

MONITORING ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN  
IMPLEMENTING DECENTRALISATION POLICY: THE CASE OF  
UGANDA

BY

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## DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my parents. Dedicated to my late father, taata, Israel Gunura, who moved our family from a deeper rural setting to a semi-urban area to enable his children to access education and other social services. Our settlement in the current area provided the foundation for my long academic journey. But taata did not live to see my academic progression and achievements beyond my first year of secondary school education as he departed this world in 1984. May he rest peacefully in eternity. Dedicated to my old mother, Iren Kereere, Kaaka who since the departure of our taata, has single-handed had the courage and commitment to instill in my brothers and I, moral values, the spirit of togetherness, hard work and optimism. Long live Kaaka. I am proud of being your child.

## STATEMENT OF ORIGINARITY

I hereby state that this is my original work in both form and content. Wherever I have referred to the work of other authors, I have duly acknowledged it.

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigated the monitoring role of local governments (LGs) in view of the institutional factors that influence LGs' performance of this role. In Uganda, under the decentralisation policy, LGs are mandated to monitor the implementation of decentralisation programmes to ensure that they are efficiently and effectively implemented. In spite of this mandate, several reports have continued to indicate that the programmes are not implemented efficiently and effectively. The reports attribute this to LGs' failure to execute their monitoring role. While the reports have relentlessly condemned LGs' failure to execute their monitoring role, there has hardly been any investigation of LGs' performance of their role in view of the institutional factors influencing their performance. The assessment of the performance of LGs in view of the institutional factors influencing their performance has bridged this gap. The assessment was based on two major fronts: the efficiency and effectiveness of LG's performance in executing their monitoring role; and the influence of institutional factors on performance of LGs. The institutional factors include the degree of LGs' autonomy in exercising decentralised powers; the capacity building in local governments; the intergovernmental working relationship; and the partnership between LGs and civil society organisations.

The study employed a qualitative methodological approach, a case study research design, an interpretivist paradigm and an exploratory conceptual model. The methods of data collection included individual interviews, focus group discussion, documentary analysis and direct observation. Qualitative data were supplemented by elements of quantitative data. Analysis and interpretation of findings were done using inductive approaches of analysis.

The study established that the LGs' efforts to monitor the implementation of decentralisation programmes have been less efficient and less effective owing to the influence of institutional factors. The problems associated with institutional factors that include insufficient autonomy, inadequate capacity building, poor intergovernmental working relationships and LGs' ineffective partnership with CSOs have greatly limited the performance of the local governments.

The thesis argues that both central government and LGs need to urgently address the problems that are associated with the institutional factors if LGs are to effectively and efficiently execute their monitoring role in implementing the decentralisation policy.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMES

ACODE	Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment
ALDA	Association of Local Democracy Agencies
ARDC	Assistant Resident Commissioner
BC	Before Christ
BOND	British Overseas NGOs for Development
BPPS	Bureau for Programme and Policy Support
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
CAFOD	Catholic Agency for Overseas Development
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CDA	Collaborative for Development Action
CIFOR	Center for International Forestry Research
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CBPM	Community Based Performance Monitoring
DACF	District Assemblies' Common Fund
DEG	Digital Era Governance
DDP	District Development Programme
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
DLB	District Land Board
DRDC	Deputy Resident District Commissioner
DSC	District Service Commission
DWAF	Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (South Africa)
EAC	East African Community

EAPRO	East Asia and the Pacific Regional Organisation
EC	European Commission
ECD	Evaluation Capacity Development.
EDI	Economic Development Institute
EISA	Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific- Committee on Poverty
ESD	Electronic Services Delivery
EU	European Union
GSAPS	Graduate School of Asia and Pacific Studies
GoU	Government of Uganda
HCCLGC	House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee.
HLGs	Higher Local Governments
IADB	Inter-American Development Bank
IFMS	Integrated Financial Management System
IG	Inspectorate of Government
IIPS	Institute for International Policy Studies
ILO	International Labour Organisation
INTRAC	International NGO Training and Research Centre
IT	Information Technology
ITRM	Information Technology Resource Management
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
JARD	Joint Annual Review of Decentralisation
LG	Local Government



LC	Local Council
LGA	Local Governments Act
LGDP	Local Government Development Programme
LGPAC	Local Government Public Accounts Committee.
LLGs	Lower Local Governments
MLGRD	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
MoLG	Ministry of Local Government
LOGICS	Local Government Information and Communication System
MDGD	Management Development and Governance Division
MISR	Makerere Institute of Social Research
NAADS	National Agricultural Advisory Services
NGOs	Non Governmental Organisations
NIRADO	Nigerian Integrated Rural Accelerated Development Organisation
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NPC	National Planning Commission
NRM	National Resistance Movement
NIMES	National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System
OAG	Office of the Auditor General
OBT	Output Budget Tool
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
PAF	Poverty Alleviation Fund

PAHO	Pan American Health Organisation
PMCs	Project Management Committees
PRSPs	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
PSC	Public Service Commission
RDC	Resident District Commissioner
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SLED	Support to Local Economic Development
ULGA	Uganda Local Governments Association
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNCDF	United Nations Development Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UM-SSW	University of Michigan School of Social Work
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNFPA.	United Nations Population Fund
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VITA	Virginia Information Technologies Agency
WHO	World Health Organisation

## CHAPTER ONE

### GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND STUDY BACKGROUND

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Public policies are government statements of goals to be pursued on behalf of society. These emanate from policy making processes intended to address public issues. Governments continue to make various public policies to address public needs and aspirations. The public issues could be societal needs, problems, regulation or change of behaviour traits. To address such matters, public policies provide programmes of action which are implemented through public institutions to achieve postulated goals or objectives. The achievement of such goals or objectives depends on how effectively the policy programmes are implemented. Decentralisation policies which have been adopted by developed, developing and transitional nations represent public policies that are intended to address numerous public needs.

Since the mid 1980s, decentralisation has become a global movement, affecting most developing countries (UNCDF2000:5-6). By 1998, Manor (1999: viii) observes, over 80% of developing and transitional countries of the Eastern and Central Europe, and the former Soviet Union, were implementing decentralisation as policy initiatives. Crook and Manor (1998:1-2) argue that several groups advocated decentralisation for several reasons: economists saw it as a means of controlling the rent seeking behaviour of leaders under a centralised system; pluralists hoped it could enable interest groups to organise; autocratic leaders considered it as a substitute for democracy. Democratic leaders saw it as a way of making government more responsive and accountable to citizens. Manor (1999:1) contends that some policy makers influenced by neoliberal ideas have viewed decentralisation as a means of shifting power away from the commandist state. Others, frustrated by poor results of centralised policy interventions, many of which were initiated and executed by the central governments with little input from the policy beneficiaries, began decentralising some functions and resources to local governments.

In Africa, decentralisation policy reforms have been mainly attributed, on the one hand, to the new wave of democratic forces against a centralised one party political system that was adopted in most African countries from the second half of the 1960s and, on the other hand, to the collapse

of communist regimes in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. The policy reform is also attributed to the demand by donor agencies that require recipients of aid to be democratic, transparent and accountable by carrying out administrative reforms as part of what constitutes 'good' governance (Makara 1998:32).

In Uganda, the decentralisation policy adopted in the early 1990s was a response to the nature of post-colonial politics and centralised development approaches adopted by post-independence leaders; and external forces from the donor community. Decentralisation was also considered as a means by the National Resistance Movement government (which had come to power through armed struggle) to secure legitimacy for its new government and to uproot support for political parties through decentralised structures under a unique no-party form of 'democracy' (Makara 1998:32; Makara 2008:341). Whichever reasons are behind its adoption, decentralisation was conceived as a multifaceted method of government and administration, the ultimate objective of which is to empower local people to administer their affairs (see Makara 1998:32). The policy, which transferred political, administrative, financial and planning functions from the centre to local governments (Nsibambi 1998:2), assigned powers and responsibilities to the local governments to play a key role in the policy implementation process. As part of this role, the local governments are mandated to monitor the implementation of development and service delivery programmes initiated by local governments, central government and nongovernmental sector organisations for efficient and effective implementation. However, several reports (e.g. JARD 2007; OAG 2009) suggest that inefficiencies and ineffectiveness continually occur in the implementation of the programmes. This questions the capacities, technical competencies and commitment of the local government structures in executing their monitoring role.

## **1.2 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT**

The study on decentralisation policy and the monitoring role of local governments in monitoring policy implementation clarifies the role of politics in public administration and management. It depicts the political supremacy of legislatures over executive institutions and the role of political office bearers and public officials in implementing policies authorised by the legislature (Cloete 1994:64-65). The legislature under article 190 of the Ugandan Constitution, 1995, as the body holding political supremacy stipulates decentralisation as a form of government to be used

in Uganda. The Constitution defines and creates executive institutions at the central government and local government levels that are responsible for implementing and monitoring the policy. At the central level, the Ministry of Local Government under the minister as the political head (political office bearer) is responsible for overall supervision of the decentralisation policy implementation by local governments. At the local government level (both higher and lower local governments) the executive officers are responsible for monitoring the implementation of the policy programmes under the supervision of political office bearers attached to elected councils. This clearly illustrates how, in practice (Cloete 1994:63), public administration is carried out in executive institutions by public officials appointed to work under the supervision of political office bearers and how public administration is a consequence and part of the political processes.

The essence of the decentralisation policy and the monitoring role of local governments in implementing policy is the empowerment of local governments to monitor the implementation of policy programmes for effective delivery of public goods and services. Effective monitoring of the implementation of decentralisation programmes enhances the capacity of local governments as institutional structures of the state which, Cloete (1994:66) argues, can be at provincial/regional or municipal/local level, to deliver quality goods and services to the public. The delivery of goods and services for the benefit of the community constitutes the objective for which public administration activities are executed (Hanekom & Thornhill 1993:57).

The monitoring role of local governments in the implementation of the decentralisation policy is the focus of this study. This function illustrates the importance of political office bearers and public officials in making and implementing government policies in the public sector. As Hanekom and Thornhill (1993:49) argue, political office bearers and public officials are among the various role players who are involved in policy making and implementation. As the local governments are close to the community (programme beneficiaries), they are therefore expected to understand the needs and problems of the community. These governmental structures, in monitoring the implementation of decentralisation, are meant to ensure that there is value for money and that programme activities are implemented in accordance with both an approved plan/budget and national standards for service delivery.

The monitoring of the decentralisation policy implementation in Uganda is a case of how government uses public policy to address society's needs, expectations and problems. Fesler (1980:3) states that what government accomplishes (through public administration) for a society depends on what policies it formulates and adopts and how effectively these are put into practice or implemented. Therefore, a decentralisation policy is meant to achieve efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of public goods and services. This must be achieved in an equitable and transparent manner with accountable use of power and resources, which are the very concerns of public administration and management (Henry 1980:26). The achievement of such objectives depends on how efficiently and effectively the policy is implemented. Efficient and effective implementation in turn requires effective monitoring.

The implementation of a decentralisation policy and the monitoring role of local governments in implementing the policy emphasises the importance of accountability which is a principle or tenet of public administration and management. In monitoring the implementation of policy through programmes for development and delivery of goods and services to the community, the local political office bearers and public officials are the key players and are accountable to the society for how the programmes are implemented to deliver services and cause transformation in people's livelihoods and material well-being. Such accountability to citizens (Moore 1998 cited in Larson & Ribot 2004:6) is the substantive essence of democracy. The central government is also downwardly accountable to local governments since local governments obtain services from the central governments—such as expertise, heavy machinery and financial support, and are enabled to gain market access (Larson & Ribot 2004:6-7). In Uganda, the Constitution of 1995 enshrines the principle of public accountability. According to objective No. xxxvi of the Constitution, public offices are held in trust for the people and all persons placed in positions of leadership and responsibility must, in their work, be answerable to the people.

The implementation of the decentralisation policy in Uganda provides an example of devolution of power. Under the decentralisation policy, power for political decision - making, finance and management is [theoretically- emphasis added] devolved from the centre to local government councils to enable local governments to manage their own affairs (Nsibambi 1998:6). This in theory implies that local government councils can make decisions and allocate resources based

on their local needs and priorities. Power is also devolved from higher level to lower level local government councils to allow decisions to be made at the lowest level of service delivery in accordance with the subsidiarity principle. The higher local government councils in Uganda, according to the Local Government Act 1997 as amended in 2008, are the district local government councils, the city council and municipal councils while lower local government councils consist of city division, municipal division, sub county and town councils. The devolved powers, according to the Act, have to be used in the best interest of the people to enhance service provision, reduce poverty and improve livelihood, which are the concerns of public administration and management in Uganda today.

The study of the monitoring role of local governments in the implementation of decentralisation policy in Uganda points to a number of public administrative and managerial institutional issues. These include the degree of autonomy of local governments in exercising decentralised powers; the amount of resources available for local governments; the working relationships among the key government role players involved in the monitoring process, especially the local government officials, the local political leaders and central government personnel; the collaboration between governmental institutions and nongovernmental sector; and the issue of capacity building support extended to the local governments which all influence the performance of the governments in executing their policy monitoring role.

### **1.3 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY**

The study was motivated by a number of reasons. First, the available literature on the performance of local governments in implementing decentralisation is too general and not disaggregated in terms of functional areas. Besides, many of these are “self-evaluation” reports published by government agencies. Attempts that have been made on specific areas have focused on development plans formulation processes and existence of such plans in local governments. The general performance of local governments has been assessed mainly by conducting regular national annual performance assessments. These assessments, often conducted by government agencies, are mainly concerned with meeting of standards and targets set by central government and with the utilisation of funds transferred from central government to local governments. The assessments are basically intended to determine whether local

governments have met the minimum conditions to access central government funding. A recent attempt in a survey (Tumushabe, Mushemeza, Tamale, Lukwago & Ssemakula 2010) has also been too general, focusing on the assessment of the general performance of local government councils. This was done using a scorecard to rank the performance of local councils and their chairpersons. The survey which was done using a scorecard to rank the performance of local councils and their chairpersons does not provide an intensive investigation. This further justifies the need for an intensive examination of the local governments' monitoring role in implementing the decentralisation programmes that assess the local governments' performance in the monitoring process and the impact of a number of institutional factors on their performance. An intensive attempt on a specific area made by Mutabwire (2008) on bottom-up planning in local governments, although it sheds some light on the challenges of LGs that informed this study, it focuses on the formulation processes of the development plans, planning opportunities and constraints and citizen participation in the planning processes.

Secondly, under decentralisation, several reports indicate that there have been continued occurrences of inefficiencies and ineffectiveness in implementing the various policy programmes. This has continually been attributed to local governments' failure to effectively execute their implementation monitoring role. Both government and the public have continued to identify local governments as being ineffective in monitoring the implementation of decentralised programmes and mobilising communities for development. However, this was being argued without any intensive investigation that examines their monitoring role in view of the factors that influence the effectiveness of the governments in executing their role.

Thirdly, for local governments to play an effective monitoring role in the implementation process, the government has to place emphasis on their critical role in the policy implementation. This means that resources have to be made available; the local governments need to have real exercisable powers; the roles of the various key players have to be clearly understood and executed; the local government officials have to be effectively trained and equipped with leadership, technical and managerial skills to enhance their capacity; there has to be effective working relations including stable power relations among intergovernmental organs and as well as effective collaboration mechanisms between government and nongovernmental key players



involved in the monitoring process. All these do not only have to be clearly specified in the policy framework, but also need to be reflected in the actions at the level of the actual delivery of services.

#### 1.4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The decentralisation policy framework in Uganda empowers local governments (LGs) to play a key role in the policy implementation process. As part of this role, various local government organs under Local Government Act 1997 as amended in 2008 Sections 13(1) e; 17(b); 24(1) c, 24(1) d; 26(1) j; 30 (6); 64 (2)c, d and e; and 65(2) (c),(d) and (e) are mandated to monitor the implementation of policy programmes initiated by local governments, central government and nongovernmental organisations to ensure efficient and effective implementation of the programmes. The policy devolves political, administrative and fiscal powers to LGs. It defines devolved roles and responsibilities of LGs. It provides for financing and capacity building in the form of training to the LGs as institutional support to enhance their performance. The problem, however, is that, in spite of all this, several reports (e.g. JARD 2005; JARD 2007; IG 2008 Tumushabe *et al.* 2010 ;) suggest that inefficiencies and ineffectiveness have continued to occur in the implementation of decentralisation programmes.

The capacities, technical competencies and commitment of the LGs in executing their monitoring role have been brought to question with repeated reports including press reports castigating that LGs are not effectively executing their monitoring function (JARD 2007; *The New Vision*: 5, 6 August 2009; OAG 2009; *The Independent*: 23-25, 14 -20 August 2009; Tumushabe *et al.* 2010; *The Daily Monitor*: 7, 9 May 2011; *The New Vision*: 8, 11 October 2010; *The Daily Monitor*: 5, 15 September 2010). However, all this is being raised without any intensive investigation that examines the efficiency and effectiveness of LGs' monitoring role in view of the institutional factors influencing the performance of LGs. LGs execute their monitoring role in the implementation of decentralisation within a context of institutional factors. The degree of autonomy of LGs in exercising the devolved powers; the working relationships among the intergovernmental organs; the existing collaboration between LGs and the nongovernmental sector players; and the capacity building support extended to the LGs all have a bearing on the effectiveness of the LGs in performing their monitoring role. This study examines the LGs'

monitoring role in view of the institutional factors that influence the LG' performance in execution of the monitoring role.

### **1.5. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The study examines the monitoring role of local governments in implementing decentralisation policy in Uganda in view of the institutional factors that influence the local governments' performance of this function. The specific objectives are:

1. to assess the performance of local governments in executing their monitoring role in the implementation of decentralisation in Uganda;
2. to examine how the degree of autonomy of local governments in exercising decentralised powers impacts on performance of their monitoring role in implementing programmes under decentralisation in Uganda;
3. to assess the capacity building that is extended to local governments in respect of its impact on local governments' performance of their monitoring role in the implementation of decentralisation programmes in Uganda;
4. to analyse the extent to which working relationships among the intergovernmental organs involved in the decentralisation monitoring process influence LGs' performance in executing their monitoring role; and
5. to evaluate the existing collaboration between local governments and civil society organisations in view of its impact on LGs' execution of their monitoring role in implementing decentralisation programmes in Uganda.

### **1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The following research questions have guided the study:

1. To what extent have local governments efficiently and effectively performed their monitoring role in implementing decentralisation policy programmes in Uganda?
2. To what extent is the local governments' monitoring role in implementing decentralisation programmes in Uganda influenced by institutional factors?

## **1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The significance of the study is reflected mainly in the way it enriches and deepens the existing body of knowledge of public administration and management; and the new ground it breaks in the field of Public Administration and Management in its exploration of local governments' decentralisation monitoring role in Uganda, as discussed in what follows.

The study carried out in Uganda deepens the discourse on implementation of decentralisation as a public policy in the context of developing countries. The foundations of the political and socio-economic paradigms of developing countries (Kakumba 2008:9) are fundamentally alike. By examining the local governments' monitoring role in view of institutional factors that influence the performance of the LGs in executing their role, the study explains the institutional inadequacies that impede the efficiency and effectiveness of monitoring the implementation of decentralisation policy in Uganda in particular and the developing countries in general.

The study augments the domain of public policy. The institutional factors that define the institutional capacity of local governments to execute their monitoring role in implementing the decentralisation policy have been analysed. The study also examines the initiatives and activities undertaken by local governments to implement and monitor the implementation of decentralisation policy programmes. The study in addition explores the possibilities for effective monitoring of the decentralisation development and service delivery programmes. All these issues fall within the domain of policy implementation and monitoring aimed at effective delivery of public goods and services to the society which is the essence of public policy.

The study extends beyond the description of the monitoring role of local governments in implementing the decentralisation policy and makes an empirical examination of the role in the policy implementation process. The examination provides empirical evidence of the resource gap, inadequacies and bottlenecks that exist at institutional level of local governments in monitoring the implementation of programmes for delivery of public goods and services to the community.

The study articulates some new ground that includes the following:

- a conceptual model that demonstrates the role players involved in monitoring the implementation process of decentralisation in local governments;
- a postulation that problems associated with the institutional factors have greatly constrained/limited the efficiency and effectiveness of local governments efforts' to monitor the implementation of decentralisation programmes;
- a proposition that unless the central government and local governments take deliberate initiatives to address the problems caused by the institutional factors, LGs cannot efficiently and effectively execute their monitoring role; and
- a departure from the "black box approach" to qualitative data analysis where, often, researchers simply state that they conducted thematic analysis without sufficient information on the methods of data analysis and the analytical process. The study provides a clear description of the process and approaches of data analysis and procedures for reporting, analysis and interpretation of findings.

It is envisioned that the study will be useful to government, researchers, academics and students in a number of ways:

- The findings will guide the government to focus on the pertinent issues that need to be addressed in order for LGs to play a more effective monitoring role in the policy implementation.
- The findings should also be of academic interest to researchers, academics and students especially in the fields of public policy and implementation, public administration and local government.

## **1.8 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The study focuses on examining the monitoring role of local governments in implementing development and service delivery programmes under decentralisation in view of the institutional factors influencing the local government performance of this role. The study targets respondents from political and civil service organs of upper and lower local governments in the two selected districts of Wakiso and Ntungamo in Uganda, central government agencies and civil society

organisations involved in the monitoring process. In examining the monitoring role, the study limits itself to assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of local governments' performance of their role in respect of the influence of institutional factors. The institutional factors are limited to local governments' autonomy in exercising decentralised powers; the institutional capacity building in local governments; the working relationships among intergovernmental organs involved in monitoring the implementation of decentralisation; and the collaborative partnership between local governments and civil society organisations in the monitoring process.

## **1.9 THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

### **1.9.1 Theoretical base**

One of the earliest topics addressed by policy analysts was public policy implementation. Starting with the seminal work of Jeffrey Pressman and Aaron Wildavsky, policy implementation has come from a largely overlooked interest to rapid growth over the last thirty years. Even though, a variety of books and articles deal with implementation, it has been described by some scholars as leading to an intellectual dead end because of lack of a generic policy implementation theory (deLeon & deLeon 2002:467). This problem of lack of a generic theory extends to policy implementation monitoring. Hermans (2010:1), referring to the works of Chen and Rossi (1992), argues that in many of the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that regard policy making as a cyclical process, monitoring and evaluation are located in the same phase and that most approaches prescribe that evaluation should be based on some underlying theory. Whether it is called a theory of change, a policy or programme theory, this theory should provide the causal relationship through which policy input is expected to result in desirable outcomes and impacts on policy systems in a given context. The author argues that ideally these theories should be tested using empirical data with monitoring data as sources of such data.

Hermans' views on the need for some underlying theory for monitoring reflect attempts made by a number of authors who have made some advances in the theory of Monitoring and Evaluation. One such advance linked to a systems approach has been referred to as the 'Built-in' or 'In-Built' Monitoring and Evaluation System. The system has four parameters of Contexts; Input; Processes; and Products (CIPP). The system identifies programme aspects that need to be focused on and the indicators to be used to monitor and evaluate change. One of the essential

elements of the Built-in M&E System is to make the agent of action also the agent responsible for evaluation - by self-evaluation or co-evaluation. The Built-in M&E is thus a system in which information is used immediately at the level where it is produced and then sent upwards (Bottom-Up) for analysis, interpretation and utilisation at each successive level. It is a two-way flow of information, as feedback from above is then fed back (Top-Down) to each of the levels below (Bhola 2006:1-2). This theory triggered a debate as to whether the monitoring information on the implementation of decentralisation process in local governments adheres to the prescribed procedure. The findings as discussed in Chapter Six provide empirical dimensions of the applicability of the theory in the monitoring process in local governments.

Hermans does not only advocate some underlying theory, but also makes a contribution by locating monitoring in the theory of organisational learning. One of the significant challenges of monitoring according to Hermans (2010:5) happens when implementers distort or withhold information which he argues could be linked to the theory of organisational learning propounded by Argyris (1992). According to Argyris's theory of organisational learning (Argyris 1992), most organisations are not capable of anything more than superficial learning, because of a basic fear that more fundamental learning leads to blaming and shaming. Organisational learning tends to involve a pattern whereby individuals withhold information or add some positive or negative bias, in order to bypass threat. To bypass a threat, people often are not fully objective. This distorting behavioural practice according to a study by Argyris (Argyris 1992:26) is widespread as it was held by all individuals studied. The findings of this study provide some credibility to Argyris's organisational learning theory.

Borrowing from the organisational learning theory, Hermans (2010:5) argues that, when the implementing actors expect that monitoring data will eventually be used for accountability or performance assessment purposes, they tend to avoid 'naming and shaming' and to increase chances of praise. For instance, Hermans (2010:5-6) poses, "what if they know they have not fully implemented the complete policy as initially designed? Will they acknowledge, risking a reprimand for neglect, or will they rather emphasise the actions they performed and be quiet about the other parts?". Hence, in many cases according to Hermans, the implementers are likely to withhold or distort information on implementation activities, which makes systematic

monitoring very difficult. This triggered a debate on whether decentralisation implementers withhold information as the theory claims. The findings of the study tend to support the author's views on this matter.

The debate was enhanced by a number of theoretical views on the dynamics of monitoring. Besides the advances in providing monitoring and evaluation theories, there have been a number of theoretical views regarding the subject matter. Implementation monitoring is stated to be affected by political 'games' played by various actors involved in policy implementation (Bardach 1977:85). Bardach argues that implementation is the continuation of politics by other means. These political implementation 'games', the author maintains can have adverse effects on policy implementation, such as the diversion of resources, the deflection of policy goals, resistance to administrative control [such as monitoring] and the dissipation of energies in game playing rather than constructive action. Such 'games' include making a small 'token' contribution by substituting a contribution of inferior quality; setting goals and objectives on existing successful programmes; and 'territorial' games of 'not our problem'. This could also be linked to Game Theory which according to Marrow (1994:2), began in the 1920s and grew into a coherent body of mathematical theory that was published in 1943 by Von Neumann and Morgenstern in *Theory of Game and Economic behaviour*. According to the theory, individual choices depend upon choices of others. In this case, since the monitors would use monitoring data for accountability purposes, the implementers would choose to selectively provide the data that would portray them as performers.

Implementation monitoring is regarded as requiring an additional effort and being distractive from primary tasks. It requires that implementers record what they did, when and why, how much time and other resources they spent on activities. All of this requires additional effort. Recording of activities is not part of the standard routines, as it is often not crucial to 'getting the job done'. Keeping records is considered as 'paperwork' that distracts professionals from their primary tasks. Hence, they are not enthusiastic about providing the basic monitoring data needed to keep track of implementation activities. Producing monitoring data then takes an additional effort. Yet many professionals already consider themselves being overburdened and lack the discipline to keep records (Hermans 2010:6). The debate in this case was whether monitoring in LGs is

considered by implementers as requiring additional effort and being distractive. The study findings provide some empirical dimensions of this debate.

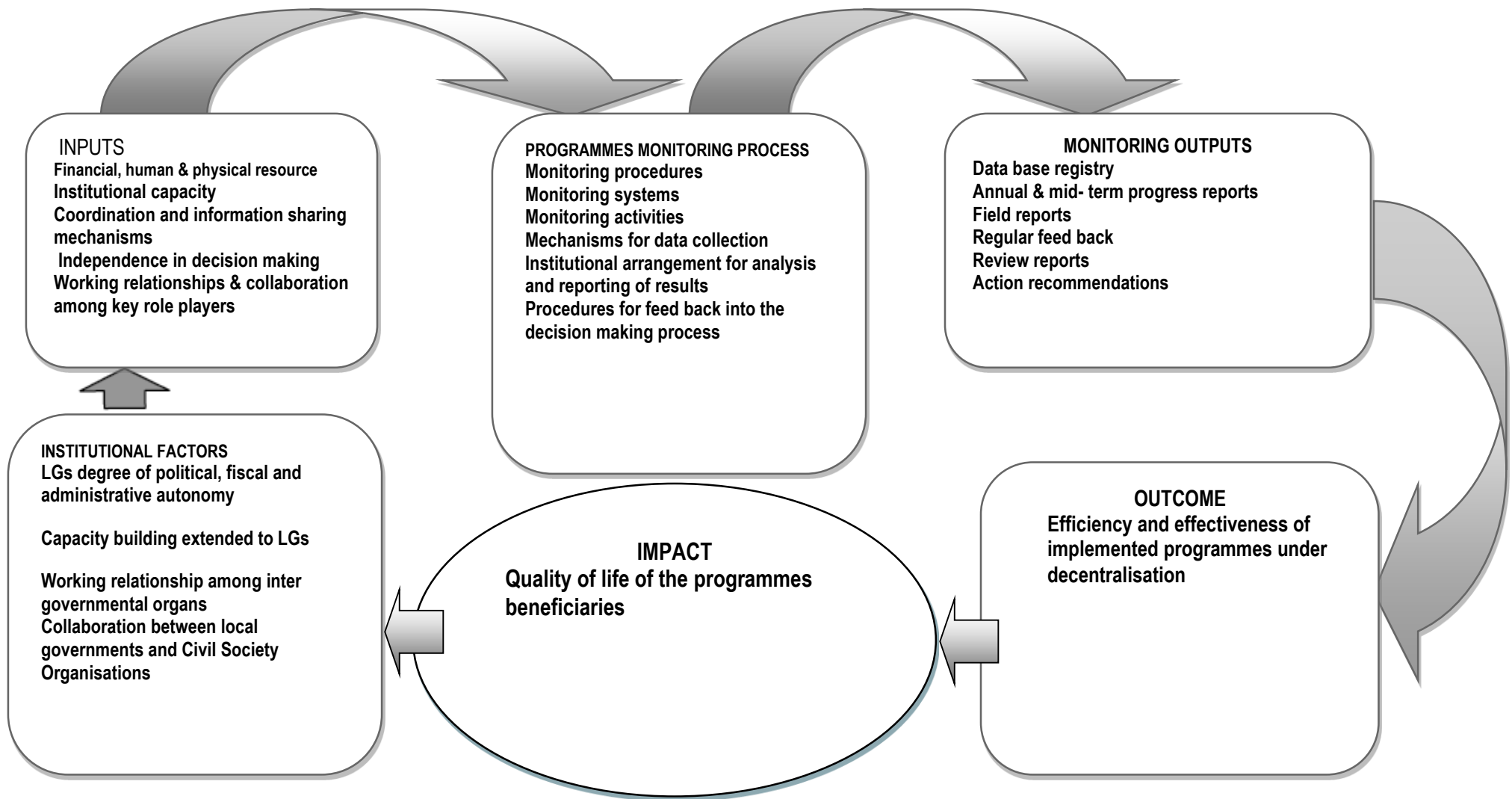
It is imperative to note that a monitoring and evaluation system which comprises all activities that contribute to increased knowledge of input, processes, output, outcome, and impact of project or programme activities (Koot 2000:15) has been provided with key principles for its effectiveness. The key principles include focus on results and follow-up; clear criteria and indicators that realistically define project outcome, outputs and activities; regular monitoring visits; regular analysis of reports; participatory monitoring mechanisms; and generating lessons learned (UN-HABITAT 2003:22-23). These principles guided the study in examining the decentralisation policy monitoring process in local governments in Uganda.

In the absence of a generalised valid monitoring theory, the above theoretical orientations linking policy monitoring to organisational learning theory, game theory and the 'Built-in' system; and the theoretical views on the dynamics of monitoring, provided viable theoretical constructs that informed the study on monitoring the implementation of decentralisation programmes in LGs. The study findings provide empirical dimensions of the theoretical constructs.

### **1.9.2 Conceptual framework**

The study has been guided by the systems conceptual framework modified from David Easton's political systems theory. The application of systems theory to the analysis of politics was pioneered by David Easton in 1953 in his book entitled, *The political system: An inquiry into the state of political science*. Easton considered political life as a system of behaviour within a political system influenced by the surrounding environment. The political system is considered as a vast and perpetual conversion process. Changes in the environment produce 'demands' and 'supports' for action as 'inputs' towards the political system. The demands and support lead to decisions in the form of 'outputs' directed at some aspect of the surrounding environment. When the decisions or outputs are made which could be in form of policy, they interact with the environment and produce changes in the form of outcomes which may also generate new demands or support. Figure I.1 below, illustrates the model in a modified form as applied to the monitoring process in local governments.





**Figure 1.1: Modified systems analysis model for local governments monitoring role in the implementation of decentralisation programmes**

Source: Reconfigured from David Easton (1965). A Systems Analysis of Political Life, New York. John Wiley & Sons p, 32

Applying the model in a modified form in the monitoring process in LGs as illustrated in Figure I.1 above, the environment in the form of institutional factors produce a variety of inputs for the monitoring system. Such inputs are in the form of financial resources, quality of human resources, physical resources, institutional capacity, independence in decision making, co-ordination, information sharing mechanisms and working relationships and collaboration among the role players. The inputs influence the monitoring process within the system to determine the monitoring outputs. The monitoring outputs then produce changes in the form of outcomes which determine the efficiency and effectiveness of the implemented programmes. Finally, the efficiency and effectiveness of the implemented programmes determine the impact of the programmes in terms of the quality of life for the beneficiaries of the programmes.

The study proposes a model that demonstrates the role players involved in monitoring the implementation process. From Figure 1.2 below, it can be transcribed that the role of local governments in monitoring the implementation of policy programmes under decentralisation is executed in an inter-institutional framework involving many role players.

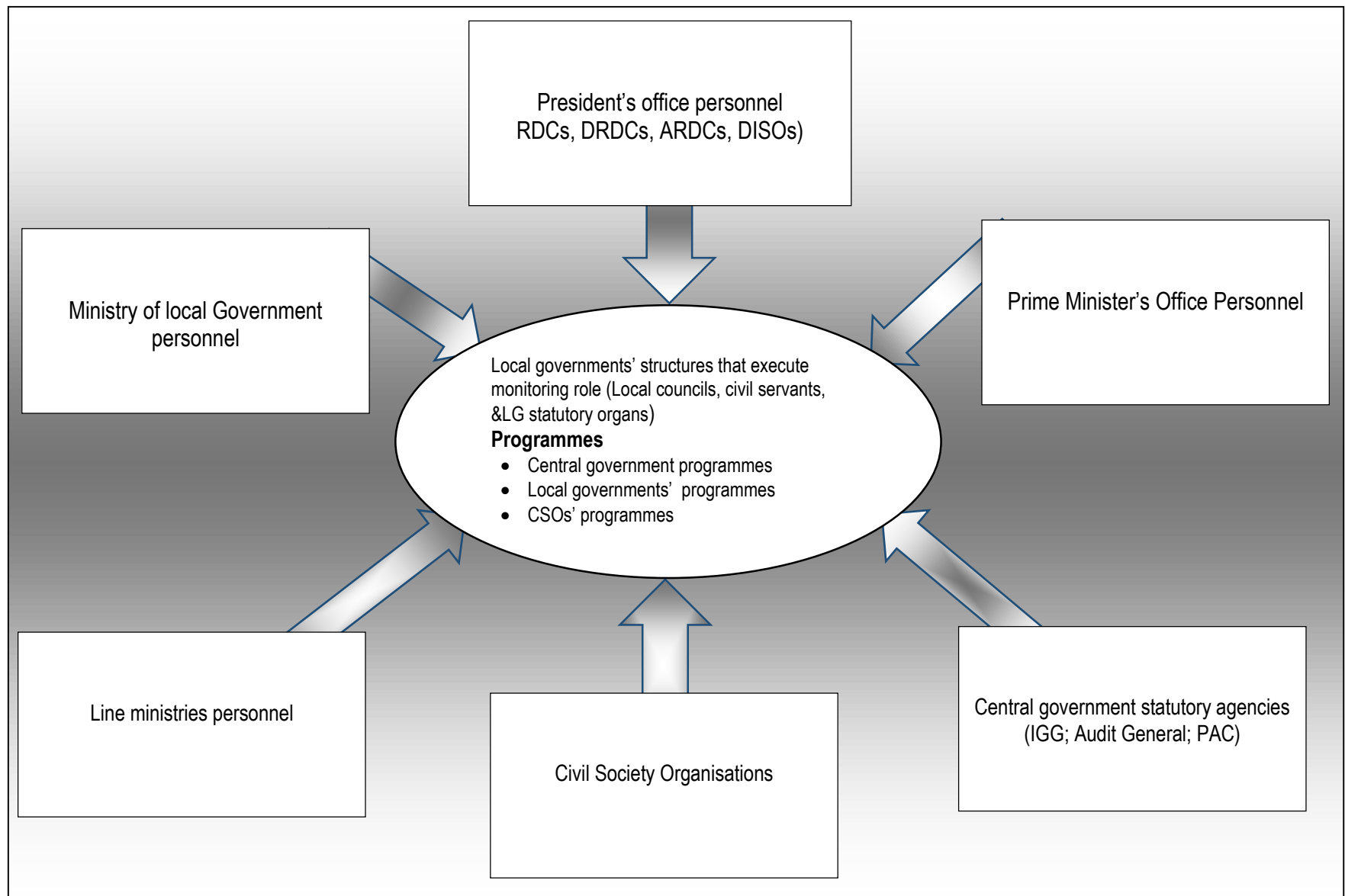


Figure I.2: Model for the players involved in monitoring in LGs under decentralisation

Source: Drawn by the Researcher

## **1.10 CHAPTER DELINEATION OF THE THESIS**

The study consists of seven chapters. The chapters are interrelated, focusing on the same topic, but from different dimensions. The chapters of the thesis are described below.

### **Chapter One**

Chapter One introduces the study topic with highlights on the background to the study. It gives the rationale of the study in the field of public administration, the motivation for the study and the research problem. In addition the chapter presents the study objectives, the significance of the study and provides the theoretical base and conceptual framework of the study. This is followed by presentation of the chapter sequence of the thesis and the clarification of key concepts used by the study.

### **Chapter Two**

The chapter reviews a plethora of the available research methodologies including research designs, methodological approaches, paradigms and conceptual models before adopting and justifying the choice of the research methodology for the study.

### **Chapter Three**

The third chapter reviews the theoretical foundations of public administration both as an activity (public administration) and discipline (Public Administration) and shows how this relates to policy implementation monitoring (which is part of the policy making process). It discusses and evaluates the evolution of Public Administration and Management and its orientation over the years — including the emergence of New Public Management construct which all have had an impact on policy making processes in general and policy implementation monitoring in particular. The chapter invokes the generic administrative functions, but with focus on the policy making function which provides the foundation for policy implementation and monitoring in public sector. The chapter also locates the study themes of decentralised power, working relationships, capacity building and collaboration in the field of public administration and management.

## **Chapter Four**

This chapter assesses the monitoring role of local governments in implementing decentralisation policy reform programmes from an international perspective. The chapter contextualises the role of local governments in decentralisation by examining the rationale of the local governments' role in decentralisation reforms and the scope of this role with a focus on the monitoring role. It then examines the efforts made by local governments to monitor the implementation of the policy programmes and the factors that influence the performance of local governments in executing their role. Experiences are drawn from the developed countries, the Asian developing countries, Africa and Latin America.

## **Chapter Five**

This chapter discusses the local government structural system and decentralisation policy reforms in Uganda. It provides a historical overview of local government structures and the system in Uganda and analyses the current decentralised structures under which the implementation monitoring function is executed. It also analyses the objectives and principles of decentralisation policy in Uganda and the rationale for monitoring the implementation of decentralisation programmes. The chapter then reviews the policy and institutional framework for monitoring the implementation of decentralisation in Uganda. This includes a theoretical review of the powers given to local governments and the scope of local government responsibilities under the decentralisation policy; the local governments' organs involved in monitoring the implementation of decentralisation and their responsibilities; the role of central government organs in the implementation and monitoring of decentralisation; the capacity building extended to local governments; and the role of civil society organisations (third sector) in monitoring of programmes under decentralisation.

## **Chapter Six**

Chapter Six presents the analysis and interpretations of the study findings. The findings are analysed and interpreted in relation to the objectives of the study under five sections as follows:

### **Section One**

Section One presents and discusses findings of the first objective of the study which assesses the performance of local governments in executing their monitoring role in the implementation of decentralisation in Uganda.

## **Section Two**

Section Two discusses the findings of the second objective of the study which was to examine how the degree of local governments' autonomy in exercising decentralised powers impacts on performance of their monitoring role in implementing the decentralisation in Uganda.

## **Section Three**

Section Three presents the findings and discussions of the third study objective which is intended to assess the capacity building that is extended to local governments in respect of its impact on the local governments' performance in the execution of their monitoring role in the implementation of decentralisation in Uganda.

## **Section Four**

Section Four focuses on the fourth objective of the study which aimed to analyse the extent to which working relationships among the intergovernmental organs involved in the decentralisation monitoring process influence LGs' performance in their monitoring role in implementing decentralisation.

## **Section Five**

Section Five presents and analyses the findings pertaining to the fifth objective of the study which sought to evaluate the existing collaboration between local governments and civil society organisations in view of its impact on the performance of local governments in monitoring the implementation of programmes under decentralisation in Uganda.

## **Chapter Seven**

The Final Chapter seven presents summaries, conclusions and policy recommendations. The recommendations are presented under the respective five central themes of the study. The chapter also provides considerations for future areas of research.

### **1.11 CLARIFICATION OF KEY TERMS**

#### **1.11.1 Autonomy**

Autonomy is the ability of a public body or official to make decisions under its jurisdiction independently from other actors. For sub-national governments or local government administrations, autonomy as it relates to decentralisation is the ability in particular to make

decisions independently of central governments. This is one of the four characteristics—along with accountability, authority and capacity—deemed important to make decentralisation work (USAID 2009:99).

### **1.11.2 Capacity building/development**

Capacity building is the process by which individuals, groups, organisations, institutions and societies develop their abilities, individually and collectively, to perform functions, solve problems and set and achieve objectives (UNDP 1997:2). Capacity building has three dimensions —Human capacity targeting individuals; organisational capacity targeting groups of individuals; and institutional capacity targeting the institutional framework (World Bank 2005:7).

### **1.11.3 Decentralisation**

Decentralisation is the transfer of power and resources from national governments to sub national governments or to the local government administrative units. Decentralisation is often regarded as a top-down process driven by a unitary or federal state in which the central government grants functions, authorities and resources to sub national and local levels (Cf. USAID 2009: 9).

### **1.11.4 Effectiveness**

Effectiveness is about ‘doing the right things’. Questions about the effectiveness of a policy focus attention on whether the right kinds of programmes are being used for delivery and whether the right beneficiaries have been targeted (CAFOD 2006: 42). The focus of effectiveness is on the customer (in the case of this study, the programme beneficiary) and is associated with the quality of services—including such issues as responsiveness, accessibility, availability, participation, safety and client satisfaction (Wagner & McCaffery 2010:490-491).

### **1.11.5 Efficiency**

Efficiency is about ‘doing the right things right’. Questions about the efficiency of a policy would look at whether it is being implemented correctly: according to procedures, without wasting time and money, fairly and transparently (CAFOD 2006: 42).

#### **1.11.6 Monitoring**

Monitoring is a continuous function that aims primarily to provide managers and main stakeholders with regular feedback and early indications of progress or lack thereof in the achievement of intended results. Monitoring tracks the actual performance against what was planned or expected according to predetermined standards. Monitoring generally involves collecting and analysing data on implementation processes, strategies and results and recommending corrective measures (UN-HABITAT 2003:12). UNFPA (2004:3) refers to monitoring as the continuous tracking of performance against what was planned by collecting and analysing data on the indicators designed for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

#### **1.11.7 Policy implementation**

It is a stage in the policy making process/cycle that involves executing or putting into action designed policy programmes. It is regarded, as Brynard (2005:9) observes, as the accomplishment of policy objectives through the planning and programming of operations and projects so that agreed upon outcomes and desired impacts are achieved.

#### **1.11.8 Programme**

A programme is a group of projects that are managed in a co-ordinated way to achieve a common strategic objective. The co-ordinated programme management results in project benefits that would not be achievable if they were managed independently (PMI 2004:15).

#### **1.11.9. Power and power relations**

Power is the ability to make somebody do something that otherwise he or she would not have done (Dahl 1961 cited in Sadan 2007:36). There are one to three dimensions of power relations: Under the one-dimensional approach, in the overt arena of power relations, A's power over B is manifested to the extent that A can make B do something which B would not have done had it not been for A. Under a two-dimensional approach, power is seen in terms of decision- making process- who decides what, when and how and who remains outside the process. Under the three-dimensional approach, B does things that (s) he would not have done had it not been for A because A influences, determines and shapes B's will (Sadan 2007:41-42).



## **1.12 CONCLUSION**

The aim of this chapter has been to introduce the study topic which examines the monitoring role of local governments in the implementation of the decentralisation policy in Uganda. The chapter has provided the background to the study, the rationale of the study in public administration, the motivation for the study and defined the research problem. In addition, the chapter has presented the study objectives, the significance of the study and provided the theoretical base and conceptual framework of the study. Lastly it has outlined the chapter sequence of the thesis and a clarification of key concepts used in this study. The succeeding chapter shifts the focus to the methodology and design which were employed in conducting the study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Research methodology and research design are two concepts that go hand-in-hand when conducting research. Although the term research methodology is often used interchangeably with research methods, the two words are different. Research methodology consists of the assumptions, rules and methods that researchers employ to render their work open to analysis, critique, replication and adaption while research methods are the tools or techniques which researchers use to collect data (Given 2008:516). Ahuja (2001:41) briefly defines research methodology as the description, explanation and justification of methods or techniques selected for collection of data. It is necessary to note that, in defining the methodology for a study, the selected methods can mainly fall under qualitative, quantitative or mixed method research methodological approaches. These approaches are explained later (see *infra* para 2.2). Regarding the search design, it can be understood as a blue print that explains how the chosen research methodology will be used to accomplish the objectives of a research study. Key features of any research design are the selected methodology, the collection and assignment of samples, collection and analysis of data along with procedures and instruments to be used. As a master plan, it provides the basis and specifies the methods and procedures selected for collecting, processing and analysing data (Manheim 1977:140; Zikmund 1988:41; Olivia 2011:1). Nieuwenhuis (2007:70) summarises the meaning of a research design as a plan or strategy which moves from the underlying philosophical assumptions to specifying the selection of respondents, the selected data gathering techniques and the data analysis procedures.

Conducting research involves selection, description, explanation and justification of a methodological approach; methodological paradigm; conceptual model; research design; area of study; study population; study sample; unit of analysis; and data collection methods. It also involves defining the data collection plan or strategy and data analysis and interpretation procedures.

## 2.2 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

Traditionally, there have been two methodological approaches in social research: qualitative and quantitative approaches. Recently, a new approach known as Mixed Methods Research (MMR) has emerged. Qualitative research approach, the discussion of which follows after discussing the quantitative approach and MMR, relies on collecting data in the form of words, narratives and sentences with a focus on the nature and meaning of the phenomena under study. The quantitative approach follows a natural science model of research process to establish knowledge that exists independently of the views, perceptions and values of the researcher. The approach relies on quantitative information in the form of figures and numbers with a focus on measurement of the phenomena. It is a type of research that employs measurements and the use of statistical analysis (Ahuja 2001:39-41; Teddlie & Tashakkori 2010: 5-7). According to Grix (2010:117-118), quantitative research is broadly characterised as an approach that identifies variables for concepts, operationalises them in the study and measures them; seeks measurement and analyses that are easily replicable by researchers for verifiability; and considers the researcher to be detached from the study—which offers free value analysis.

Regarding the applicability of quantitative approach, it has been argued (see Grix 2010:119-20) that whereas the approach produces numerical or statistical figures that are essential for human lives and scholarship, there are aspects of human action especially behavioural (or social) phenomena which are difficult to measure quantitatively. The author contends that dependence on the quantitative approach can lead to a neglect of the social and cultural context in which measurement of the variables takes place. The author also contends that the researcher cannot be fully detached from the study as the approach suggests, because researchers are the sum of the accumulated knowledge which is based on the assumptions about the world. Given the approach's weaknesses particularly regarding areas of social reality which cannot be measured and given the fact that, according to Mason (1998:27-27), the approach usually tackles large random and representative samples to identify patterns, the approach is not the most appropriate for an intensive, in-depth case study that involves the need to understand the social reality of the situation in which the monitoring function in LGs takes place; and the experience, perceptions and beliefs of those who are involved in executing the function.

Recently, there have been requests for the use of a mixed methods research approach. This involves collecting data using both quantitative and qualitative approaches in a single study, analysing independently the data collected using each approach and then integrating the findings and drawing inferences based on the two approaches (Given 2008:526). While there is general agreement on some characteristics of the approach, there is no consensus yet with regard to some basic characteristics (or principles) about the nature of the new approach (Teddlie & Tashakkori 2010: 8). There is, according to Teddlie and Tashakkori (2010: 12-16) still an ongoing debate on a number of important issues and controversies regarding the application of the approach. Such issues include conceptual or methodological interface; the language of the approach across disciplinary and cross- cultural applications of the approach; design issues in the approach; and data analysis and interpretation. While the debate continues, according to the authors, referring to the works of Leech, there are those who argue that the field of social research is not ready for consensus. Whereas the MMR is applauded for its methodological eclecticism — where the researcher is able to select and synergistically integrate the most appropriate techniques from both quantitative and qualitative research approaches, given the controversies and lack of consensus on applicability, the study did not find it the most appropriate approach to adopt.

Concerning the qualitative methodological approach, as noted above, the approach relies on collecting data in the form of words, sentences and narratives with a focus on the nature and meaning of the phenomena. Grix (2010:121) observes that in qualitative research, the researcher analyses cases—usually few in number in their social and cultural context. In contrast to the quantitative approach, the researcher is not detached from the research, but positively interacts with the object of study. Grix contends that qualitative research has enabled studies into contemporary issues such as the nature of dictatorships by interviewing people who have lived under such conditions and by establishing the nature of relationship between the state and its citizens. It is unlikely, Grix argues that the rich findings resulting from such studies would be produced by statistical data associated with the quantitative approach.

Qualitative research seeks answers by examining various social settings and the groups or individuals who inhabit the settings to determine how the inhabitants of the settings make sense of their surroundings. Qualitative procedures provide mechanisms for accessing unquantifiable information from the inhabitants of the settings as study participants. The

procedures enable the researcher to share in the understanding and perceptions of the participants to explore how they structure and give meaning to the events in their daily lives (Berg & Lune 2012: 4).

Qualitative research, according to Brewer (2003:193), is based on an intensive study of as many features as possible of one or a small number of phenomena. Instead of condensing information, it builds understanding by depth. Brewer argues that qualitative research defines breadth of social phenomena under study holistically and it pursues meaning not by investigating many instances of phenomena but rather by considering all aspects of the same phenomenon to determine their interrelationship.

Notwithstanding some criticisms that qualitative studies are usually small-scale and are not generalisable beyond the cases researched and that the 'immersion' of the researcher in the social context being studied leads to lack of objectivity (Grix 2010:121), given the fact that the focus for this research is on an intensive, in-depth, holistic study that needs to consider all aspects of the local governments' monitoring role in implementing the decentralisation policy by sharing in the understanding and perceptions of those involved in executing the function, a qualitative approach was suitable for the study. The approach has been supplemented by some elements of quantitative data, in form of figures and percentages. The overall intent of using the figures and percentages as Bloomberg and Volpe (2012:150) observe is not to quantify qualitative data but to essentially supplement the qualitative narratives.

## **2.3 GUIDING RESEARCH PARADIGM**

In conducting social research, it is imperative for the research methodology to indicate the guiding research paradigm. In social sciences, a paradigm has come to be understood as an established academic philosophy or approach in which academics use common theories based on agreed assumptions and agreed methods and practices and common terminology (Rosamond 2000:192). There are various research paradigms such as positivism, interpretivism, realism, critical, constructionist, participatory and ecological paradigms. Grix (2010:79) observes that generally in social and human sciences, research paradigms as the understanding of what one can know about something and how one can gather knowledge about it, can broadly be categorised under three core paradigms which often overlap. These

include positivism, post-positivism and interpretivism. Understanding the philosophical considerations and assumptions or principles of the existing research paradigms enables the adoption of a relevant guiding paradigm which assists in clarifying and facilitating the selection of an appropriate research design (Babbie 1998:281; Ahuja 2001:17-19; Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler 2008:19-20;). It also enables the researcher to focus and to structure his or her observations of the study. Otherwise one would end up writing a story without being able to differentiate between the way people approach specific topics of study. Furthermore, it helps to provide the ontological and epistemological perspectives of the study<sup>1</sup> (Grix 2010:27).

Positivism emphasises scientific empiricism of the natural sciences, objectivity of the social world, value-free research and the researcher being an independent analyst. According to the paradigm, the social world exists externally and is observed by collecting objective facts. Positivism assumes that there is no distinction between appearance and reality; and that the world is real and is neither influenced by researchers' 'senses nor is socially constructed. It holds that like in the natural world, there are also patterns and causes and effects in the social world, thus the need to employ natural science research principles to analyse the social world. In contrast to positivism, an interpretivist's basic principles consider the social world as being subjectively constructed and given meaning by people; the researcher being part of what is observed and the research being initiated and driven by interests. Post-positivism also referred to as critical realism shares the principles of positivism and interpretivism. Critical realists have attempted to link the way in which social phenomena occur (the understanding which characterises interpretivism) and why social phenomena occur (the cause factor associated with positivism) by bridging the gap between the two paradigms. For example, critical realists believe that whereas social science can adopt the same methods as natural science, it also needs to apply an interpretive understanding. The paradigm holds that social research should not only seek to understand but also to explain the social world (Kerr 2003:122-123; Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler 2008:20-23; Grix 2010:80-85;).

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<sup>1</sup> Ontology is about claims and assumptions that are made about the nature of social reality, claims about what exists, what it looks like, what units make it up and how these units interact with each other while epistemology is about the possible ways of gaining knowledge of social reality or claims about how what is assumed to exist can be known (Blaikie 2000:8).

Among the paradigms indicated above, this study adopted an interpretivist guiding paradigm. Mason (1996:4) contends that qualitative research is grounded in the philosophical paradigm which is broadly interpretive in the sense that it is concerned with how the social world is interrelated, understood and experienced or produced. Henning (2004:20) observes that the interpretivist paradigm states that phenomena and events are understood through mental processes of interpretation which are influenced by and interacting within a social context. Knowledge according to the paradigm, the author argues, is constructed not only by observable phenomena but also by description of people's intentions, values, beliefs and reasons providing meaning and self-understanding. Interpretive research according to Henning is regarded as a process informed by participants and scrutinised by the participants. Given (2008: 518) contends that, in a research study, interpretivists believe that meaning emerges through interaction among participants and between the researcher and the participants. The author argues that interpretivists assume that social phenomena are constructed or co-constructed by self and can be discovered by collecting and analysing conversations and texts and that verification of research results occurs through interaction with study participants. Given the fact that this study relies heavily on data (mainly collected in form of conversations and texts) based on the researcher's interaction with participants in their natural context to learn from their understanding, experience, perceptions, values and beliefs about the monitoring function, the interpretivist paradigm was/and is the most suitable and justified choice to guide the study.

## **2.4 CONCEPTUAL MODEL**

The main purposes of social research are: to describe, to explain, to predict and to explore. It is from these purposes that descriptive, explanatory, predictive and exploratory conceptual models of research are derived. The descriptive conceptual model concerns univariate questions about the size, the form, distribution, associations among different variables; and characteristics of the study population (Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler 2008:207). The explanatory research model explains the causes of social phenomena. It explains the causal relationships among variables and uses theories or hypotheses to account for the forces that caused a phenomenon to occur (Ahuja 2001:38; Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler 2008:11). If a plausible explanation can be provided for an event after it has occurred, it is then possible to predict when and in what situations such an event might reoccur— thus a predictive research model becomes applicable (Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler 2008:11, 13). The

exploratory conceptual model focuses on gaining better understanding of different dimensions of the study problem (Ahuja 2001:32). Zikmund (1988:43) cites three purposes of exploratory research: first is diagnosing a situation which clarifies the nature of the problem and explores its different dimensions. The second purpose is that it can be used to generate new ideas and the third purpose is the screening of alternatives which involves determining various alternatives pertaining to the issue.

This study adopted the exploratory conceptual model. Qualitative researchers are best advised (Given 2008: 518) to generate an exploratory conceptual model in line with the research purpose or questions which are usually framed as explorations of behaviour patterns, factors accounting for behaviours, the meaning associated with behaviour patterns and contexts in which meanings, behaviours and other factors occur. As the research purpose of this study was exploratory in nature (examining the local governments' monitoring role in view of the institutional factors influencing the execution of the function) and as the exploratory conceptual model is appropriately suited for qualitative research approach adopted by this study, the exploratory conceptual model of research adopted by the study was a justifiable choice.

## **2.5 RESEARCH DESIGN**

In conducting research, there is a plethora of research designs from which a researcher can select one that is most appropriate for generating the kind of data required to answer the purpose or research question of a study. Such research designs include survey research design; experimental research design; action research design; historical research design, ethnographical and case study designs. Some authors such as Nieuwenhuis (2007:71), however, have warned that these research designs should not be seen as watertight compartments as there is a great deal of overlap and borrowing among the research designs.

For a brief discussion of the respective research designs, the survey research design has been described as a design that focuses on gathering information about a large number of people by collecting information from a few of them (Black & Champion 1976:85). In a survey research, the research instrument is the questionnaire — a uniform set of questions or items designed to collect data in a standardised form. The same questionnaire is used for each element of the population (Rubin 1983:259). A survey research is perhaps the best for a



researcher who is interested in collecting original data for describing a population too large to observe directly. The careful probability sampling employed provides a group of respondents whose characteristics may be taken to reflect those of the larger population, and the carefully constructed standardised questionnaires provide data in the same form from all respondents (Babbie 1998: 256). The self-administered questionnaires used, make large samples feasible which is very important for both descriptive and explanatory analysis especially where several variables are to be analysed simultaneously. A survey provides useful vehicles for measuring attitudes and orientations in a large population for public opinion. The standardised questions used are important for measurement purposes (Rubin 1983:260-262).

In the survey design, however, it is not possible to capture the real sentiments of the respondents. In-depth analysis (which this study provides) is not possible as one gets only superficial reflections of the population's sentiments. The researcher has no control over individual responses and the respondent may deliberately choose not to answer some questions or to give ambiguous answers. Because there are predetermined categorised standardised responses, it limits the number of possible responses and does not allow the respondent to explain or to qualify his/her answer. The tendency to place respondents into predetermined categories, when in reality the range of human response to issues varies, means that the approach does not recognise that an individual might not always respond the same way in life to a situation as may have been indicated by that person's responses on a questionnaire. In any case, even if the situation were the same, at every occasion human response may vary depending on subjective factors. The requirement for standardisation seems to result in the 'fitting of round pegs into square holes'. By designing questions that will be appropriate for all respondents, the researcher may miss what is most appropriate to some respondents. The survey researcher rarely develops a feel for the total life situation in which respondents are thinking and acting. Furthermore, surveys are inflexible. While other studies involving direct observation can be modified as demanded by field conditions, surveys typically require that an initial study design remains unaltered throughout. However, as a field researcher, one can discover an important new variable operating in the phenomena under study that needs to be observed (Ahuja 2001:138; Babbie 1998: 273-274; Rubin 1983:262).

From the above discussion, employing a survey research design for this study would imply that, through probability sampling (in order to get a representative sample), the country (Uganda) would be divided into four regions and then, from each region, one would systematically arrive at a representative sample of LGs and a representative sample of participants for administration of the questionnaires. However, such design for this study would have been expensive in terms of time and material resources. Besides, even with a fairly small sampled survey as Majchrzak (1984:63) recommends, the research purpose of the study would not be adequately addressed. This is because the standard questionnaire and the structured interview associated with survey could not provide the study with the intensive, in-depth approach that was employed to explore the monitoring function by learning from those who are directly involved in executing the function in terms of their daily life experiences, feelings, beliefs, thoughts and perceptions about the monitoring process in local governments.

Regarding experimental research design, this is a design in which some of the variables being studied are controlled while others are allowed to vary in the experiment. One set of variables (independent) is manipulated and its effect upon another set of variables (dependent) is measured, while other variables which may influence such relationship are controlled (Zikmund 1988:210). In experimental research design, as Paul and Gross (1981 reflected in Majchrzak 1984:61) observe, some form of intervention is developed to alleviate a social problem. The intervention is then implemented into a target group for a while and data on the resulting effects are collected and analysed. Based on a field experiment on employees of the City of San Diego, Paul and Gross (1981 cited in Majchrzak 1984:61), observe that through interventions such as team building workshops, counselling, process consultations and training in management skills, one can test the impact of these interventions on employee morale and productivity. By comparing the productivity and morale of the employees receiving the interventions with the employees not receiving the interventions, the researcher can confirm the positive effects of the interventions on the employees. In the context of this study, the experimental research design would perhaps be suitable if the focus of this study had been on comparing the effect of particular interventions such as capacity building and welfare programmes on the productivity and morale of local government employees receiving the interventions with those employees not receiving the interventions.

As regards action research design, the task of the researcher is to answer questions about specific problems to enable the decision-makers to make decisions about a particular course of action (Ahuja 2001:145). Burns (1990 cited in Ahuja 2001:145-146) contends that *action* in action research is situational (aiming at solving the problem in a given situation); collaborative (requiring the efforts of researchers and practitioners); participatory (researchers playing an important role in the implementation of the findings); and self-evaluative (involving constant evaluation of the intervention). According to Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler (2008:366), action research addresses real life problems and is bound by the context of the problem's situation; it is a collaborative venture of researchers, participants and practitioners; it is a continuous reflecting process of research and action; and in terms of credibility, its validity is measured on whether the actions solve the problems and realise the desired change.

A substantial weakness of action research design concerns the problem associated with the direct participation of the researcher and attempts to integrate research with organisational goals which neglect the critical distance of a researcher's essential task for conducting good academic research (David 2002:13-15). Although action research is designed to change a given environment, the researchers rarely have full control over the environment (Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler 2008:366). As Avison, Baskerville and Myers (2001:29-33) contend, in action research, an organisation will rarely cede ultimate authority to the external researcher. The researcher's motives according to the authors are divided between research goals and solving the organisation's problem.

Adopting such research design for this study would imply working with the respondents in local governments to identify specific problem(s) in the decentralisation monitoring process that requires action and in a participatory and collaborative manner, make decisions about a particular course of action and together implement and evaluate the course and effect of the action. This would be in line with the task of a researcher in the action research design that involves participation in defining the problem, seeking solutions and evaluating the solutions implemented. However, since such actions do not constitute the task or the purpose of the study (which makes an in-depth examination of the local governments' monitoring role in view of institutional factors), the action research design was not appropriate to the study.

With regard to the historical research design, this involves a systematic process of describing, analysing and interpreting the past based on information from selected sources related to the phenomenon under study. Historical research focuses on the description of what happened with events and their analysis in respect of the reasons for such happenings. The design constructs a map of the past or developmental trajectory of a phenomenon. It locates events in time and place and provides the basis for understanding the past by exploring past trends and applying them to current and future trends. It offers an understanding and perspective for judging current events and trends and thus, aims to impact on decision making and policy formulation (Nieuwenhuis 2007:72).

Sources of data required for a historical research design are classified as either primary or secondary. Primary sources include the oral testimonies of eye witnesses, records, documents and relics. Customarily, the researcher relies on the original texts, also called archival data, which are kept in museums, archives or libraries. Secondary sources include the reports of persons who relate the accounts of the actual eye witnesses as in history books and encyclopedia. The researcher considers various sources of historical data: contemporary records, including instructions, stenographic records and personal notes and memoirs; confidential reports, including journals; public reports, including newspaper reports and memoirs; government documents; opinions including editorials, pamphlets, letters to the editor and public opinion polls; fiction; songs; poetry; and folklore (Marshal & Rossman 1999:123-124; Nieuwenhuis 2007: 73).

Despite its inherent weaknesses (see Marshal & Rossman 1999:125) such as dialectic tension in historical analysis between contemporary thought and that of the past; inability to use direct observation; incorrect interpretation of historical records; and errors in recording, the design is useful in many studies that have a historical base or context. With respect to this study, some brief historical background of the LGs and decentralisation reforms in Uganda from colonial period to post-independence and through the turbulent political governance of the country to the setting in of the current political dispensation under the National Resistance Movement, which has been provided in Chapter Five of this thesis, borrows some aspects of historical research design. However, the design was inadequate for the study as the historical aspects referred to do not constitute the focus of the study.

Ethnographical research design has been traditionally associated with social and cultural anthropology. The design involves the description of a community or group that focuses on social systems and cultural heritage. Normally, the researcher spends a considerable amount of time studying the lives of the targeted groups from within their naturalistic setting. The idea is that if one is to understand a group of people, one must engage in a long period of its observation. This may involve immersion in a culture of a community over a period of time to learn its language and participate in its social events. The aim is to describe the way of life from the perspective of the respondents by making sense of the inherent meaning of social aspects like symbols, gestures, sayings and songs. Ethnography assumes that all human behaviour is intentioned and observable and that research should therefore be oriented towards understanding the reasoning behind people's actions. The researcher spends time living with the target group observing and doing in-depth interviews. Eventually, the researcher compiles all the data and analyses it in such a way that (s) he is able to create a full picture of the group under study (Cassell & Symon 2004: 312; Silverman 2005:49; Nieuwenhuis 2007: 76-78).

While some of the aspects of ethnographical research design, such as observing the group under study in their natural setting, could be linked to the researcher's observation of the study participants where he attended stakeholder review, council and public accountability meetings, the observation was not all that long and the purpose was not to focus on the participants' cultural way of life as proposed by ethnography. Moreover, the design is more suited to anthropological studies than public administration or policy. Thus the design could not be employed for this study.

With respect to the case study research design, the design consists of a detailed empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context (Yin 2003:13). Using mainly qualitative methods of data collection, it presents a holistic account that offers insights into the case(s) under study. It aims at providing an analysis of the context and processes which illuminate the theoretical issue being studied. The phenomenon is isolated with the aim to understand how behaviour traits are influenced by and influence the social context (Ahuja 2001:261; Hartley 2004:323). Case study designs are used primarily when researchers wish to obtain an in-depth understanding of a relatively small number of problems, individuals or situations (Patton1990). The case study approach typically involves "intense analyses of a small number of subjects rather than gathering data from a large

sample or population" (Powell 1997:49). The basic idea in a case study, as Punch (1998 cited in Silverman 2005: 126) puts it, is that one case (or perhaps a small number of cases) will be studied in detail using appropriate methods. While there may be a variety of specific purposes and research questions, Punch argues, the general objective is to develop a full understanding of the selected case(s). Based on a qualitative methodological approach, the focus of this study is to provide an intensive investigation of LGs' monitoring function within its social context. It aims at providing an in-depth and holistic understanding of the monitoring function by obtaining data from a relatively purposively selected small number of respondents involved in the monitoring process. In this respect therefore, the case study design, as described by the respective authors, was the most appropriate for the study.

In a case study, Hartley (2004:326) contends, a key decision to be made is whether the research will be single-case study design or multiple-case study design. Single case studies limit the research to one case while a multiple case study design covers two or more cases. The author argues that while many cases can provide more information, attention should be paid to the quantity of data which must be collected and analysed given resource implications. Given the time and resource constraints, the selection of only two districts in this study was decided upon in consideration of the huge amount of data that would need to be collected (and analysed) if more than two districts were to have been selected.

While the case study design is associated with some criticism, the most frequent being its tendency to depend on a single case with a claim that such a case study research is incapable of providing generalised conclusions, authors such as Nieuwenhuis (2007:76) counteract this criticism by arguing that generalisation, is not the main purpose of case study research. Instead, case study research, the Nieuwenhuis contends, is aimed at gaining greater insight and understanding of the dynamics of a specific situation. Hamel *et al.* (1993 cited in Nieuwenhuis 2007:76) characterise such singularity of a case study as a concentration of the global phenomenon in the local setting. Additionally, Nieuwenhuis (2007:76-77) observes that another metaphor often used in the social sciences is that a well selected case constitutes the dewdrop in which the world is reflected. Other criticism regarding validity, reliability, transferability and confirmability of case study research findings has also been addressed. Guba (1981:81-87) has proposed 'trustworthiness' as a surrogate measure to address such criticisms. A detailed discussion of these measures is provided later under the trustworthiness aspects of this study.

Researchers have used the case study design for many years throughout a variety of disciplines to answer “how and why” questions. This is because a case study offers a multi-perspective analysis in which the researcher considers not just the voice and perspectives of one or two groups of participants in a situation, but also the views of other relevant groups who interact with the participants (Nieuwenhuis 2007:75). Similarly, this study needed to attain a multi-perspective analysis of the monitoring function in LGs by extending beyond collecting data from the participants who directly execute the monitoring function to other actors interacting with the participants in the monitoring process. In this respect, the case study design was an appropriate research design to guide the study.

The study’s adoption of a case study design was also based on other numerous advantages of the design. Unlike statistical studies, case studies allow researchers to see beneath the surface of the situation into personal meaning (Burgess 1928 reflected in Zach 2006:6). Majchrzak (1984:63) argues that case studies tend to be frequently used policy research methods as they are usually quick, cost efficient and allow room for impressionistic analysis of a situation. Furthermore, the author argues that case studies provide for more understanding of a situation’s complexity by examining behaviour in context, and promote examination of process by which an intervention has been implemented.

## **2.6 AREA OF THE STUDY**

The study was carried out in the districts of Wakiso and Ntungamo. Wakiso district is situated in central Uganda. It surrounds Kampala city and borders the districts of Mukono in the east, Mpigi and Mubende in the west, Kalangala in the south and Luwero in the north. Ntungamo district borders the districts of Bushenyi, Mbarara in the east, Rukungiri in the north–east, Kabale in the south-west and the Republic of Rwanda to the south (see Appendix 8 for a map of Uganda showing the location of Wakiso and Ntungamo districts). In terms of government structures, Wakiso comprises 24 LG entities including one district council LG, one municipal council LG, two municipal division LGs, five town council LGs and 15 sub county council LGs. Ntungamo’s government structure comprises twenty two LGs. These include one district council LG, one municipal council LG, two town council LGs, three municipal division council LG and 15 sub county LGs.



The districts constituting the area of study were purposively selected. The basis for purposive selection of the districts was in line with Marshal and Rossman (1999:68). The authors note that in selecting an area of study, a rationale should be provided that outlines why a specific setting is more appropriate than others for the conduct of the study. In this respect, Wakiso is not only the second most populous but also the second most urbanised of Uganda's districts (see Kato 2011:13). In terms of population mix, it provides the best example of urban and local populations. Besides, it is a district where members of the public have openly and violently attacked and injured the local leaders for their purported failure to monitor programmes in the district (*The New Vision*: 5, 6 August 2009; *The Independent*: 23-24, 14-20 August 2009). For Ntungamo district, while capacities, technical competencies and commitment of LGs in executing their monitoring roles have been generally questioned, LG leaders in Ntungamo have recently been found to have performed better than leaders in many other districts comparatively particularly in providing supervision and oversight, involving the people in community development projects and general service delivery (Tumushabe *et al.* 2010; *The Daily Monitor*: 1&5, 15 September 2010).

## **2.7 STUDY POPULATION**

Selection of the study population is an important methodological consideration. Any qualitative study must provide valid reasons for the identification and selection of the study population (Given 2008:518-519). Given contends that a study population is a group or groups of interest to the research in relation to the study question. It constitutes the basis from which to select the study sample. As pointed out earlier (see *supra* para 2.5), one of the reasons why researchers have used the case study design for many years across disciplines is that it provides a multi-perspective analysis in which the researcher considers not only the views of participants involved in a situation but also the views of other relevant groups interacting with the participants. This view guided the selection of the study population. The participants were located from local governments' political and civil service organs. These included LG civil servants and political office bearers who are directly involved in the monitoring function at various levels in the local governments where the study population was drawn. The views of other relevant actors who interact with the participants directly involved in executing the monitoring function were obtained to provide a multi-perspective analysis. Thus the study population also included actors from the Ministry of Local Government which is the overseer of local governments, actors from line ministries the



programmes of which are implemented in local governments, the Office of the Prime Minister and civil society organisations.

## 2.8 SAMPLE SELECTION

In drawing the sample of local government entities within the selected districts, both purposive and random sampling methods were applied. Regarding Wakiso district, the district council LG and the municipal council LG were purposively selected as the only two LGs at a higher level. Based on their respective categories, the lower LGs were randomly selected. From the two municipal division council LGs under the municipal council LG, one municipal division LG was selected. From the 15 sub county council LGs, three were selected and two town council LGs were selected from the five town councils. For the Ntungamo district, the district and municipal council LGs like in the case of Wakiso district were purposively selected. For lower LGs, three sub county council LGs were selected from the 15 sub county councils, one town council LG was selected from the two town councils and one municipal division council LG was selected from the existing three division councils — together making a total of 15 local government entities.

With regard to the sample size, while samples for qualitative studies are generally much smaller than those used in quantitative studies, the size needs to be large enough so that most or all of the perceptions that might be important are uncovered. At the same time, however, if the sample is too large, data becomes repetitive and eventually superfluous. In order for the researcher to remain faithful to the principles of qualitative research, sample size in qualitative studies should generally follow the concept of saturation (a point where the collection of new data does not shed any further light on the issue under investigation) as the guiding principle during their data collection (Mason 2010:2). The study targeting specific sections of the study population that had potential in-depth information employed purposive sampling in determining the sample size. Purposive sampling according to Rubin (1983:140) focuses on a limited number of the stratum of the population that can provide valuable in-depth information. The views of the respective authors on the sample size guided the study in targeting specific sections of the population and in determining the sample size as illustrated in the table below:

**Table 2.1: Type and number of respondents for in-depth Interviews**

<b>Interviewee by designation</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>No. of respondents</b>
Commissioner for Urban Inspection	Ministry of Local Government	1
Commissioner Quality Assurance	Ministry of Health	1
Asst. Comm. Urban Administration	Ministry of Local Government	1
Asst. Commission M&E	Min. of Works and Transport	1
District vice Chairpersons	District Local Government.	1
District Executive Committee Councillors	District Local Government	6
Municipal Mayor	Municipal Local Government	1
Chief Administrative Officers	District Local Government.	1
Deputy Chief Administrative Officers	District Local Government	2
Deputy Resident Commissioners	President's Office	1
District Planners	District Local Government	2
Chief Finance Officers	District Local Government.	2
Ag. District Engineer	District Local Government	1
District Agriculture Officers	District Local Government.	1
District Production Officers	District Local Government.	1
District NAADS Coordinators	District Local Government	1
District fisheries Officers	District Local Government	1
Deputy District Health Officers	District Local Government	1
Principal Procurement Officers	District Local Government	1
Principal Personnel Officers	District Local Government.	1
Municipal Ag.Town Clerk	Municipal Local Government.	1
Municipal Planners	Municipal Local Government.	1
Municipal Agriculture Officers	Municipal Local Government	1
Senior Economist M&E	Office of the Prime Minister	1
District Senior Personnel Officers	District Local Government.	1
District senior internal auditor	District Local Government	1
District Senior Asst. Engineering Officer	District Local Government	1
Statistician	District Local Government.	1
Municipal Senior Personnel Officer	Municipal Local Government.	1
Municipal Senior Internal Auditor	Municipal Local Government.	1

**Table 2.1: cont.**

Sub county Chair Persons	Sub county Local Government.	5
Ag. Sub county Chair Persons	Sub county Local Government.	1
Sub County Chiefs	Sub county Local Government	4
Ag. Sub County Chiefs	Sub county Local Government.	2
Town Council Chair Persons	Town council Local Government	2
Deputy Town Council Chair persons	Town council Local Government	1
Project Director	Compassion International	1
Senior Branch Manager	Red Cross	1
District Supervisor	REACH-U	1
Town Clerk	Town council Local Government.	1
Ag. Town Clerk	Town council Local Government.	1
Brach Manager	SUNRISE-ACORD	1
Project Manager	Star South West NGO	1
Asst. Town Clerk	Municipal Division Local Government.	1
Municipal Division Chair Person	Municipal Division Local Government.	1
Community Development Officers	Sub county Local Government.	2
Urban Comm. Development Officers	Town Council Local Government	1
Monitoring and Evaluation Officers	Ministry of Education & Sports	1
Economist Monitoring &Evaluation	Office of the Prime Minister	1
IFMS Technical Support Officer	Ministry of Finance & Econ. Planning	1
Senior Town Agent	Municipal Division Local Government	1
<b>Total respondents</b>		<b>69</b>

## 2.9 UNIT OF ANALYSIS

An important step in designing research is the decision on the unit of analysis. The unit of analysis describes the level at which the research is conducted and which objects are researched. What is important to note, is that the unit of analysis and the kind of respondent the researcher interviews to obtain information are not the same. For example, in a study of a company's expansion strategies, one might interview the general manager of the company but the unit of analysis is the company, not the general manager (Blumberg, Cooper &

Schindler 2008:224). Similarly, while in the study of local governments' monitoring role in implementing decentralisation programmes, the researcher interviewed political office bearers and technical staff and other officials involved in the monitoring process, the unit of analysis was local government entities not the respective personnel.

## **2.10 DATA COLLECTION METHODS**

In qualitative research, methods of data collection almost always involve face-to-face interaction with the study community and the study participants. The researcher is the most important instrument of data collection. Face-to-face data collection occurs in two ways: through observation and interviewing (Given 2008:520). Researchers supplement interviewing and observation with gathering and analysing documents produced in the course of every day events, or constructed specifically for the research on hand (Marshall & Rossman 1999:116-117).

### **2.10.1 Qualitative interviews**

A qualitative interview is an interaction between an interviewer and a respondent in which the interviewer has a general plan of inquiry but not a specific set of questions that must be asked in particular words and in a particular order. It is essentially a conversation in which the interviewer establishes a general direction for the conversation and pursues specific topics with the respondent doing most of the talking (Babbie 1998:290). Emphasising the importance of a positive and effective relationship between the interviewer and the respondent for promoting trust, understanding and cooperation, Ahuja (2001:233) provides some guidelines for achieving such a relationship: In asking questions, the interviewer should avoid being arrogant; the interviewer should not patronise the respondent; (s) he should not show disbelief in the answers given by the respondent and the interviewer should effectively probe answers in order to gain more information. These guidelines informed the study in conducting interviews. The study employed qualitative interviews at an individual level (in-depth individual interviews) and at a collective level (focus group interviews/discussion). The two techniques used are explained below:

#### **2.10.1.1 *In-depth individual interviews***

Typically, qualitative in-depth individual interviews are much more like conversations than formal events with predetermined response categories. In conducting the interviews, the

researcher explores a few general topics to uncover participants' views, but otherwise respects how the participant structures the responses (Cassell & Symon 2004:108). The views of the authors informed the interview strategy of the study. In interviewing the selected individuals, topics regarding the existing monitoring system and processes in LGs, monitoring activities executed by different LG organs and the influence of institutional factors on LGs' execution of the monitoring function were brought in the conversations to uncover a participant's views. The institutional factors for discussion included: the capacity building programmes extended to LGs to enhance performance; LGs' autonomy in exercising of the powers and responsibilities stipulated under the Constitution (1995) and the Local Government Act (1997); working relationships among intergovernmental organs involved in executing the monitoring function; and collaborative relationships between LGs and CSOs. An important consideration in conducting an in-depth interview is that respondents must be allowed to answer in their own words and at length in order for the researcher to understand the interviewee's meanings, perceptions, beliefs, attitudes and descriptions (Given 2008:524). At the same time, Given (2008:524-525) advises that the researcher must have some questions ready to ask if there is a lull in the conversation requiring the researcher to attempt to structure a direction in the interview. Given's views on the subject matter informed this study in conducting the in-depth interviews.

#### **2.10.1.2      *Focus group interviews***

A focus group interview or discussion is based on the assumption that group interaction will be productive in widening the range of responses, activating details of experience and releasing inhibitions that may otherwise discourage participants from disclosing information individually (Nieuwenhuis 2007:90). As Nieuwenhuis recommends, in conducting focused group interviews, the discussions were focused on particular topics and debate was encouraged which stimulated group members to express their views from various perspectives of the issues under discussion.

Krueger (2002:3-4) advises that the first few moments in focus group discussions are critical. In a brief time the researcher must create a thoughtful, permissive atmosphere, provide ground rules and set the tone of the discussion. According to the author, much of the success of focus group interviewing can be attributed to the development of this open environment. The pattern for introducing the group discussion, Krueger recommends, should include a

welcome remark, an overview of the topic, ground rules and first question. Elaborating on setting of ground rules, the author argues that it is advisable for the researcher as a moderator of the discussion to assure the respondents that there are no wrong answers but rather differing points of view, that they are free to share their points of view even when they differ from what others have said and that negative comments are as welcome as positive comments. These views were the guiding principles for the researcher in creating a free, supportive and open environment for the focus group discussions that were conducted.

Groups for focused interview are generally composed of seven to 10 people (although they range from as small as four and as large as 12) who have been selected because they share particular characteristics relevant to the study (Krueger 1988 cited in Marshal & Rossman 1999:114). The focus group interview method, according to Marshal and Rossman (1999:115), assumes that an individual's attitude and beliefs do not form in vacuum: people often need to listen to others' opinions in order to form their own opinions. The authors argue that one-to-one interview may be impoverished because, the participant had not reflected on the topic and may be unprepared to respond. Often the questions in a focus group according to the authors are deceptively simple, the aim being to promote the participants' expression of their views through the creation of a supportive environment. These views informed and guided this study in constituting the number of focus group members and in conducting the focus group interviews.

Although there are particular weaknesses associated with the focus group interview method such as the interviewer having less control over a group than an individual and logistical problems (see Marshal & Rossman 1999:116), the study having taken into account such weaknesses, relied on the advantages of the method. The advantages of focus group interviews as Marshal and Rossman (1999:115) note are that the method is socially oriented, studying participants in an environment more natural and more relaxed than the exposure of one-to-one interview. When combined with participant observation, focus groups are especially useful for checking tentative conclusions. As Marshal and Rossman state, the method allows the facilitator the flexibility to explore unanticipated issues as they arise in the discussion.

### 2.10.2 Direct observation

Direct observation entails the systematic noting and recording of events, behaviours and artifacts (objects) in the social setting selected for study. The observer does not attempt to manipulate or control the situation as s/he only records what occurs. The observational record is often referred to as field notes; a detailed non-judgmental description of what has been observed. Observation is a significant method in all qualitative inquiries. It is used to discover complex interactions in natural social settings. Even in in-depth interviews; observation is useful as the researcher notes the interviewee's body language in addition to the words (Marshal & Rossman 1999:107; Ahuja 2001:247). As Ahuja (2001:256) advises, when the researcher attended some meetings in LGs as a non participant observer, the focus was on a number of key areas such as discussions, facial expressions, language used, patterns of communication and the behaviour of the participants.

Despite some limitations and weaknesses of observations (which the study took into account) such as lack of control, not being able to provide data about the past or future events and memory loss when field notes are made after observation (Festinger & Katz 1976:245; Ahuja 2001:260), there are a number of strengths associated with using observation as a method of data collection which have benefited this study. One such strength is that observation, being flexible, allows the observer to concentrate on any aspects that prove to be important. The second strength is that the behaviour being observed in natural environment will not carry bias. The third strength is the method's ability to offer data on certain aspects where respondents are unable or unwilling to cooperate for giving information (Bailey 1982:249-50; Sarantakos 1998:219; Babbie 1998:303; Zach 2006:6). The most vivid benefit of adopting the method in this study has been the detailed discussion of a number of issues/areas by councillors and technical officials in the meetings attended by the researcher as a non participant observer. The researcher had not obtained such information from interviews especially regarding the working relationship among the key actors in the monitoring process and project fund accountability issues.

Mason (1996:68-70) contends that in conducting observation, the researcher needs to make decisions about whether to make notes while observing or to write up 'field notes' at some point following the observations or whether to use other aids—video or audio tapes, photography, or diagrams. But Lofland (1971:102-104) recommends as general rule that one

should avoid taking notes during observation as it makes the subjects self-conscious and causes them to act unnaturally. Lofland maintains that it is advisable for the researcher to depend on memory and record notes as soon as possible after observation. In line with the authors' views, in conducting observation in this study, the researcher wrote up of the 'field notes' at the end of the meetings.

### **2.10.3 Documentary analysis**

As pointed out earlier (see *supra* para 2.10), researchers supplement interviewing and observation with gathering and analysing documents produced in the course of every day events, or constructed for the research on hand. Minutes of meetings, logs, announcements, formal policy statements and project reports are all useful documents in developing an understanding of the setting. In document analysis, Mason (1996:75) observes, one should consider a numbers of issues, that is, what level of detail is provided by the documents? How complete an account or perspective will they provide? Why such documents were prepared or displayed and by whom for whom? Whether they are authentic, accurate and reliable. For this study, a number of relevant documents were analysed including copies of monitoring plans; work plans; development plans; project monitoring reports; monthly and annual performance reports; budget documents; statements for funds released from central government to LGs; field monitoring forms/tools; capacity building plans; project log frames; minutes for stakeholder review, minutes of departmental and council meetings; reports on the performance of LGs by the Office of the Auditor General; Joint Annual Review of Decentralisation(JARD) reports; and decentralisation implementation manuals.

## **2.11 DATA COLLECTION PLAN**

Given the variety of sources of data potentially available to the researcher and the variety of individuals who might be suitable informants for the research, it is important for the researcher to define where to start from and the manner in which the researcher will approach the process of collecting the data (Hartley 2004:328-329). Hartley recommends that the first strategy is to get a general overview of the structure and functioning of the organisation in which the study will be conducted, define the individuals and the groups one wants to interview, plan for the data which needs to be collected based on key themes and plan for collecting manageable data. Based on Hartley's views, the researcher first obtained information on the structure and functioning of the selected local government entities and



categorised the population elements within the LG entities. The categories of the population elements from local governments that are involved in monitoring decentralisation programmes included technical officials and political office bearers.

## **2.12 DATA COLLECTION THEMES**

For the data collection, the approach, as Hartley (2004:329) emphasises, involved systematic arrangement of the key themes under each objective thus the themes under the five objectives of the study include local governments' performance in their monitoring role; the local governments' autonomy in exercising decentralised powers; the nature of capacity building extended to local governments; the working relationships among intergovernmental organs involved in the monitoring process; and the collaboration between local governments and civil society organisations in the monitoring process. These themes were used to define data collection areas and were later used as analytical constructs. The kind of data that were collected under of each theme for analysis are given below:

### ***2.12.1 Local governments' performance in their monitoring role***

In collecting data on the local governments' performance in execution of their monitoring role, the focus was on the design of a sound monitoring system and preparation and execution of monitoring plans which are required major tasks of local governments if they are to effectively and efficiently monitor the implementation of decentralised programmes ( MoLG 2003:67).

Under the design of a monitoring system, the areas of data collection which have significant indications for an effective monitoring system include:

- organs for data collection;
- structures or organs for data analysis;
- structures for dissemination of monitoring findings;
- data storage mechanisms; and
- linkage of the monitoring system to the national monitoring systems.

For the monitoring plans, specific areas of data collection which have implications for effective preparation and execution of monitoring plans included:

- identification of project components /areas to be monitored;
- definition of performance indicators;

- data collection methods used in the monitoring process;
- establishment of reporting and feedback mechanisms; and
- allocation of monitoring resources

### ***2.12.2 Local governments' autonomy in exercising decentralised powers***

The emphasis was on collecting data relating to the degree of autonomy the local governments have in exercising decentralised roles and responsibilities. It has been indicated (Nsibambi 1998:6-7) that the degree of local governments' autonomy in exercising decentralised roles is established by measuring the local governments' degree of autonomy in making political, administrative and financial or fiscal decisions. Under the local governments' autonomy on political decision-making, the sub themes or specific aspects for consideration included:

- the degree of LGs autonomy in matters of local governance; and
- the degree of LGs autonomy in determining their own development priorities.

Under administrative autonomy, the sub themes were:

- the degree of LGs autonomy to manage human resource including recruitment and management of staff remuneration matters; and
- the degree of LGs' autonomy in setting up statutory organs.

Under financial or fiscal autonomy, the sub themes included

- LGs' autonomy in determining their areas of expenditure;
- LGs' autonomy in mobilisation of their own revenue;
- the degree of fairness in revenue sharing between central and LGs; and
- existing revenue equity mechanisms.

### ***2.12.3 Capacity building in local governments under decentralisation***

In any capacity building approach, there are a number of issues to address which include: comprehensiveness; the competence of the capacity building providers; the capacity needs assessment procedures; the capacity building timing; and the readiness of the clients to receive the capacity building (UM-SSW.2007:4-6). These issues formed the basis for identifying the data collection areas under the capacity building theme. The areas included:

- the existing capacity building needs assessment procedures in LGs;
- the comprehensiveness of capacity building extended to LGs;
- the frequency, duration and attendance of the capacity building programmes;
- the capabilities of providers to deliver the capacity building programmes in LGs;
- the availability and utilisation of capacity building guides and tool kits; and
- the existing mechanisms for evaluating the impact of the capacity building.

#### ***2.12.4 Working relationships among intergovernmental organs***

The focus under this theme was on gathering data relating to the nature of the existing working relationships among the intergovernmental organs involved in monitoring the implementation of decentralisation policy reforms. Such issues included:

- the definition and clarification of monitoring roles and responsibilities;
- harmonisation of goals and objectives;
- existing co-ordination mechanisms;
- power relations among the organs;
- the ingredients necessary for a successful working relationship; and
- the existing conflict resolution mechanisms.

#### ***2.12.5 Collaboration between local governments and civil society organisations***

Building and managing effective collaborative relationships require collaborating partners to have a clear understanding of the purpose of collaboration. This should be followed by clearly defined roles and responsibilities to ensure clarity and prevent duplication. The partners should also establish mechanisms to resolve conflict and to closely monitor the performance of each partner (Bryson, Crosby & Stone 2006:46; Künzel & Welscher 2011:28). The views of the authors on building effective collaborative relationships provided the theoretical basis for identifying data collection areas under the theme. The specific areas included:

- roles and responsibilities of the collaborating parties in the monitoring process;
- the existing managerial and technical capacities among the collaborating parties;
- the existing co-ordination mechanisms;
- the existing level of openness and mutual trust between the collaborating partners; and
- the existing conflict resolution mechanism.

## **2.13 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA AND FINDINGS**

### **2.13.1 Data analysis**

Once the researcher has collected data by way of the various data collection methods, the next step is to manage, organise and make sense of the separate pieces of accumulated data. Qualitative data mainly include excerpts from documentation, interview transcripts, focus group transcripts, field notes from observations and critical incident forms (Bloomberg & Volpe 2012:134). Data are viewed as the empirical material on which scientific findings are based. This empirical material needs analysis to provide findings. The analysis, which in qualitative research involves the use of code trees, matrices, summary tables, memos and diagrams, is a means of transforming the data, discovering and generating findings (Boeije 2010:150).

Bogdan and Biklen (1992:153) define qualitative data analysis as "working with data, organising them, breaking them into manageable units, synthesizing them, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned and deciding what you will tell others". Boeije (2010:76) argues that qualitative analysis involves the segmentation of data into relevant categories and naming of these categories with codes while simultaneously generating the categories from the data. Boeije recommends that the categories are then compared to one another to generate theoretical understanding of the phenomenon under study in terms of research questions. For Bloomberg and Volpe (2012:135) qualitative analysis involves organising the data, generating categories, identifying patterns and themes and coding the data.

One of the most common problems in presenting qualitative research is what Guest, MacQueen and Namey (2012:253) refer to as the "black box approach to data analysis", that is, inadequate description of analytical procedures employed in qualitative research. The authors contend that researchers frequently simply state that they have conducted thematic analysis without sufficient information on the methods of data analysis and the analytical process. Boeije (2010:194) argues that the need for carefully documenting the analysis process is a researcher's scientific responsibility to show how s/he transformed the data and thus how the findings came into being. This study departs from the "black box approach" by describing the data analysis approaches; the process of data analysis; and procedures for reporting, analysing and interpreting findings.

### **2.13.1.1      *Data analysis approaches***

It is imperative to point out that different qualitative research traditions promote specific approaches for data analysis. For instance, grounded theory recommends a systematic strategic approach in which categories of information are generated (open coding) and constantly compared throughout the study (Bloomberg & Volpe 2012:137). In case study research, the approach involves a detailed description of the setting or individuals, followed by an analysis of the text material (data) to understand behaviour patterns or issues and context of the phenomenon under study (Stake 1995:78). Phenomenological research makes use of significant statements, the generation of meaningful units and the construction of essence description. It focuses on attitude and the responses of the participants to the phenomenon under study (Moustakas 1994:118-119; Boeije 2010:190; Bloomberg & Volpe 2012:137).

Guest, MacQueen and Namey (2012:7-8) provide two broad approaches to data analysis: inductive approaches which primarily have descriptive and exploratory orientation; and confirmatory approaches which according to the authors are employed less often in social research. The main difference between the two approaches according to the authors is that for inductive, exploratory approaches, the researcher carefully reads and rereads the data looking for key words, trends, themes, or ideas in the data that will help outline the analysis before analysis takes place. By contrast, the authors maintain, confirmatory approaches are hypothesis driven and in the analysis, data categories are predetermined without consideration of the data. The authors argue that whereas the inductive approaches use non probability samples to generate primary data from participants [from their views, perceptions, and experiences], the confirmatory approaches typically employ probability sampling strategies.

While this study broadly adopted the inductive approaches where basically the case study research based data analysis approaches fall, it recognised the fact that whatever approach one adopts, the most fundamental operation in qualitative data analysis, as Bloomberg and Volpe (2012:138) note, is that of discovering significant classes; participants and events; and the properties that characterise them. The researcher, as the authors recommend, was interested in the language of the participants. He worked with the participants' responses (words) to identify units of information that contribute to the themes and patterns of the study

findings. To make the voluminous data understandable, the vast array of words, sentences and paragraphs were reduced to what was of most importance in answering the study objectives.

### **2.13.1.2      *Data analysis process***

Qualitative data analysis, as Brynard and Hanekom (2006:60) argue, begins during the data collection process when the researcher discards the data which is not relevant to the purpose of the study and retains only the relevant data. After data collection, the data analytical process involves a series of steps. Whereas the steps are described as if they are a series of separate sequential steps, it is imperative to note as Hoepfl (1997:55-56) and Bloomberg and Volpe (2012:153) argue, that qualitative data analysis is an interactive and recursive process rather than a linear one. The steps in practice may occur simultaneously and repeatedly. They are usually repeated several times until sufficient information has been generated from the data and research objectives or questions have been adequately addressed. The analytical process includes: transcription of interviews; review and exploration of data; developing data categories; establishing descriptors for each data category; preparing of data summary matrices/tables; writing of memos/journaling; and sorting and categorising of quotations.

#### *(a)      Transcription of interviews and assembling data*

The researcher began by transcribing the audio tape interviews and assigning identification codes to each transcript. The transcribed interviews were individual and focus group interviews. In transcribing the interviews, the exact words of the participants were recorded verbatim. Field notes including observation notes particularly notes obtained from meetings attended by the researcher; and excerpts from documentary analysis were assembled with the interview transcriptions. Dates on which each of the data was collected were then written on the notes.

#### *(b)      Review and exploration of data*

Building on insights gained during data collection, as Bloomberg and Volpe (2012:139) recommend, sense of the data was made as a whole by fully reading all the data provided by the various data collection sources. This initial reading of data was done to gain an overall sense of the whole data before disassembling them into constituent parts. In this first go -

around, read through, as the authors recommend, emerging major ideas were sought that would provide an initial framework for the development of the study findings. The reading was also intended to edit the data for correction of errors. Editing, as Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler (2008:690) observe, was meant to guarantee that the data are accurate; consistent with intent of the research purpose; complete; and arranged to simplify coding and tabulation of data.

*(c) Developing data categories*

In analysing data, Hartley (2004:329-330) recommends careful development of data categories in which to place responses. Hartley suggests that the data need to be organised according to the key themes with groupings of similar topics being identified. Ahuja (2001: 315) advises that categories should be set up according to the research problem and purpose of the study. In line with these authors' views, the study developed data categories that were based on and directly tied to study research objectives.

*(d) Developing descriptors for each data category*

Under each category, the category's descriptors were laid out. Each category and descriptor was assigned a code that maps participants' responses to the research questions, forming categories and sub categories. In the findings chapter of the thesis, the categories and descriptors became headings and subheadings for the presentation of the findings. For the data obtained from documentary analysis, a documentary summary form was developed under which excerpts from documentary review were summarised (Bloomberg & Volpe 2012:141). Coding, which essentially involves assigning numbers or symbols to group responses into a limited number of categories (Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler 2008:690), was employed in identifying the different segments of the data and their descriptors. The segments were phrases, words, sentences and whole paragraphs. Precision was exercised to know which participant said what by including coded participant identification with each unit of information.

*(e) Preparation of data summary matrices/tables*

In the process of qualitative data analysis, Boeije (2010:128) and Bloomberg and Volpe (2012:144) recommend the use of data summary tables or matrices. Preparation of data summary tables according to the authors involves filling in data tables for each research

question or objective. The tables are used to compile what participants have said about the categories under each of the objectives of the study. The tables enable consistent recording of findings regarding participants' responses across the categories. In line with the authors' views, a number of tables were developed. The participants were listed down the vertical axis with the descriptors being listed along the horizontal axis. Each participant's response to each of the descriptors on the horizontal axis was then checked off and tallies in form of numbers and percentages were placed at the bottom of each column. Whereas qualitative research, as Bloomberg and Volpe 2012:144) state, is not essentially about quantifying data and whereas the intention is not to reduce qualitative data to numeric representation, the numbers and percentages used, were meant to essentially supplement the qualitative narratives.

(f) *Writing of memos/journaling*

As the researcher reads through the data, during and after the data collection, s/he develops different ideas. It is these ideas that form the basis for interpretation of findings and conclusions later on. Therefore, it is necessary to record all these ideas that are related to the interpretation of data to serve as a reminder of the development history of the interpretation of various data categories. This should be done by keeping a memo that contains a track of the conceptual progression of findings about specific occurrences that appear to be significant (Boeije 2010:128-129). In line with Boeije's advice, a memo was developed to record notes about certain sentences, words and phrases that were of vital interest to the purpose of the study.

(g) *Sorting and categorising quotations*

As Boeije (2010:200) claims, qualitative research reports feature literal quotations or verbatim field observations in the text. After coding the data, Bloomberg and Volpe (2012:146) advise that the researcher should place the quotations in analytical categories. In line with the authors' advice, after coding the material, participants' quotations were placed in their appropriate analytic categories.



### **2.13.3 Reporting, analysis and interpretation of findings**

#### ***2.13.3. 1 Reporting/presentation of findings***

What is done up to the reporting stage is transforming the data into findings. Findings are the outcome of the researcher's analytical activities and consist of analysed data with what the researcher deduces, including descriptions and explanations (Boeije 2010:196). In presenting the findings, comprehensive finding statements were formulated after studying the data summary tables to establish what each of the participant said in terms of each of the aspect of each finding. The use of a "findings road map" as Bloomberg and Volpe (2012:150) recommend provided guidance on how to conduct the discussion that followed each of the findings statement.

In terms of formatting, qualitative research findings can be presented by way of different formats. One way to present the findings is to develop and craft participant profiles and to group them into categories (Miles & Huberman 1994:82-84). Yet another approach that is often used in case study research is to mark individual excerpts from the transcripts and group these in thematically connected categories. This should be followed by an introductory statement that restates the purpose of the study (Bloomberg & Volpe 2012:149). This research which adopted the case study approach begins the presentation of findings with an introductory paragraph which restates the purpose of the study and informs the reader about how the presentation of the findings is organised. The introductory paragraph is followed by the discussion of research objectives one by one and the evidence from the data about how each of the research objectives was addressed.

As Sandelowski (1994:48-482) contends, in presenting the findings, the researcher is telling the story of what was learnt from the participants and therefore should use participants' direct quotes. In line with Sandelowski's recommendation, the participants' quotations were used to illustrate the points being made. The quotations, as the author argues, provide the detail and substantiate the story that is being told. By using the participants' own words, the aim was to build the readers' confidence that the reality of the participants and the situation studied have been accurately represented.

The quantitative data used in the discussion to supplement the narratives particularly numbers and percentages, as Boeije (2010:203) and Bloomberg and Volpe (2012:15)

recommend, match the words thus 100 percent translates into “all”; percentages falling in the 80s to 99 translate to “overwhelming majority”; those falling in 60s and 70s translate into “majority”; those falling in 20s to 50s translate into “some”, while those falling below 20s translate into “a few” in the discussion of the study findings.

### **2.13.3. 2      *Analysing and interpreting findings***

The task of the researcher at the level of analysing data and reporting findings lies in making sense of the large volume of data that calls for reducing the data; identifying patterns and relationships to establish what is significant; and communicating the facts the data reveal. At the level of analysis and interpretation of findings, the task turned into one of delving beneath the findings to establish the deeper meaning of the findings. At this level, as Bloomberg and Volpe (2012: 173) recommend, the researcher shifted from being an objective reporter and became an insightful and informed communicator. Boeije (2010:196) observes that researchers cannot and should not limit themselves to the presentation of findings and withhold their analysis and interpretation of the findings. With a laid out set of findings, patterns and themes were identified among the findings in order to construct a framework for description and interpretation of the findings. In order to establish what the findings mean, a comparison of the findings both within and across groups, as well as with other research results and the existing theory and practice was undertaken (Ahuja 2001:315). Thus, this level provided an opportunity to communicate what the researcher thinks the findings mean and to integrate the research findings with the conclusions of other researches and the expectations of theory and practice.

To facilitate the interpretation process, an interpretation outline tool was developed. This mechanism which Bloomberg and Volpe (2012:173) propose was meant to assist in considering the findings in a deeper way to establish their meaning and ensure that they are not taken at their face value. The tool that propelled the questioning of the various aspects of every finding with questions of “why” and “why not” assisted in exhausting the possibilities that could explain the findings. An effort was made to ensure that the interpretations— the judgments or pronouncements a researcher offers about the experiences under investigation (Sandelowski & Barraso 2002:214) are clear, logical, relevant and credible. The effort included presenting information in sufficient details to enable the readers to understand the issues; presenting the discussion in a systematic way beginning with issues that needed to

be addressed first; ensuring that the interpretations are directly related to the research problem, purpose and research questions; and by systematically searching for rival explanations and interpretations.

In discussing the findings, words were carefully chosen. As the researcher was offering ideas, suggesting explanations, speculating and identifying reasons but not stating facts, qualifiers such as *seems*, *implies*, *suggests*, *possible*, *probable*, *likely* and *unlikely* were used. The use of such qualifiers was meant to leave open the possibility that other researchers could have told a different story given the same set of data (Bloomberg & Volpe (2012:182-184). This is because, given the subjective nature of qualitative research, there are multiple ways of interpreting qualitative data.

## **2.14 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

There are growing concerns for ethical issues in social research. Issues of ethics mainly concern the ethical treatment of participants, the research sponsor, the research team and obligation to the research community. With regard to participants, ensuring their confidentiality, their right to privacy and safety, explaining the benefits of the study and obtaining their consent are the main ethical issues. For the research team, the main issues are the researchers' rights to safety and ethical behaviour of research assistants, while for issues regarding ethical obligations to the research community, guarding against falsification and plagiarism have to be upheld (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell 2005:201; Punch 2006:55; Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler 2008:156-170; Schurink 2010: 432 ).

Throughout the study, the ethical issues discussed above were taken into consideration. To adhere to the concept of participant consent, a consent form was used. For confidentiality, participants were informed of their freedom to allow or disallow the researcher to quote their names. Because of this freedom, there were a number of participants who preferred anonymity. Others preferred the use of their titles. Furthermore, the researcher explained to the participants the purpose of the study as being purely academic and the likely benefits of the study.

## 2.15 TRUSTWORTHINESS ISSUES

While, in quantitative research, the most frequently used criteria for judging the trustworthiness of research are validity and reliability, the criteria for judging qualitative research focus on how well the researcher has provided evidence that her or his findings represent the reality of the phenomenon studied. The basic question addressed by the notion of trustworthiness in qualitative research is: “How can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences that the research findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to?” (Lincoln & Guba 1985:290). Lincoln and Guba (1985:300) identify one alternative set of criteria that corresponds to those typically employed to judge quantitative work: Credibility; transferability; dependability; and confirmability as opposed to internal validity; external validity; reliability; and objectivity emphasised by quantitative research.

Credibility is about whether the researcher’s findings accurately represent the participants’ responses, perceptions and feelings. In order to attain credibility, the researcher engaged in repeated involvement with participants for clarifications and details on issues, triangulated data collection methods to corroborate evidence obtained from different data sources and in some cases the researcher used “member checks”(cf. Lincoln & Guba 1985:313-316). The member checks, as Stake (1995:115) and Guest, MacQueen and Namey (2012:93) propose, entailed sending the transcribed interviews to participants to corroborate the transcriptions.

Regarding transferability, even though it may not be possible to specify the transferability of qualitative findings to all other settings, the lessons learnt could be useful to others. Transferability is about how well the study findings make it possible for readers to decide whether similar research processes and findings can apply in other settings (Patton 1990: 487-491; Eisner 1991:204-206). To attain transferability, in discussing findings, rich descriptions which have been referred to as “thick description” (Denzin 1989:83) were used to present holistic situation that provides the reader sufficient information that can then be used to determine whether the findings are applicable to other settings.

With respect to dependability, the criterion is about whether one can track the processes and procedures which had been used to collect and interpret the data (Lincoln & Guba 1985:317). To enhance dependability, a detailed explanation of the strategies, approaches, methods and procedures that were used to collect data, analyse and interpret the data and findings

was provided. This was done to provide what Lincoln and Guba (1985:317) refer to as an “inquiry audit”, a process in which reviewers examine the process and the product of the research for consistency.

Research that relies on quantitative measures to define a situation is relatively value-free and therefore objective. Qualitative research, which relies on interpretations and is admittedly value bound, is considered to be subjective. The investigator in qualitative research is considered not to be neutral and this leads to results that are not reliable (Hoepfl 1997:60). Lincoln and Guba (1985:320-321) propose “conformability” for qualitative research in the place of objectivity. Conformability is considered as the degree to which the researcher can demonstrate the neutrality of qualitative research interpretations. To enhance the research conformability, as the authors recommend, a record of the research material consisting of raw data, analytical notes, process notes and personal notes was kept.

## **2.16 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Limitations of a study are the problems inherent in research. They arise *inter alia*, from restricted sample size, sample selection, reliance on particular techniques for collecting data and issues of researcher bias and participants reactivity (Bloomberg & Volpe 2012:144). In this study, the following were the limitations:

Some participants were not comfortable with audio tapes. In such cases, the researcher explained the advantages of using the audio tapes. For those who did not accept the explanation, the researcher opted to take notes during the interview.

There were respondents particularly in LGs who viewed the study as an assessment exercise that would help the LG to access more financial assistance from the central government. This would potentially lead to biased responses. To deal with this, it was explained that while the results of the study could have implications on the relationship between central government and LG if the government were to become interested in the recommendations of the study, the purpose of the study was purely academic.

There was reluctance on the part of some respondents to freely discuss issues they considered sensitive to their job security. In such cases, the participants were assured of their confidentiality.

Some respondents could not easily grasp the English language used for interview purposes owing to limited levels of education. In such cases, some translations into the local languages were done.

## **2.17 CONCLUSION**

The chapter has discussed the existing methodological approaches, research paradigms, and conceptual models in social and policy research before justifying the selection of the most appropriate methodological approach, research paradigm and conceptual model for the study. The chapter then articulated a number of available research designs in social and policy research before justifying the selection of the most applicable to the study. The chapter presented and justified the selection of the area of study, the study population, the sample of the study and the unit of analysis. It discussed the appropriate methods of data collection in line with the selected research design, methodological approach, research paradigm and the conceptual model adopted for the study. The chapter then provided both data collection plan including data collection themes; and the approaches and procedures for analysis and interpretation of data and findings. This is followed by the discussion of ethical considerations; trustworthiness issues and limitations of the study. The next chapter turns attention to the theoretical exposition of policy monitoring in public administration and management.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **POLICY MONITORING IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT: A THEORETICAL EXPOSITION**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

Given the fact that this study falls within the realm of Public Administration and Management, it is necessary to note that the main theme of the study (policy implementation monitoring) is located within the theory of the field of Public Administration and Management. This will assist in understanding the topic and its themes from a theoretical perspective to the practical perspective and show the relevance of policy implementation monitoring in the domain of Public Administration and Management.

This chapter reviews the theoretical foundations of public administration both as an activity (public administration) and discipline (Public Administration) and shows how it relates with the policy making process (whereby policy implementation monitoring is one of the phases in the process). It briefly examines the evolution of (P) public (A) administration and its orientation and discusses the critical aspects of the evolution and transformation which have implications for the public policy making process in general and policy implementation monitoring in particular. The chapter provides a definition of public administration as an activity and Public Administration as a discipline and invokes the generic administrative functions, but with focus on the policy-making function under which policy implementation and monitoring in public sector are embodied. It also briefly comments on the relationship between public administration and public management. The chapter locates the study themes of decentralised power, working relationships, capacity building, and collaboration in the field of public administration and management.

#### **2.2 HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR PUBLIC POLICY PROCESS**

Administration as an activity is as old as humankind. There is enough proof today that orderly communities existed thousands of years before Christ. Wherever people formed communities there were certain common needs such as defence, water and health services. Administration was necessary to render these collective services. Therefore, origins of administration can be traced to people who came together to make a living in certain circumstances and geographical localities (Du Toit & Van Der Walddt 1997:21). Public

administration was later employed in building great empires, cities and public works, collecting taxes, organising huge armies and enforcing law and order (Basu 1994:11). Managing the affairs of the Roman Empire, organising the national state out of medieval feudalism, and creating a disciplined army from undisciplined crowds were administrative as well as political feats (White 1955:1).

Evidence of administration practice can be found in ancient Egypt during the building of pyramids. The physical presence of pyramids with millions stone blocks suggests that there existed formal plans, organisation, leadership and a control system. There is also evidence that in approximately 1100 BC, the Chinese recognised the need for planning, organising, leading and controlling. By the time of Christ, evidence can be found that the unity of command, management by exception and delegation to subordinate administrators were practiced (Robbins 1980:34).

It is imperative to note that public administration of the ancient times differed from that of contemporary times in that the goals and structures of the former were predominantly patriarchal and authoritarian and were mainly concerned with collection of revenue and maintaining of law and order as opposed to the promotion of citizen welfare which is a concern of the latter (contemporary public administration) (Kakumba 2008:28).

Public Administration (as a discipline) originated as a result of a need for people who had the ability and capabilities to carry out the activity of public administration efficiently and effectively. Initially, government officials were not expected to do much work, even at the highest level of the hierarchy. They were merely required to know about the legal composition of the various political and executive institutions and the prescribed work procedures of these institutions. Political scientists and those involved in constitutional law and other sciences provided the detailed knowledge and insight on public administration activities (Cloete 1988:41).

The functions of government however, gradually increased. The main reason for this was that society expected more and more of their institutions. At the same time, the problems confronting government institutions became increasingly complex, this created the need for more public officials. The main reason for Public Administration can therefore be attributed to a need for trained people in government institutions; trained people who can do research



in the field to apply in practice; and improving Public Administration in general (Du Toit & Van der Walddt 1997:52). The slowly evolving and relatively stable societies before the industrial revolution gave way to a society full of complexity and unpredictability. This resulted in the need for the state to obtain reliable information on the basis of which policy makers could shape legislation and administer public affairs. This in turn required people with specialised knowledge in policy analysis (De Coning & Wissink 2011:19).

Public Administration, as a discipline and activity, has passed through a number of stages with numerous developments and transformations. The most notable stages can be considered (see Henry 1980: 29-56; Robbins 1980:36-54; Basu 1994:13-20; Self 1977:19-48; Fredickson 1980:33-49; Denhardt & Denhardt 2000:553; Zhiyuan Fang 2002:1-6; Pfiffner 2004:444-446; Dunleavy, Margetts, Bastow & Tinkler 2005:1-3) to include the Politics-Administration Dichotomy; the Principles of Administration approach, the Human Relations Movement; the Behavioural Science Movement; the Systems Movement; the New Public Administration, the New Public Management, the New Public Service Model and the current Digital Era Governance approach. This thesis does not intend to debate, critique or investigate, in detail, the various stages of the development. It only provides a discussion of the critical aspects of the evolution and transformation which have had implications for the public policy making process.

Woodrow Wilson largely set the tone for the early study of Public Administration in an essay entitled “the study of Administration”, published in the *Political Science Quarterly* in July 1887. The essay is considered to have pioneered the “politics/administration dichotomy”—the naïve distinction between “political” activity and “administrative” activity in public organisations that would dominate the field for years to come (Henry 1980:28). It, among others, called for separation between politics and administration, consideration of government from commercial perspective, effective administration through civil service reform and the training of civil servants in their administrative responsibilities (Gildenhuys 1988:12-13). Wilson’s views were amplified by Frank J. Goodnow in *Politics and Administration* (1900) and elaborated on by Leonard D. White’s 1926 publication—*Introduction to the study of Public Administration*. This stage in the development of Public Administration emphasised the notion of the distinct Politics-Administration Dichotomy which argued that the field of politics and administration were separate areas of public life and that administration was concerned with carrying out public policies as “expressions of state will”.

The legislative branch aided by the interpretive abilities of the judicial branch was meant to express the will of the state and form policy while the executive branch would impartially and apolitically implement those policies (White 1955:6; Henry 1980: 29-30). This meant that policy formulation and policy implementation should be two distinct activities with the latter being professionalised, neutral and nonpolitical.

The Politics-Administration Dichotomy was reinforced by a group of writers known as the Scientific Administration School who tried to show that there were sound principles of administration for universal applicability. The principles were considered to 'work' in any administrative setting regardless of mission, function, culture, environment, or institutional framework without exception. This school drew some of its inspiration from the writings of Fredrick Taylor's *Principles of Scientific Management*. Other significant scholars were Parker Follett, Henry Fayol with his *Administrative Principles*, James D. Mooney and Allan Reiley. Several other writers who are recognised as major contributors to the Administrative School were Max Weber, Oliver Sheldon, Leonard D. White, Lillian Gilbreth, Luther Gullick and Lindall Urwick. This school *inter alia*, stressed the need for a unified and disciplined system of authority with clearly defined duties, specialised skills and knowledge, formal organisational structure, hierarchical/centralised decision-making and strict superior subordinate relationship (Self 1977:19-23; Henry 1980: 31-33; Robins 1980: 38-40).

The universal principles, as Kakumba (2008:29) observes, were heavily criticised by number of scholars including Chester Barnard, Herbert Simon and Douglas McGregor, who argued that the principles were mechanistic with misplaced autocratic assumptions that neglected human factors. However, some implications for the policy making process can be drawn from this phase. An important implication for the policy making process that can be noted particularly in respect of hierarchical/centralised control of decision making is the top down policy process approach where policies should be made by top management and implemented by subordinates at the bottom of the organisation. This view is reflected in the works of policy authors such as Daniel Mazmanian and Paul Sabatier (1983), Robert Nakamura and Frank Smallwood (1980), and Paul Berman (1980) who proposed a *command and control* orientation that came to be known as a *top-down* policy implementation perspective –considered to be the best way to move a policy proposal to its successful fruition (deLeon & deLeon 2002: 469-470).

A number of the writers who attacked the universal principles were later to be associated with the Human Relations Movement which began as a result of studies conducted under the direction of Elton Mayo (at Hawthorne Works). The Hawthorn studies had a dramatic impact on the direction of administrative thought. Mayo's conclusions were that behaviour and sentiments were closely related; that group influences were significant in affecting individual behaviour; that group standards were highly effective in establishing individual worker output; and that money was less a factor in determining output than group standards, sentiments and security. These conclusions led to a new emphasis on the human factor in the functioning of organisations and the attainment of their goals. Popular writers associated with this humanist orientation were Douglas McGregor, Rensis Likert and Chris Argyris. Their unifying theme was that people are naturally good and in order to stimulate their performance, work should be humanised by allowing people to participate and take an active role in those decisions that affect them; having trust and confidence in people; and reducing external control devices (Robbins 1980: 40-41).

Allowing people to participate and take an active role in those decisions that affect them; having trust and confidence in people; and reducing external control devices as espoused by the Human Relations Movement, are important aspects to note which had implications for the policy making process. These aspects in a way align with the bottom-up policy process orientation views. deLeon and deLeon (2002:470) observe that scholars like Michael Lipsky (1971 and 1980) and Benny Hjern (1982) proposed that street level bureaucrats, the lower cadre public service employees who directly interact with the public, were the key to successful policy implementation. From their vantage point, effective policy implementation occurred only when those who are primarily affected, are actively involved in the planning and execution of the policy programmes. Another implication is that the participation of policy beneficiaries is crucial for successful policy implementation.

Another significant phase in the evolution of Public Administration was the Behavioural Science Movement. It considered the behaviour of human beings as the focus of the management action. Based on scientific research on individual behaviour, its argument was that the relationship between morale and efficiency had been over simplified by Human Relationists. It viewed the manager as the leader whose managerial decisions should lead to high productivity and achievement of organisational objectives (Gupta 2012:1). After effectively exposing the contradictions of the scientific administration school, one of the

notable writers on the behavioural science approach to management, Herbert Simon, in his influential work—the *Administrative Behaviour* (1945) sought a better alternative approach to administrative efficiency through the design of a rational model of decision making which he termed—the “behaviour alternative model”. Simon, argued that decision analysis is what should be studied as it was at the centre of public administration. He intended to find a framework for extensive use of applied behavioural research and quantitative measurement that would guide administrative decisions. The “behaviour alternative model” stated that [for efficient and effective results] in any situation an administrator ideally ought to examine all possible courses of action open to him, trace through and weigh the consequences of each option and then separately evaluate the benefits and losses of each option. He should then choose that course of action which is expected to provide the greatest net satisfaction (Self 1977:29-30).

A key aspect of the Behavioural Science Movement that had implications for the policy process is Simon’s ‘behaviour alternative model’ upon which the Rational Model for policy analysis builds. As in the case of the administrator selecting the course of action which is expected to provide the greatest net satisfaction, under the rational model (Dye 2008:15), a policy maker chooses policies resulting in societal gains that exceed costs. To achieve this, policy makers need to establish all the society value preferences and their relative weight; all the alternatives available; all the consequences of each policy alternative; calculate the cost benefit ratio for each alternative; and select the most efficient policy alternative. For the decentralisation policy in Uganda, this implies that in its selection, the policy makers should have established the society value preferences, considered all the policy alternatives and weighed the consequences of the alternatives in order to select the policy as the most appropriate policy alternative.

The ‘New Public Administration’ which emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s was another important development in the evolution of Public Administration. The New Public Administration emerged in response to several stimuli that included the dissatisfaction with the intellectual basis of Public Administration, the Vietnam War, racial unrest and changes that were taking place in the social sciences. Dwight Waldo, Frank Martins and George Fredrickson are notable authors identified with the development (Frederickson 1980:33-34). The questions raised by New Public Administration mainly dealt with ethics, values, the development of an individual in an organisation and the relation of the client with the

bureaucracy (GSAPS 2009:3). Social equity, bureaucratic responsiveness, worker and citizen participation in decision making, citizen choice and administrative responsibility for programme effectiveness, were the main values to be acknowledged. These values were to foster humanistic decentralised, democratic organisations that distribute public services equitably (Frederickson 1980:43-48; Henry 1980:49). Table 1 summarises the values of New Public Administration and the means to achieve them.

Table 3.1: Values of New Public Administration

Values to be achieved		Structural means of achievement	Managerial means of achievement
1.	Responsiveness	A. Decentralisation (political and administrative) B. Contracting C. Neighbourhood control over street level bureaucracies	A. Routine interaction with employees and managers B. Managerial definition of democracy which includes responsiveness to elected officials, interest groups, and minorities C. Training
2.	Worker and citizen participation in decision making	A. Neighbourhood councils with power B. Overlapping work groups C. Worker involvement in decision processes	A. Acceptance of an ethic that insists on the right of the workers and citizens to participate in those decision processes which affect their lives directly B. Training in OD
3.	Social equity	A. Area-wide revenue systems with local distribution systems B. Public service outputs and outcomes made equal by social class	A. Professional codes of ethics spelling out equity B. The managerial commitment to the principle that majority rule does not overturn minority rights to equal public services
4.	Citizen choice	A. Devising alternative forms of services to broaden choice B. Overlap C. Contracting	A. Reduction of managerial monopoly over particular service such as health care or education
5.	Administrative responsibility for programme effectiveness	A. Decentralisation B. Delegation C. Performance targets	A. Measuring performance, not only on general organisational standards but also on social class

Source: Redrawn from Frederickson (1980 p, 47)

In terms of implications or impact of the New Public Administration philosophy on public policy, the values espoused and their means of achievement had numerous implications. First, the advocated decentralised structures and contracting out (see Table 3. 1) were to be reflected in the decentralisation policies adopted by many countries including Uganda from the 1980s. The policies generally transferred responsibilities, decision making authority and resources to local governments and often to communities and to the private sector to deliver public services. Many governments associated poor service delivery with centralised public administration thus embracing decentralisation which was actually a philosophy/value of the New Public Administration.

Secondly, the New Public Administration's espoused value of citizen participation in decisions which affect their lives implied that in policy making process, society members targeted by a government or public policy were to participate in the identification of the need or goals to be pursued and the alternative measures that can be taken to obtain the goal or alleviate the need. It also implied that there was a need for involvement of community members and institutions in the implementation and monitoring of public policies for the general well-fare of the community. The participatory monitoring approaches that involve stakeholders working together to assess policy programmes and take corrective action which have been adopted in the implementation of policies in many countries reflect the new public administration philosophy of citizen participation.

Thirdly, the value of social equity implied that, in designing policies, policy makers would need to ensure that policy outputs and outcomes are equally distributed with the disadvantaged minority having equal access to the policy outputs and outcomes. It also means that policy analysis had to improve especially to enable clear understanding of the effects of public policies on specific segments of society such as the disadvantaged minorities and the determination of those policies that are most suitable to address their problems.

Fourthly, the proposed establishment of performance measurement and performance targets as means for achieving programme effectiveness augur well for policy implementation monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment. In monitoring policy implementation, performance measurement is important as a system for assessing the performance of policy interventions in terms of the achievement of outputs and outcomes while performance targets

provide quantitative and qualitative indicators that help in the verification of changes produced by a policy intervention relative to what was planned. Such indicators are also used for evaluation and impact assessment of policy interventions.

New Public Management (NPM) was another notable development. Even though it amplified some of the ideals of the New Public Administration such as decentralisation, citizen choice and performance measurement, the NPM did not advocate social equity, workers and citizen participation in decision making, ethics and humanistic democratic organisations that distribute public services equitably which were some of the major concerns of the New Public Administration. The NPM movement which emerged in the 1980s as a new approach to public sector management challenging the traditional public administration, encompassed a range of techniques and principles that were meant to overcome the inefficiencies inherent in the traditional public administration. It was a set of ideas broadly divided into two categories. First, was the use of private management ideas, such as performance contracts including service standards and new financial management techniques, greater autonomy and flexibility for managers and the provision of more efficient and responsive services. Managers were expected to make public administration more responsive to citizen needs by offering value for money, choice flexibility and transparency. Second was the use of market mechanisms, such as contracting out and public-private partnerships in service provision. The approach was generally inspired by the principles and values of the private sector. It focused on making the public sector lean and more competitive-driven by concepts of economy, efficiency and effectiveness (Pfiffner 2004:444-446; Dunleavy, Margetts, Bastow & Tinkler 2005:4-5; Cameron 2009:3).

The New Public Management advocated for decentralised administration and delegation of discretion. Managers were supposed to have greater control to hire and dismiss employees as well as the flexibility to use the resources at their disposal to accomplish organisational goals and objectives. The approach focused on measurement of results rather than careful accountability for inputs. Managers' success would be measured by the goals accomplished rather than accounting for inputs and their reward would be performance based. Government was to allocate the provision of some services entirely to the private sector and control would be achieved through market forces in the sense that if goods or services are overpriced, a competitor would provide them at a lower price (Pfiffner 2004: 445-446).



Regarding the implications for the policy making function, in the NPM, managers were given a much greater role in policy making than before, essentially at the expense of politicians and service professionals. While this clearly helped to redress the traditional imbalance where management had been rather undervalued in the public sector, it quickly resulted in many authors questioning whether this rebalancing was not going too far. In particular, it resulted in a vision of the public sector (or public policy for this matter) that was empty of political values and political debate (Bovaird & Löffler 2009: 20).

In the case of policy implementation, the implication was that policy implementers under the New Public Management philosophy, would have to focus on evaluation of policy outcomes that would measure society changes (the intended purposes of government policy programmes). Accountability for programme inputs was considered less important than the accomplishment of goals at a given cost.

Adoption of the New Public Management approach particularly the advocated privatisation through the practice of contracting out for public service delivery meant that implementation of government policies would be carried out largely with employees who are not directly employed by government institutions. In this case public officials would concentrate on monitoring the contract performance of the private providers for service quality and standards.

It is important however to note that like many other developments in the evolution of public administration, the NPM movement has come under increasing criticism. Goodsell (2004:151) observes that a major criticism for the application of the business model to public administration is that it introduces privatised individual values in place of common community ideals. It has also been noted (United Nations, 2005: xi) that there is little evidence that NPM strengthens the quality and integrity of the civil service. Haque (2000:601) argues that the New Public Management approach sacrifices the traditional public administration values such as impartiality, equality, representation, integrity, fairness, welfare, citizenship and justice in preference of business values of efficiency, competition, profit and value for-money. This leads to viewing people as economic units not democratic participants. The situation has not been improved by experience of corruption associated with contracting out in implementing public private partnership policy programmes and the fact that purchasing



privately supplied services makes governments lose their core competence of producing services (Pfiffner 2004:5; Bovaird & Löffler 2009: 21-23).

In criticising the New Public Management model, some authors describe it as having essentially died in the water (Dunleavy, Margetts, Bastow & Tinkler 2005:2) while others like Thornhill (2012:118) argue that the model boiled down to little more than adopting a fashionable or marketable terminology. In spite of the criticisms, some of its essential values such as customer-focused service delivery, result-oriented management, hands-on management, product instead of function-oriented management, performance contracts, entrepreneurship and outsourcing are still being considered applicable in public institutions in some countries (see De Vries & Nemec 2013:7). In Uganda, for example, public managers, especially in state corporations, are still being encouraged to be business oriented. Those who still view the approach's values to be applicable to the public sector however, need to be reminded that it is a fallacy as Thornhill (2012:118) warns for the approach to assume that the foundational values for public administration are the same as those for the business sector. Public administration foundational values such as impartiality, equality, public accountability, representation, integrity, fairness, welfare, citizenship and justice cannot be discarded in pursuit of the business sector values.

Yet another significant development in the evolution of Public Administration emerged in the late 1990s when writers like Robert B. Denhardt and Janet Vinzant Denhardt proposed a New Public Service model in response to the dominance of NPM. The New Public Service model is one of the *Post NPM approaches* to public administration. The model is built on work in democratic citizenship, organisational humanism, community and civil society and discourse theory. It is built on a number of principles, most notably that the primary role of the public official is to help citizens articulate and meet their shared interests rather than to attempt to control or steer society. The argument is that while in the past, government played a central role in the "steering of society", currently the role of government is changed from one of controlling to one of agenda setting, bringing the key players to the table and facilitating, brokering or negotiating solutions to public problems. Those policy programmes that give direction to social and political life today are the result of the interaction of many different stakeholders and a mixture of different opinions and interests. In many areas it no longer makes sense to consider public policies as the result of governmental decision-making processes. Though government remains a substantial player, the policies that guide societies

today are the outcome of a complex set of interactions involving multiple stakeholders and interests (Denhardt & Denhardt 2000:553).

In the New Public Service model, public interest is conceived as a result of a dialogue on shared values. Public administrators need to contribute to building a collective shared public interest. The argument is that the process of making policy to achieve a vision for society cannot merely be left to public officials or political office bearers. Instead, it should be done with widespread stakeholder dialogue and deliberation. The model also holds that public officials are responsive to citizens not customers (as in business sense) and that building coalitions of public, private and civil society agencies to meet mutually agreed upon needs are the mechanisms for achieving policy objectives. It calls for valuing people (not just productivity), citizenship and public service above entrepreneurship. The model's approach to accountability is multifaceted- public officials must attend to law, political norms, community values, professional standards and citizen interests (Denhardt & Denhardt 2000:554).

For administrative discretion, the model argues that discretion is needed, but has to be constrained and accountable. Regarding organisational structure, the approach advocates collaborative structures with leadership shared internally and externally. The idea is that policy programmes meeting public needs can be most effectively achieved through collective processes and efforts. The motivation of public administrators under the new approach should be public service and desire to contribute to society as opposed to the entrepreneurial spirit and the ideological desire to reduce size of government espoused by new public management (Denhardt & Denhardt 2000:554-556). Table 3.2 provides a comparative analysis of the Old or Classic Public Administration, the New Public Management and the New Public Service model.

Table 3.2: Comparison of the Old Public Administration, the New Public Management and the New Public Service

Comparing Perspectives	Old Public Administration	New Public Management	New Public Service
Primary theoretical and epistemological foundations	Political theory, social and political commentary augmented by naïve social science	Economic theory, more sophisticated dialogue based on positivist social science	Democratic theory, varied approaches to knowledge including positive, interpretive, critical, and postmodern
Prevailing rationality and associated models of human behaviour	Synoptic rationality, “administrative man”	Technical and economic rationality, “economic man,” or the self-interested decision maker	Strategic rationality, multiple tests of rationality (political, economic, organizational)
Conception of the public interest	Politically defined and expressed in law	Represents the aggregation of individual interests	Result of a dialogue about shared values
To whom are public servants responsive?	Clients and constituents	Customers	Citizens
Role of government	Rowing (designing and implementing policies focusing on a single, politically defined objective)	Steering (acting as a catalyst to unleash market forces)	Serving (negotiating and brokering interests among citizens and community groups, creating shared values)
Mechanisms for achieving policy objectives	Administering programmes through existing government agencies	Creating mechanisms and incentive structures to achieve policy objectives through private and nonprofit agencies	Building coalitions of public, nonprofit, and private agencies to meet mutually agreed upon needs

Table: 3.2 cont.

Approach to accountability	Hierarchical—administrators are responsible to democratically elected political leaders	Market-driven—the accumulation of self-interests will result in outcomes desired by broad groups of citizens (or customers)	Multifaceted—public servants must attend to law, community values, political norms, professional standards, and citizen interests
Administrative discretion	Limited discretion allowed administrative officials	Wide latitude to meet entrepreneurial goals	Discretion needed but constrained and accountable
Assumed organisational structure	Bureaucratic organisations marked by top-down authority within agencies and control or regulation of clients	Decentralised public organisations with primary control remaining within the agency	Collaborative structures with leadership shared internally and externally
Assumed motivational basis of public servants and administrators	Pay and benefits, civil-service protections	Entrepreneurial spirit, ideological desire to reduce size of government	Public service, desire to contribute to society.

Source: Redrawn from Denhardt and Denhardt (2000 p, 554)

Of importance is the approach's direct implications for the policy making process. After formulating policies through a collective and collaborative process, the implementation and monitoring process of these policies should not be left to those in government; rather, all parties should join together in executing the policy programmes. For the decentralisation policy in Uganda, it implies that monitoring the implementation of the policy programmes should involve not only those who are in government but also all other key stakeholders. The involvement of the stakeholders creates such a sense of pride and responsibility and evolves into a greater willingness as all stakeholders work together to ensure effective implementation of policy programmes.

By creating opportunities in the policy making process where citizens, through discourse, can articulate shared values and identify their common problems or interests, the implication is that public policies would be rightly targeted and with joint implementation, the effectiveness and efficiency of such policies would be a shared responsibility. However as Ingraham and

Rosenbloom (1989) argue government has to be responsible for ensuring that any policy solutions are consistent with the public interest — both in substance and in process and that such solutions are consistent with democratic norms of justice, fairness and equity.

Finally, it can be argued from a theoretical perspective as Denhardt and Denhardt (2000:57) argue, that the New Public Service model offers an important and viable alternative to both the traditional and other managerial models. It is an alternative that is built on the basis of theoretical explorations and practical innovations. The result is a normative model, comparable to other such models. However, in terms of the normative models, the authors observe, the New Public Service clearly seems most consistent with the basic foundations of democracy and, therefore, provides a framework within which other valuable tools and values such as the best ideas of the old public administration or the New Public Management, might be played out. While this debate will surely continue, the authors further observe, for the time being, the New Public Service approach provides a rallying point around which we might envision a public service based on and fully integrated with citizen discourse and the public interest.

Another movement in the post NPM regime which is currently being formed is associated with a range of connected and information technology centered changes focusing on themes of reintegration, needs-based holism and digitalisation changes. The overall movement incorporating these new shifts is toward “Digital-Era Governance” (DEG), which involves reintegrating functions into the governmental sphere, adopting holistic and needs-oriented structures and progressing digitalisation of public administrative processes. The new movement emphasises the central role that information technology and information system changes now play in a series of changes in how public services can be organised as business processes and delivered to citizens (Zhiyuan Fang 2002:1-2; Dunleavy, Margetts, Bastow & Tinkler 2005:1-3).

The Digital Era Governance constitutes three main themes—Reintegration; Needs-Based Holism; and Digitalisation Process. Reintegration involves integrating the functions that under NPM were fragmented into single-function agencies and spread across inter-organisational networks. It includes: creating mergers, re-assimilation of agencies into cohesive departmental groups; Joined-up governance, entailing departmental amalgamation and integration of government agencies; re-governmentalisation via the re-absorption into

the public sector the activities that had previously been privatised; re-establishing central processes to deal with the NPM's fragmenting changes that duplicated multiple hierarchies; re-engineering back-office functions through redesigning business processes using IT systems; and network simplification to stop the creation of multiple management teams (Dunleavy, Margetts, Bastow & Tinkler 2005:19-23).

The Needs-Based Holism involves an attempt to re-prioritise away from the NPM emphasis on business process management towards a genuinely citizen-based, services-based organisation. It includes creating new macro-organisational structures, re-evaluations of processes, fundamental changes of management styles and information systems and new modes of responding expeditiously to emerging problems. Its main parameters include: client-based and function-based reorganisation—involving reintegrating agencies around a single client group—instead of the NPM focus on discrete business processes; one stop provision which includes one-stop shops, one-stop windows and web-integrated services; data warehousing; interactive and 'ask once' information seeking; end-to-end service re-engineering—where project teams focus through the whole process without demarcating an organisation's boundaries; and a focus on achieving speed with flexibility and responsiveness in the government decision-making process (Dunleavy, Yared & Bastow 2003: 3-4; Dunleavy, Margetts, Bastow & Tinkler 2005:23-27).

The Digitalisation Processes theme is the most closely connected to the impact of the Web, Internet and e-mail upon public agencies. Its components include: electronic services delivery (ESD) involving converting most paper-based administrative processes to e-government processes; centralised, state-directed IT procurement involving specification of service-wide systems and contracts to be taken up by government and its agencies; new forms of automated processes where the ideal is that no human intervention is required in a given administrative operation; web-based processes that allow citizens, businesses and other civil society stakeholders to connect directly to public administration systems; and open book government—shifting from 'closed files' government to allowing citizens to view their own files in government offices and monitor their status such as managing their own tax accounts as a move towards greater self-administration (Zhiyuan Fang 2002:1-6; Dunleavy, Margetts, Bastow & Tinkler 2005:27-30).

Regarding the implications for the policy making process, under the Digital Era Governance (DEG), individual governments no longer have sufficient resources, information or internal competencies to respond effectively to the policy needs of a complex and fast- changing global environment. Policy makers need now to identify new partners and participants to identify problems and create innovative policy solutions. With a superior technology driven capacity for organisational networking and knowledge creation, policy webs are emerging as the leading organisational forms for facilitating greater innovation and citizen participation in the policy making process. At the core of digital-era policy making process is an understanding that citizen-centred processes require active and informed participation by citizens. Innovation in policy making is driven by the adoption of *five imperatives* for digital-era policy making process: transparency; participation; internetworking; responsiveness; and informed participants (Williams & Hay 2000:1-3).

Concerning transparency, policy makers are experiencing that withholding information can alienate citizens. At minimum, policy makers need to publicise the policy documents, objectives, participants and decision criteria and provide reasons for the chosen policy alternative. True transparency, however, will need to move beyond posting policy documents on web sites to making the processes and underlying policy assumptions subject to critique. For participation, engaging citizens is at the centre of the policy web. Participation range from citizen juries to digital brainstorming and online referenda. As for internetworking, it involves partnering across organisational and jurisdictional boundaries. Digitally enabled policy webs connect a range of participants representing governments and various policy stake holders. As regards responsiveness, lightning-speed electronic technology developments will enable policy makers to respond to citizens' policy concerns in "real time." For informed participants, it will involve effective management of policy information inputs from citizens. This will include developing information management systems that can search for, filter and compile information from extensive data (Williams & Hay 2000:5-6; Pascual 2003:14-16).

The changing role of public officials and political office bearers in the DEG has significant policy implications. Public officials will play a leading role in establishing new processes for creating and managing knowledge. In the policy development stage, the public officials will develop and execute strategies for using information technologies to obtain and disseminate knowledge widely throughout the policy web and to the public at large. In the implementation

and monitoring stage, public officials will be crucial links in providing the feedback to policy beneficiaries which will enable greater policy responsiveness. Public officials will also use online forums to share best practices and operational know-how through an emerging intergovernmental public service network. Political office bearers will need to utilise new technologies to build stronger relationships with their constituents and in doing so, facilitate political discourse and citizen participation. Political office bearers will play an important role in disseminating information to constituents, moderating discussions and forwarding citizen input into the policy making process (Williams & Hay 2000:16-17).

While the Digital Era Governance emphasises the central role that IT and information system changes can play in creating efficient and effective public organisational structures for policy making and public service delivery, in developing countries like Uganda, the IT and information systems are not developed. Access to IT and information system facilities such as computers and internet is limited not only for the citizens but also for public administrators. Many institutions including local government (LG) institutions in Uganda lack IT and information access facilities. Given the lack of access to IT and information facilities, the application of the Digital Era Governance approach to public administration in the policy making process may take many years.

The above historical evolution indeed shows that (P) public (A) administration, both as an activity and discipline, have experienced major developments which have had a considerable impact on public administrative functions in general and the policy making process in particular. The debate at each stage of evolution focusing on what constitutes public administration, its relevancy in society, where and how public administration should be conducted has enriched both the activity and discipline of public administration. However, the evolution and the search for public administration systems that can serve society better have not come to an end. Two decades ago New Public Management was the dominant theme, currently, it is the New Public Service model and Digital Era Governance.



### 3.3 DEFINITION OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

#### 2.3.1 Public administration as an activity

Public administration in its broadest sense as phenomenon characterising the public sector can be divided into three main interwoven realms of activity in the sphere of *purpose*; activity in the sphere of the *means*; and activity in the sphere of *results* (Rowland 1987:68-69). With regard to purpose, Rowland contends that the activities pertaining this sphere cannot be divorced from the fact/value nature inherent in the system of relations between society and the state. The argument is that since it is interwoven with the sphere of *purpose*, the management of the means, that is the optimal utilisation of human resources and other facilitating resources cannot be divorced from the interpretation of the fact/value variable if the best *results* are to be pursued and realised. In its broadest sense, Rowland concludes, public administration implies the control of the state by bureaucrats while in its narrowest sense, it refers to management by bureaucrats of the means in order to achieve the best results for society.

To Henry (1980:26), public administration is a broad ranging and amorphous combination of theory and practice. Its purpose is to promote a superior understanding of government and its relationship with the society it governs. It focuses on ensuring that public policies are more responsive to social needs and on instituting managerial practices attuned to effectiveness, efficiency and the deeper human requisites of the citizenry. Pfiffner and Presthus (1967:7-8) define public administration as the co-ordination of individual and group effort to carry out public policy. It is mainly occupied with the routine work of government. It is concerned with carrying out public policies, encompassing innumerable skills and using techniques that order the efforts of a large number of people. Public administration is considered (Fesler 1980:5) to include the shaping of policy on the way up, execution of policy after it has been made, and as a necessary part of the execution, shaping policy matters on the way down. White (1955:1) considers public administration as consisting of all those operations having for their purpose the fulfillment or enforcement of public policy. Public administration as an activity (Du Toit & Van der Waldt 1997:8) refers to the work done by officials within government institutions to enable different government institutions to achieve their objectives at the three levels of government.

Based on the views of the authors cited on what constitutes public administration, some consensus can be derived. What emerges from the definitions is that public administration involves the execution of government activities by officials within government institutions aimed at achieving the best results for society.

### 3.3.2 Public Administration as a discipline

The essence of Public Administration as a field of study according to Rowland (1987:69) lies in the provision of tools of knowledge and skills to public administrators. The focus of such a study, the author argues, should be centred on the following: the study of society, values and value allocation, power, conflict, environment and forces of change, from which the *purpose* of the public sector emanates; and the study of administration and management (in the generic sense) which provides the knowledge leading to optimal utilisation of human and other facilitating resources thus understanding the *means*. The focus should also centre on the study of power of the officials which culminates in the results achieved by the public sector that should include *inter alia*, a conveyance of knowledge with regard to higher ideals of human existence stripped of worldly values such as materialism. The most important factor, Rowland contends, is that such an academic endeavour should at all times be pursued from the vantage point of the public official. Thus in the final analysis, he concludes, Public Administration should on one hand encompass the study of the purpose-means-results dimension of the public sector in terms of what it *entails* and on the other hand, include a study of public management which investigates *how it is done*.

Public Administration should be concerned with the development of four theories: Descriptive theory — for description of the hierarchical structures and relationships with their task environments; Normative theory or the value goals of the field, that is what public administrators (the practitioners) ought to do given the range of decision alternatives and what public administrationists (the scholars) ought to study and recommend to the practitioners in terms of policy; assumptive theory or rigorous understanding of administrative person; and instrumental theory or the increasingly refined managerial techniques for effective and efficient attainment of public objectives (Baily 1968 cited in Henry 1980:26). Smithburg and Thompson (1950:19) echo Baily's assumptive and instrumental theories when they contend that the study of Public Administration has two goals which can be separated in conception but which in practice are often interlocking. According to the authors,

Public Administration is concerned with understanding how people in public organisations behave and how such organisations operate; and with practical recommendations as to how public agencies can be most effectively organised.

It is important to note that there are important government matters that are outside the scope of the study of Public Administration. While in a modern state, each of the three branches of government needs an administrative system and a corps of public administrators to assist in performing its legitimate tasks, the main seat of public administration is in the executive. Consequently, the true realm of public administration is to be found in the administrative systems of government which are primarily responsible for the conduct or management of public affairs. Therefore areas like theories of political activity, interesting and important as these may be, are outside the scope of public administration (Gladden 1966:14).

What seemingly emerges as consensus from the numerous definitions and descriptions is that Public Administration involves the study of the activity of public administration in executive institutions of government. Essentially, it is the study of the administrative functional activities executed by public officials (under the supervision of political office bearers) to improve the general welfare of society through the provision of goods and services.

### **3.4 PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND PUBLIC MANAGEMENT**

There are differences of opinion about whether the concepts of public administration and public management, which have crossed paths for centuries together, are different or synonymous. For some authors, it is generally impossible to establish either historically or conceptually a definitive distinction between administration and management. In the most general sense, both 'administration' and 'management', when referring to the public sector seem to embody methodological efforts to accomplish the objectives of a sovereign authority. Yet public management has been widely considered to represent a new governing approach, a new ideology, or perhaps a new paradigm (Lynn 2006:4). From the 1980s onwards, a new terminology began to be dominantly heard in some circles— "public management". While it was interpreted differently by different commentators, it almost always was characterised by different set of symbols from those associated with public administration. It was considered

to be about entrepreneurship, risk taking, accountability for performance and a contract culture (Bovaird & Loffler 2009: 6).

For other authors such as Fox, Schwella, and Wissink (1991:2), the activity of public administration in government institutions is much wider in nature and scope than management in government institutions. Management is just a facet of public administration in government institutions. This echoes the works of Ott, Hyde and Shafritz (1991:ix) who contend that public management is that part of public administration which overviews the art and science of applied methodologies for public programme design and organisational structuring including policy and management planning; and allocation of resources through financial management, budgeting system, human resource management and programme evaluation and audit.

This thesis does not intend to engage in the debate of which concept is more important or whether the two should be separate disciplines. One can only acknowledge that management cannot take place if the outputs (results) of public administration do not enable those in managerial positions to manage. Before public managers can fulfil their managerial functions, they must have a policy spelling out the objectives of the institution concerned. Managers usually receive a policy in the form of legislation which provides the necessary guidelines for public managers to fulfil their functions. It is through the functioning of public administration that institutions (organisational structures) are created in which managers perform their work to achieve objectives. It is also through public administration that money is made available to do the work. Personnel are also acquired through public administration. It is public administration that determines work procedures for managers and other personnel to deal with specific issues. It is through the functioning of public administration that measures are created for controlling staff activities and the way in which government funds are spent. The process of public administration in short, gives public managers and their subordinates the necessary tools to enable them to achieve their objectives (Du Toit & Van der Waldt 1997:45).

Du Toit and Van der Waldt's views are reflected in the recent work of Thornhill (2012:119). Thornhill makes an effort to clarify the two concepts of public management and public administration. He argues that public administration provides management with the system which results in policies, organisational structures, financing, human resources, work

procedures and control. The official (manager or his subordinate), then operationalises the system by *inter alia*, using the system to plan action, provide leadership, motivate subordinates and check the executive actions.

### 3.5 GENERIC ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

The functions or activities performed in the administrative executive institutions which collectively constitute public administration have been classified into three groups: (i) the generic administrative activities or functions of policy making, financing, organising, personnel provision and utilisation, the determination of work procedure and devising methods of control; (ii) the functional activities peculiar to specific services such as education, nursing, police-work or defense; and (iii) the auxiliary functions — sometimes referred to as tangential functions such as decision making, data processing, programming, planning and communication which are necessary to simplify the execution of the generic administrative functions and the functional activities (Hanekom & Thornhill 1993:57-58). Thornhill (2012:87) classifies the activities or functions into four groups: (i) generic administrative and managerial; (ii) auxiliary; (iii) instrumental; and (iv) functional also referred to as line functions. This thesis, however, focuses on the generic administrative functions category.

The generic administrative functions are called *generic* because they are executed in all public institutions, although the manner in which they are executed can be influenced by the environment or purposes for which they are employed (Thornhill 2012:88). In the subsequent discussion, a description of what constitutes each generic function is provided but with particular emphasis on the policy making function under which policy monitoring falls as a component of the policy making process. This emphasis is premised on the fact that the purpose of this study is to examine the monitoring role of local governments (LGs) in implementing the decentralisation policy in Uganda.

The *policy making* function is the umbrella process in terms of which a series of functions (identifying a problem, investigating, gathering information and making decisions) are carried out to decide on a plan of action (for implementation-emphasis added) to achieve particular objectives (Du Toit & Van der Walddt 1997:14). A detailed discussion of this function on which this thesis places emphasis follows after a brief description of the other generic functions.

*Organising* involves establishing structured system of roles and functional relationships designed to carry out the programmes which policies inspire. It identifies a pattern of skills, responsibilities and authority that will permit co-ordination and unity of purpose through supervision (Pfiffner & Presthus 1967:7). Organising is considered to include actions involved in creating and maintaining organisational units. It involves arranging individuals into units to execute responsibilities in pursuit of desired objectives and building their mutual relationship through communication and delegation (Cloete 1993:112). Organising is the function of formally establishing a formal structure or organisation. In the public sector, formal organisation encompasses the organisational pattern designed by senior public officials and political office bearers that provide the basis for division of work, delegation and lines of authority, co-ordination and communication (Hanekom & Thornhill 1993:74). Briefly, organising involves classifying and grouping functions as well as allocating the groups of functions to workers and institutions in an orderly arrangement so that everything done by the workers focus on achieving objectives (Thornhill 2012:166). Organising is done at every level of government in a particular country which usually include national, regional and or local government administrative levels. In the case of local governments in Uganda, organising involves setting administrative structures at higher (district) and lower (sub county) local government level with lines of authority, division of work, communication and mechanisms for co-ordination of activities.

The *financing* function is the umbrella function which administers the departments' finances. It entails, *inter alia*, obtaining, spending and controlling public finances. At national and provincial or local government, provision is made for how money is obtained, how specific amount of money should be spent by particular institutions for specific objectives and how spending should be controlled. In an individual department, this entails budgeting for the amounts needed to carry out activities and controlling how the money is spent (Du Toit & Van der Waldt 1997:14-15). For local governments in Uganda, the financing function involves defining how to generate or obtain revenue and how such revenue should be spent to deliver services under the decentralisation policy.

The *personnel provision and utilisation* function involves performing several other functions for making personnel available to, placing them in suitable positions and developing them to effectively execute their responsibilities. Provision is made for this at national level by means of an Act (Public Service Act) and establishment of public service commission. In an

individual department (at each level of government), the function entails recruiting, selecting, placing, developing and using personnel meaningfully (Du Toit & Van Der Waldt 1997:15). Human resource provision and utilisation function involves determining suitable personnel that are employed and utilised according to their potential. It entails designing systems and setting up support or facilities associated with management of employees, including supervision, training, motivating and maintaining discipline and the merit system (Van Dijk 2003:41). With respect to local governments in Uganda, personnel provision and utilization function is mainly about identifying personnel and equipping them with the required skills and competences to enhance their capacity to effectively administer the delivery of decentralised services.

*Determination of work procedures* involves drafting specific instructions to be followed when dealing with a particular matter. These instructions are found in legislations (rules and regulations). Usually, at the national level, the legislature defines, in general terms, the procedures to be followed in executing certain actions. At individual departmental level, detailed work procedures applicable to particular department are laid down (Du Toit & Van der Waldt 1997:15; Thornhill 2012:98). While the policy objectives and particular organisational arrangements are supposed to compel employees to unite their effort, the individuals may still have different views on how to execute particular tasks. There is therefore a need to determine appropriate procedures to be followed in discharging the diverse functions. Work procedures are required for inculcating discipline, protecting the rights of individuals, building cohesion in operations and ensuring productivity (Cloete 1993:174). Regarding the local governments in Uganda, the determination of work procedures function involves determining procedures for a number of activities such as licensing; granting of permits to individuals, groups or companies to undertake legitimate activities; procedures for accessing public services; procedures for judging misconduct of officials; procedures for promotion and disciplining of employees; remuneration and or payment procedures; and staff transfer procedures under the decentralisation policy.

The *control function* is exercised to ensure that all generic administrative and functional activities are carried out effectively and efficiently to achieve objectives. Traditionally, control measures applied in the public sector include reporting, inspection and the auditing of accounts. However, a great deal of informal yet actual control comes from the debates and discussions in legislative assemblies where legislators belonging to opposition parties task



the executive to give the account of government actions on particular issues (Thornhill 2012:99). At national level, formally, control means that specific measures are set and bodies created for exercising control for example controls in acts and regulations, Office of the Auditor General, Inspector of Government or Public Protector (DuToit & Van Der Walddt 1997: 15). In Uganda, the control function in LGs involves establishing of local government Public Accounts Committees at national and district levels; inspection of local government operations by the Inspector of Government, the ministry of local government and other line ministries; internal and external audit of LGs' financial accounts; reporting both internally within particular LGs and externally to the central government; and the informal control exercised by local council members belonging to the opposition parties. During debates and discussions in local council sessions, council members from the opposition parties ask questions and voice criticisms forcing the executive members to give account of their actions.

By carrying out the generic administrative functions, government institution officials are not only able to do their work, but they also have certain regulators (guides) for functioning efficiently and producing effective products and or services to society. These regulators are policies, acts, procedures and standards (Du Toit & Van der Walddt 1997:15).

### **3.6 THE POLICY MAKING FUNCTION IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

#### **3.6.1 The meaning of public policy**

Public policy is the formal articulation, statement or publication of a goal that the government intends to pursue with the community. Public policy is decided by the legislator and is therefore an output of the political process. The implementation of the public policy is the task of public institutions. Hence the policy decided by the legislator becomes an input to the comprehensive administrative process — the process in which policy making constitutes one of the six generic administrative functions. Public policy is the link between the political and administrative function. Deliberations in the legislature usually lead to a legislation which is a formal articulation or statement of public policy that entails a proposed programme of action aimed at realisation of a predetermined goal or objective (Hanekom & Thornhill 1993:63). De Coning and Wissink (2011:7) consider public policy as a public statement of intent, including sometimes a more detailed action programme, to give effect to selected empirical and normative goals in order to improve or resolve perceived needs and problems in society in a specific way, thereby achieving desired changes in that society. Public policy has also been



referred to as a relatively detailed government statement of objectives (or goals) in a sector and a general statement of the methods to be applied in achieving those objectives (Baalén & De Coning 2011:17). What seemingly emerges as consensus from the various definitions is that public policy is a government statement of goals and objectives intended to address needs and problems in society and the means to be used in addressing such needs and problems.

### **3.6.2 Policy making roles of government officials in executive institutions**

There is no doubt that public officials in the executive institutions play various roles in the policy making function. However, De Coning, Cloete and Wissink (2011: 248) contend that if the policy making role of public officials at various levels is considered, it is evident that three basic roles can be distinguished: fundamental policy making roles; incremental policy making roles; and momentous policy making roles. Fundamental policy making involves the provision of comprehensive and exhaustive information on major and often unclear policy problems. Incremental roles are often entail marginal adjustments of policies and are often a response to issues arising within a policy area. Momentous policy making roles are often associated with urgent and immediate decisions that have to be made in response to problems (De Coning, Cloete & Wissink 2011: 248).

It is important to note that the fact that public managers do not make the “final decisions” in policy making is generally acknowledged. This implies that the politicians usually make the legalising decisions in parliament, provincial legislatures (where applicable) or local council chambers (Hanekom 1987:27). However, as Starling (1979:29) contends, it is evident that government officials also “make” policy that has as much mandatory authority as the parental policy. Starling’s argument is in line with the work of Cockram (1975:8) who contends that an important policy making “finality” quality that government officials possess is the delegated authority to make certain legislative interpretations that could become policy through precedents. There are diverse reasons for the delegation of policy making powers. In a new field in which there is no accumulated or relatively little experience to build on, the legislature wants an action to be taken, but can only make a vague gesture as to the direction that the action should take. In a field where there are continuous changes, the statute permits flexibility for the agency (public official) to make legislative interpretations or policy adjustments (Fesler 1980:5). Drawing from the congressional policy making process in the United States, Fesler illustrates that the Congress may broadly forbid “unfair” methods of

competition and “unfair” or “deceptive” acts in commerce, leaving the administrative agency officials to give content to those vague terms *unfair* and *deceptive*.

At times, the legislative process itself is so confusing and full of cross currents that the statute passed, incorporates a number of contradictory policy guidelines and the agency (or public official) has to use its own judgment to make sense out of the vague policy. Sometimes, too, the necessity of reaching a compromise solution results in use of terminology by the legislature which obscures the disagreement but whose deliberate ambiguity leaves the administrative agency (official) great scope for interpretation (Fesler 1980:5-6).

In cases where citizens, political parties, interest groups and civil society are involved in the policy making process, it is the public manager who finally creates the policy document or formulates policy proposals to advise politicians on the matters relating to the issue. This implies that the official has the task of articulating group and individual values and needs in society in order to generate the relevant policy information. Furthermore, the manager has to put into action several specialists such as statisticians and investment teams to provide specialised advice on the issue at hand. A good case also is the public official's preparation of white papers and many of the Minister's speeches on policy issues (De Coning, Cloete & Wissink 2011: 248).

The role of the public official comes to the fore in cases where policy issues become more technical requiring the expertise of the officials. Hanekom (1987:27), drawing from *Hansard Reports* in South Africa notes, *inter alia*, that the public official dominates the fact findings, analysis and recommendation with regard to policy formulation in such a way that a minister with a group of competent public officials as advisors, has less personal impact on the policy making. Based on the same reports, Hanekom (1987:27) concludes that “as a policy formulator” a public official has a virtual monopoly on drafting minutes and briefs (and legislation) for committees or ministerial meetings. Witte (1962:153-171) describing the critical role of public officials in public policy making in the United States, argues that the conception that administrative agencies merely provide the legislature with information on policy matters and initiate minor bills to fill details of unclear statutes or defective laws is no more. What is evident, Witte contends, is that many important statutes enacted by Congress have their origin in administrative departments and that congressional action is profoundly influenced by the wishes of these departments.

Public officials are the major source of proposals for statutes and amendments of statutes. Although proposals for statutes and amendments of statutes can flow from many sources, the executive administrative institutions are among the most important of these. The general reason, is that, an institution or department in a given field is likely to have more factual information about trends and problems in that field and the expert personnel for the analysis of such data. During implementation, the institution is also likely to have discovered the defects that existing statutes have. In addition, though not all the time, the institution is trusted as a less biased source of information than other available sources such as organised interest groups (Fesler 1980:4).

Another area where public officials play an important policy role is in regard to budgetary matters. Public officials prepare and establish estimates of income and expenditure which eventually go through the normal legislative processes (De Coning, Cloete & Wissink 2011: 249). According to Harveman and Margolis (1983: xii-xiii), budget policies have great influence on established policies. The way in which the formal budget is drawn up, plays vital role in determining policy objectives.

From the above, it can be deduced that officials in executive institutions play a major role in the policy making process. In the case of local governments in Uganda, officials in their executive institutions are expected to play an important role in the decentralisation policy making process. The officials who are directly involved in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the decentralisation policy, should be in position to identify the policy defects or limitations, its achievements and its areas or aspects that need adjustments. The officials can then make proposals for the policy changes or innovations to the politicians. In areas like budgetary matters, officials particularly in local governments provide an input to the budgeting process by participating in budget conferences. In other cases, public officials in local government executive institutions are the ones who formulate policy proposals to advise the politicians on particular citizens or interest group demands. A case in point is the demand for creation of new districts. Public officials articulate the demands of citizens to create separate districts and they advise the politicians on the viability and demarcation of such districts.

### 3.6.3 Policy levels in government structures

Official duties are executed at various government levels: central or national; regional and local levels but the administration and management followed will always be similar. The only difference lies in the content of the actions taken which may depend largely on the mandates given at each level under existing constitutional arrangements. In discussing the hierarchy of the various policy levels (in democratic policy making systems), this thesis does not make a distinction between the various levels of authority—all actions are treated as related.

The hierarchy of policy levels in government structures (based on the South African experience) includes: the ruling party policy; government policy (or cabinet policy); departmental policy; administrative policy; departmental personnel policy; departmental finance policy; departmental organisational policy; departmental procedural policy; and departmental control policy (Botes, Brynard, Fourie & Roux 1992:197-198). The authors explain the levels as follows

The ruling party policy making takes place during top management of the party conference or congress on an annual basis (the frequency varies in many countries. In Uganda, the President convenes the conference as and when he feels it is necessary). At the party congress the party obtains the opinions of party members. When members accept the matters under consideration, they are included in the political policy of the party and become part of the policy of the government of-the-day (in Uganda as well as South Africa, however, ruling party policies often have to go through parliamentary approval before becoming policies of the government of-the-day). This policy making phase is beyond the scope of the executive officials and they often contribute only in exceptional circumstances. After the ruling party political policy has become the government policy (or cabinet policy), the political ideas must be transformed into workable realities and it is the task of the executive official to create practical programmes to execute the policy of the government of-the-day. The government will specify policy principles such as policy regarding employment, agriculture, education, health, environment and urbanisation. These policy programmes will often serve as policy frameworks for institutions at both national, regional and local government levels. As to the situation in Uganda, a number of policy changes regarding directing more resources to the productive sectors of the economy through agriculture modernisation; promotion of exports through strengthening value addition; industrialisation and tourism; and the Bank of

Uganda's interest rates for dealing with inflationary pressures have been discussed and adopted by the ruling party (National Resistance Movement) at its caucus conferences (retreats) usually held at Kyankwanzi National Leadership Institute (NALI) (Mugerwa 2012:5). Such changes which have an impact on development and service delivery programmes at both national and local levels eventually have become government policy positions.

After government policy has been specified, the next step is to formulate departmental policy. The head of department and the senior officials assume a leading role in the formulation of departmental policy. As regards administrative policy, in line with the execution of the generic administrative functions, the head of department is expected to make provision for the formulation of policy for each of the other generic functions. With regard to departmental staff policy, although there are policy directives from a Commission of Administration or Public Service Commission and general personnel policy in Public Service Acts as well as personnel regulations and codes, it is still required that the head of department formulates a personnel policy to satisfy the managerial independence granted to her or him. In Uganda, the heads of department and chief officials in local government administrative executive institutions are expected to determine departmental policies on a number of areas such as personnel conduct, time management, reporting and feedback procedures, performance appraisal mechanisms, leave procedures and performance target setting mechanisms.

For departmental financial policy, it is necessary that departments establish policy guidelines and regulations on how public finances should be managed. As for departmental organisational policy, the organisational structure of public institutions is usually prescribed by Parliament or Public Service Commission but the internal functioning need to be continuously investigated by departmental organisational and work study officials. Regarding departmental procedural policy, it is important to note that public institutions at all government levels operate according to specific methods and procedures. It is therefore necessary that departmental organisational and work studies continuously advise the head of department on improved procedures and methods in order to implement a proper procedural policy. Finally, in regard to departmental control policy, since it is one of the core tasks of the departmental head to be in control of the affairs of his or her department, it is logical to formulate sound control policies. It is imperative to take the necessary steps to implement means of control such as supervision, inspection, auditing and reporting in order to manage control duties successfully.

### **3.6.4 Institutions involved in public policy making**

The formulation of policies usually takes place when information on the issue concerned is provided. There are institutions which are involved in the determination of policy decisions. These deliberately gather information or act in advisory way before decisions are made. Such institutions to include: legislative institutions; political executive council or cabinet committees; commissions and committees of inquiry; and internal auxiliary services and staff units (Botes, Brynard, Fourie & Roux 1992: 195-196; Thornhill 2012: 148-153).

Duly elected legislative bodies at various levels of government have the authority to determine policies and enact acts or ordinances. Legislative committees (select, standing and joint committees of parliament) for specific areas are given powers to collect evidence on matters that require policy formulation. The cabinet committees are entrusted with the formulation and execution of policy. The committees which consist of ministers, sometimes deputy ministers are appointed to investigate specific areas and make relevant policy recommendations to the cabinet. Commissions of inquiry are usually appointed by political office bearers to investigate a specific event which may result in the identification of shortcomings in a policy and make recommendations for policy change. The internal auxiliary services and staff units which are in all the departments provide advice to management on specific policy areas (Botes, Brynard, Fourie & Roux 1992:196-198). In the Ugandan situation, the current decentralisation policy was adopted following recommendations by a commission of inquiry (Mahmood Mamdani Commission of 1987). The Parliamentary committee on local governments has been influential in making recommendation for the decentralisation policy changes. Notable among the recommendations is the establishment of the local government finance commission which advises the President on issues of financing the decentralisation policy.

### **3.6.5 Factors influencing policy making**

There are a considerable number of internal and external factors that influence policy making which must be taken into account in the policy making process. Botes, Brynard, Fourie and Roux (1992: 192-194) identify the internal factors as conditions of establishment; political assignments; legality according to the state and administrative law; financial means; abilities of personnel; physical facilities; and the managerial style of the head of department. The authors explain the factors as follows:

Regarding conditions of establishment, it is argued that public institutions are established with a view to accomplishing specific goals. Therefore, they can only determine sub-goals and lay down policy directions that fall within their scope of jurisdiction. No department or institution has the right to act outside its jurisdiction or duplicate or take over the work of another department. For political assignments, it should be noted that public institutions are created to achieve political goals and for this reason, each department is under the supervision of a political office bearer. If the political office bearer is to defend the political policy of her/his department in a legislative assembly, it must fall within her or his political portfolio; otherwise one would be trespassing on the terrain of another political office bearer. In the case of local governments in Uganda, administrative executive institutions have their scope of jurisdiction provided under the LG Act, 1997 and are therefore not expected to act outside their jurisdiction in the policy making process. Each of the institutions is also not expected to take over, duplicate or undo the work of another institution or department. With regard to legality, according to the state and administrative law, all government actions require that the rights and freedoms of people are respected. If a public institution applies an illegal or unlawful policy, the state may be held accountable if a citizen sustains any harm.

As for financial means, no public institution can set up an ambitious policy if there are insufficient funds to give effect to it. Regarding the abilities of the personnel, when a policy is determined for attainment of goals, it is imperative to take into account the number and quality of employees. As regards physical facilities, availability of facilities such as office space, warehouses, land, equipment and modes of transport have to be taken into account. For the managerial style of the head of department, a lenient manager, might promote a relaxed policy making process and create an atmosphere that would lead to the belief that deviation from departmental policy would not be dealt with strictness while an autocratic manager will enforce his or her view without an input from others. For local governments in Uganda, issues of inadequate financing, lack of skilled personnel, inadequate number of the personnel and lack of facilities such as transport and office equipment affect the executive institutions' policy making activities.

Concerning the external factors, these include: circumstances; policy directions of political parties; pressure groups, interest groups and mass demonstration; and personal views of public officials and political office bearers. Circumstances as the total environment determined by changes in time and place, impact on policy making decisions. Changes in



circumstances occur in a number of areas including crises or war situations, international relations, geographical and climatic conditions and human needs and demands- which are influenced by economic and technological trends (Cloete 1986 reflected in Botes, Brynard, Fourie & Roux 1992: 192:194; Thornhill 2012:132-133). Regarding circumstances, in the case of Uganda, policy changes have had to be made to address the suffering of people in the northern region resulting from civil wars that have plagued the region for many years. Concerning international relations, many countries are members and participate in the activities of international and regional bodies such as United Nations, International Monetary Fund, African Union, European Union, SADC and EAC. The activities of these bodies influence policies of each state at national, provincial and local government levels.

In Uganda, the current legislation about homosexuality has received international condemnation with a number of international bodies such as the EU withholding funding assistance to the country. The withholding of funds is likely to adversely affect service delivery at both national and local government levels. There are indications that government will reconsider its position on the matter, given the potential negative consequences on development activities due to the withdrawal of international funding. The geographical and climatic conditions in the case of Uganda have had considerable influence on policy making. Policy adjustments have had to be made to provide dams and boreholes to farmers in the drought prone regions such as Karamoja and south western Uganda. Areas prone to landslides have also influenced policy making decisions to address the problem.

For policy directions of political parties, the ruling party, running the government of the day may take into account policy ideas of opposition parties (especially from the stronger parties). Pressure groups and interest groups usually organise mass demonstrations when they have issues to make known to the government. In Uganda, pressure groups have organised several demonstrations to demand policy changes with many of them resulting in violence as the demonstrators clash with security agents. Recently the main opposition leader, Kiiza Besigye had to be flown abroad for hospitalisation following a brutal attack from security personnel during demonstrations (*The Daily Monitor*: 1, 29 April 2011; *The New Vision*: 1-2, 29 April 2011). Regarding personal views of public officials, the departmental heads are supposed to be appointed on account of their special knowledge, experience and disposition. It is thus expected that the personality of such heads would have an effect on policy.



### 3.6.6 Public policy making process

In the public policy making process, there are several phases. Sharkansky (1975:5) considers the process to include: the formulation, approval and implementation of government programmes. Hanekom and Thornhill (1993:63-66) consider the process to include: formulation; authorisation; articulation; execution; and feedback. To De Coning and Wissink (2011:4), the process includes initiation; design; analysis; formulation; dialogue and advocacy; and implementation and evaluation phases. This thesis considers five major phases of the process: (i) formulation; (ii) authorisation; (iii) articulation; (iv) implementation and monitoring; and (v) evaluation or impact assessment phases. The implementation and monitoring phase is given an emphasis since it is the core subject matter of the study which examines the monitoring role of local governments in implementing decentralisation policy in Uganda.

The formulation phase, as the first phase, involves the identification of a goal or need (or problem). This implies that information is obtained by the policy formulator such as a senior public official regarding the magnitude of the need [problem] or goal, the community groups affected and the alternative measures that can be undertaken to attain the goal or to satisfy the need [solve the problem] (Hanekom & Thornhill 1993:64). It is important to note that in political systems where citizens participate in public activities policy needs, issues or problems are identified through the attention they generate in public debates. The longer, more intense and widespread debates about an issue become, the stronger the need and the urgency to deal with it. Political leaders (who work very closely with public officials) often use public speeches, political campaigns or media debates to raise and mobilise public awareness and support for policy issues that need to be promoted. Once there is mass support for issues; it becomes very difficult to ignore them. Such debates usually attract civil society, business sector, interest and advocacy groups; and individuals (Cloete & Meyer 2011:88-91). In Uganda, however, public awareness and participation in policy formulation have been limited. Government institutions more often formulate policies without or with little public input. For example, currently the taxation policy changes announced in the 2014/2015 national budget were arrived at without input from stakeholders. The policy changes such as the tax that has been imposed on private education institutions (without consulting the institutions) has caused discontent among the owners of the institutions and parents who send their children to such institutions.

The authorisation phase, which is the second phase, entails selection by the policy formulator of the specific programme of action (a policy) that appears to be the most suitable solution under the prevailing conditions and formal authorisation to implement the selected policy option that will meet the desired goals and objectives (Hanekom & Thornhill 1993:64). It is imperative to note that the selection of policy alternatives (programmes and strategies) to achieve intended goals and objectives involve a critical analysis of the available policy options. Cloete and Meyer (2011:104) have compared this phase of the process to a journey that is to be undertaken: with clear destination (policy objective) but different potential routes and vehicles (policy programmes and strategies) to reach that destination.

In the articulation phase, which is the third phase, the adopted policy is publicly stated and becomes the policy of the legislator regarding a specific goal or need. It also includes spelling out the goal or goals the policy maker or legislator intends to pursue with the community or groups of the community (Hanekom & Thornhill 1993:64).

In the implementation and monitoring phase, which this study considers to be the fourth phase, the executive institutions embark on the implementation of the policy. During the policy implementation there is a need to monitor the implementation process in order to keep track of the spending programme, the time frame, the progress towards reaching objectives and the quantity and quality of outputs. Regular collection of information through monitoring provides early warning of deviation from the initially desired targets and provides the necessary information on performance and progress (Valadez & Bamberger 1994:7; OECD 2005:75). An examination of the implementation and monitoring phase is provided after a brief discussion of the policy evaluation or impact assessment phase.

For evaluation, the policy process model implies that it is the final step in the policy making process. This study considers it the fifth and the final phase. This is when policy makers determine whether or not policies have achieved their stated goals; at what cost; and with what effects, intended and unintended on society. Evaluation provides the “feedback” linkage, that is, evaluation of current policy identifies new problems and leads to the policy making process once again (Dye 2008:55). It is imperative to note that systematic evaluation is relatively rare in government. Systematic evaluation is considered to be a careful, objective, scientific assessment of the current and long term impact of policies on both target and non target groups or situations, as well as an assessment of the ratio of current and long

term costs to the identified benefits (Dye 2008:55-56). Evaluation is distinguished from monitoring that refers to the continuous function that uses the systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the stakeholders of an ongoing development intervention with indications of the progress and the achievement of objectives in the use of allocated resources (Kusek & Rist 2004:12). Evaluation, which is done periodically, could be undertaken by external commissioned evaluation teams such as medium term-review teams, although it could also be done by fulltime in house evaluation personnel (De Coning, Cloete & Wissink 2011:269-270). In Uganda, the external evaluation of the decentralisation policy is done by private firms which produce decentralisation annual performance reports.

### **3.7 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING PHASE**

#### **3.7.1 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

##### **3.7.1.1 The meaning of policy implementation**

Policies, without being implemented, would remain mere theoretical statements of intent on paper. Policies imply theories, they only become programmes when by authoritative actions the initial conditions are created through implementation. Implementation, therefore, is the ability to forge subsequent links in the causal relationship to obtain the desired results (Pressman & Wildavsky 1973 reflected in Brynard, Cloete & De Coning 2011:137). Policy implementation includes those actions by a public body that are directed at the achievement of objectives set forth in prior policy decisions (Van Meter & Van Horn 1975:447-448). Policy implementation is regarded (Brynard, Cloete & De Coning 2011:137) as the process of converting mainly physical and financial resources into concrete service delivery outputs in the form of facilities and services or into other concrete outputs aimed at achieving policy objectives. Fesler (1980:3) explains what policy implementation means when he argues that when government adopts a policy, where it normally means that policy makers have enacted a law permitting, forbidding or directing members of the society to behave in a specific way, the law is merely printed on paper. It is therefore the task of the public administrator to translate the law into changed behaviour by individual members of society or society as a whole, to convert words into action and form into substance, Fesler Concludes. Based on the respective authors' understanding of the meaning of policy implementation, it can be concluded that policy implementation is the translation and conversion of government policy

into programmes of action to produce specific policy outputs aimed at realising policy goals and objectives.

### **3.7.1.2 Generations of research into policy implementation**

Brynard (2005:6-8) identifies three generations of research into policy implementation: The first generation began with the assumption that implementation would occur 'automatically' once the appropriate policies had been authorised. The second generation set out to challenge this assumption, to explain implementation 'failure' in specific cases and to demonstrate that implementation was a complex and dynamic political process. The third generation, by contrast, is less concerned with specific implementation failure and more with understanding how implementation works in general and how its prospects of success might be improved.

It is imperative to note that researchers do not agree on a theory of implementation or even on the variables crucial to implementation success. Researchers, for the most part, also disagree on what should constitute implementation success, especially in the multi-actor setting. Even among those who seem to share assumptions on this issue, for instance those who prefer the top-down approach to policy implementation, there seems to be considerable diversity (Brynard 2005:8).

### **3.7.1.3 Approaches to policy implementation**

Opinions as to the most appropriate approaches to policy implementation are varied. As implementation research evolved, two approaches developed as to the most effective methods for policy implementation: top-down and bottom-up. Top-down proponents treat policy makers at the top management level as the cardinal actors and focus their attention on factors that can be manipulated at the national level. Bottom-up proponents argue that effective implementation occurs only when those who are primarily affected by the policy are actively engaged in the planning and execution of the policy. The bottom-up approach came as a challenge to the top down approach that was criticised mainly for ignoring the critical role of those affected by the policy programmes. But soon the bottom-up approach also came under criticism. The problem was that the bottom-up model undermined any idea of a relatively expeditious implementation process; moreover, there were circumstances when a top-down approach seemed to be more applicable than a bottom-up approach such as in

cases of national security, many legal judgments or technically driven decisions (de Leon & de Leon 2002:470).

It is important to note that there have also been attempts at refining the two approaches into more comprehensive frameworks or models. Approaching implementation from the perspective of social change, Smith (1973) argues that in implementation of any policy, old patterns of interactions and institutions are abolished or modified and new patterns of action and institutions are created. His model views implementation as tension generating force in society. Smith's tension-generating matrix within the implementation process is an interaction between four components: the idealised policy and the patterns of interactions that the policy intends to induce; the target group which is supposed to change its behaviour; the implementing organisation's structure, capacity and leadership; and environmental factors or the "constraining corridor" through which the implementation of policy passes. Although, as Brynard, Cloete and De Coning (2011:140) argue, this was presented before the bottom-up model became popular; Smith's model may well be considered one of the earliest bottom-up approaches to policy implementation.

A much more widely quoted early model comes from Van Meter and Van Horn (1975). Invoking the earlier work of Lowi (1963), the model proposes that the nature of policy itself is critical to the success of its implementation. It suggests six clusters of variables and the linkage between them which shape policy and performance. The variables include: the relevance of policy standards and objectives; policy resources; inter organisational communication and enforcement activities; the characteristics of implementing agencies; the economic, social and political environment affecting the implementation organisation; and the disposition of implementers to carry out policy decisions.

Another model which is in the tradition of top-down communication and in many aspects similar to Van Meter and Van Horn's is what was proposed by Edwards and Sharkansky (1978). In addressing the questions "What are the preconditions for successful policy implementation?" and "What are the primary obstacles to successful implementation?" they identified four interacting and simultaneously operating factors: communication; resources; dispositions; and bureaucratic structure (Brynard, Cloete & De Coning 2011:141).

Yet another model, probably the most influential articulation of the top-down approach was proposed by Mazmanian and Sabatier (1981). Their model begins with three critical observations: policy making is an interactive process of formulation, implementation and reformulation; the focus should be on the attainment of the stated goals, even though the outputs of the implementing agencies and the outcomes of the implementation process are both important; and that implementation can be viewed from three different perspectives — the initial policy maker or the centre, the field level implementing officials and the beneficiaries or target group at whom the policy is directed. Searching for the key variables that affect implementation, Mazmanian and Sabatier (1981) give numerous factors grouped into three broad categories: tractability of the problems, in the sense that some social problems are simply much easier to deal with than others; the ability of policy decisions to structure implementation — meaning that original policy makers can substantially affect the attainment of policy objectives; and non-statutory variables affecting implementation—implying that implementation also has inherent political dynamisms (Brynard, Cloete & De Coning 2011:141).

#### **3.7.1.4 Challenging the top-down models**

Concurrent with the refinement of the top-down approach of implementation was a growing number of authors that begun to question some of the assumptions of the approach and to highlight the importance of factors that had either been ignored. For example, Rein and Rabinowitz (1977) challenge the hierarchical assumption of the top-down model by proposing the “principle of circularity” which implied that top-down and bottom-up forces will often co-exist in most implementation situations which are influenced by pressures from both the top and the bottom. Building on this, Nakamura and Smallwood (1980) proposed their conception of the implementation process as a system of functional environment, each of which constitutes a variety of factors and are connected to the others by various communication links (Brynard, Cloete & De Coning 2011:141).

Berman (1978) forwarded his own analysis that implementation success depends on the complex interactions between the policy and its institutional setting. Berman (1978:175-177) argues that the differences between the processes of macro and micro-implementation arise from their distinct multiple-actor institutional setting. He contends that macro-implementation is when central government executes its policy to influence local delivery organisations while

micro implementation is when, local governments have to devise and carry out their own policies. Berman argues that the effective power to determine a policy's outcome rests not with the original policy makers, but with local employees who operate at micro-implementation level. Berman suggests that implementation can follow four possible paths: non-implementation—where there is no adaptation to the project plan; cooptation—when there is adaptation in the project implementation to accommodate existing routines; technological learning—where there is no adaptation of the project plan but adaptation of the routinised behaviour to accommodate the plan; and mutual adaptation—where there is adaptation of both the project and deliverer behaviour. He argues that projects are either adapted to local conditions or not implemented at all and that the only projects that seem to produce effective outcomes are those whose path showed mutual adaptation. One of Berman's (1978:179) conclusions is that, given the nature of implementation, a single retrospective theory of implementation is not likely and that if one proposed it, it should be treated with caution.

Lipsky (1978) questions the top-down hierarchy's assumption that greater influence of policy is exerted by those who formulate it than by those who execute it. He proposes that in many cases, the latitude of those charged with executing the policy is so substantial that policy is effectively 'made' by people who implement it. Lipsky (1978:397-398) observes that the frontline or lower public service employees (whom he termed street-level bureaucrats) who interact directly with citizens in the course of their jobs and who have substantial discretion in the execution of their work, were central to successful policy implementation.

Other authors like Elmore (1979) joined the stream of authors criticising top-down implementation approach. Elmore (1979:603) argues that the notion that policy makers should exercise some kind of direct and determinary control over policy implementation might be called a "noble lie". Some of the other notable scholars who criticised the top-down model according to Brynard, Cloete and De Coning (2011:139) include Barret and Fudge (1981), Harjan and Porter (1981), Hanf (1982), and Linder and Peters (1987).

While the hierarchical assumptions of the top down model that consider policy makers at the top management as the central actors have been heavily criticised, in a number of cases especially in developing countries like Uganda, the policy process seems to be dominated by elements of these assumptions. Major policy decisions, even under decentralisation, are

made at the centre with little input from those who implement the policy and those who are affected by the policy or the target group. For example, local governments in Uganda which are the principal implementers of decentralisation policy seem to have limited input into the policy making process. Substantial policy decisions tend to be made by the central government which is the initiator of the decentralisation policy. The situation is not improved by the fact that the policy targeted beneficiaries and the lower level officials tend to have very limited input into the policy making process. The findings of this study provide empirical dimensions of this argument.

#### **3.7.1.5 Towards a synthesis between top-down and bottom-up approaches**

Bottom-up implementation research developed largely as a response to the top-down policy implementation views especially its assumption of hierarchical control; its focus on legally mandated aspects; and its underestimation of the role of the frontline or lower level employees and organisational interactions and bargaining. However, notwithstanding the differences that exist between the proponents of the two approaches, there is much they have in common. There is general consensus that policy implementation is a dynamic, complex, multilevel and multi-actor process influenced both by the context and content of the policy being implemented (Brynard, Cloete & De Coning 2011:142).

The difference between the top-down and bottom-up models, in many instances, is not so much about the variables they use as about the relative significance of particular variables within specific cases of implementation. For example, the difference is not so much about whether implementation is multi-organisation process, multi-actor, but which organisations and actors are the most relevant. It is not about whether lower cadre public service employees and organisational networks are significant as explanatory variables but how significant they are. Depending on the particular features of specific implementation cases, each model may be more or less relevant thus the need to synthesise the major features of the two models and develop models that capture the strengths of both (Brynard, Cloete & De Coning 2011:142-143).

Experience supports the need to synthesise the major features of the two approaches. In policy implementation, the features of both approaches tend to be at play. In the case of local governments in Uganda where the elements of the top-down approach are more prevalent



in the decentralisation policy process, the features of bottom-up approach also exist. In the implementation process, local governments as the principal implementers of decentralisation have had some input in the policy making. By providing implementation progress reports; and monitoring and evaluation reports for example, LGs make input into the policy decision process. Through bodies like Local Governments Association (LGA) Urban Authorities Association (UAA) and through participation in the annual decentralisation performance review conferences, LGs have also made some input into the decentralisation policy process. The lower civil service employees in both higher and lower LGs usually initiate the implementation and monitoring reports that are submitted to their supervisors. The reports are eventually incorporated into the final reports that are sent by the LGs' top management officials to the central government. The existence of the features for both approaches supports Rabinowitz's (1977) "principle of circularity" discussed earlier (see *supra* para 3.7.1.4) which proposed that top-down and bottom-up forces will often exist simultaneously in most implementation processes.

#### **3.7.1.6 Factors influencing policy implementation**

While the maze through which policy progresses during the implementation process is unique, a synthesis of the accumulated scholarship on the subject points to critical variables which shape the direction that the implementation might take. Five such variables emerge as important causal factors (known as 5-C protocol). These variables include: (i) the *content* of the policy itself — what it sets out to do in terms of goals, how directly it relates to the issue at hand (causal theory) and how it aims to solve the perceived problem (methods); (ii) the nature of the *institutional context*— the corridor through which policy must travel and by whose parameters it is limited in the implementation process; (iii) the *commitment* of those entrusted with executing the implementation at various levels to the methods and goals of the policy; (iv) the *administrative capacity* of the implementers to execute the changes desired of them; and (v) the *support* of clients/coalitions whose interests are enhanced or threatened by the policy and the strategies they employ in strengthening or deflecting its implementation (Brynard, Cloete, & De Coning 2011:145).

Each of the five variables is linked to and influenced by the others, depending on the varying extent on the specific situation of implementation. For example, capacity is likely to be a function of all the remaining four variables; policy content may provide for resources for

capacity building; the commitment of the implementers can make up for lack of such capacity; the institutional context of the relevant agencies can influence capacity enhancement; or the coalitions of actors opposed to effective implementation could reduce the capacity which might otherwise have been sufficient while supportive coalitions and clients can enhance the capacity (Brynard, Cloete, & De Coning 2011:145-146).

#### **3.7.1.7 Institutional arrangements for policy implementation**

Policy implementation begins once the policy is approved and handed over to the executive institutions to implement. Government departments translate the policies into strategic and business plans that include multi-year planning; programming and budgeting as key instruments for policy implementation. In Uganda for example, the decentralisation policy is implemented through three year continuous strategic plans designed by various local governments.

The key instruments for policy implementation are concerns of programme management, operations management and project management. As already discussed, policy implementation involves the conversion of mainly physical and financial resources into concrete delivery outputs in the form of facilities and services. This is achieved through implementation of programmes and projects. It has been observed (Baalén & De Coning 2011:178) that, to ensure that public sector service delivery is as efficient and as economical as possible, all government institutions are supposed to design strategic plans to allocate resources to implement these plans through programmes and projects and then to monitor the implementation process.

An integrated governance framework which arranges for the management of policies, strategies, programmes, projects, operations and resources in an integrated manner, can be more effective in implementing policies in government institutions (MacMaster 2004). Cloete (2000:121) identifies a number of principles that should guide a government department in dealing with implementation. They include: departments should concentrate on their core competencies and functions; policy and service delivery programmes should be appropriately designed; output oriented benchmarks should be created; a strong, coherent and proactive political administrative leadership cadre should be considered to steer the implementation; implementation structures should be adequately designed for their specific

tasks; implementation strategies should be conceptualised explicitly; systematic appraisals should be conducted; adequate service delivery systems should be taken into account; and interdepartmental mechanisms should be established.

In Uganda's situation, the decentralisation policy implementation is executed in an institutional framework consisting of central government departments, inter-ministerial committees, interdepartmental co-ordination units, LGs and advisory agencies such as the local government finance commission which advise the President on the implementation of the decentralisation policy. In the context of policy management which concerns the institutional and governance arrangement of the state and civil society that have profound influence on how policies are made, implemented and evaluated (De Coning & Wissink 2011:3), the nongovernmental sector including public private partnerships, nongovernmental organisations and other civil society organisations are part of the institutional arrangement. This is the case in many countries including Uganda.

The execution of public policies by executive institutions cannot be taken for granted. The unresponsiveness or weaknesses of the institutions affect the implementation. In many developing countries the critical problem seems to be not so much of political instability of governments or failure to design rational policies, but an administrative incapacity to implement government policy decisions and programmes (Fesler 1980:3). In Uganda, the administrative capacity of local governments to implement the decentralisation policy as indicated in the introductory chapter (see *supra* para 1.4) has been questioned and it's one of the issues that this study address itself to.

### **3.7.2 MONITORING OF POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

#### **3.7.2.1 The need for monitoring of policy implementation**

As pointed out earlier (see *supra* para 3.6.6) once policies are being executed, there is a need to monitor the implementation process in order to keep track of the spending programme, time frame, the progress towards achieving objectives and the quantity and quality of outputs. Regular collection of information through monitoring provides early warning of deviation from the initially desired targets, provides the necessary information on performance and progress— by indicating the actual performance against what was planned.

While the importance of well-designed policies is unquestionable, implementing them effectively is often difficult. Given the nature of politics, actual implementation is often a complex and lengthy process. Monitoring that process is important to keep the implementation on track and to yield information on the effectiveness of the strategy used in the implementation. In addition, information from a strong monitoring system can promote vigorous discussion on the implementation process among stakeholders. When the designing of a monitoring system includes discussing the status of the policy process with all the key stakeholders within the country, that process encourages support and ownership of the policy, increasing the likelihood that the policy will be sustained ( USAID 2000a:2).

According to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD 2005:75), the importance of monitoring policy implementation lies in providing the necessary information on progress and performance to provide an ongoing picture of progress; maintain high standards; ensure resources are used effectively; ensure that plan workflow stays on schedule (with logistics and resources); identify problems and solutions proactively; establish and maintain records of events; identify opportunities; and motivate staff by illustrating the purpose of their work. The overall objective of monitoring is actually to ensure that policy programmes are efficiently and effectively implemented. Segone (2008:8) observes that the aim of monitoring policy implementation is to improve relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of policy reforms.

Drawing from Nigeria's local government experience, Oladipo (2008:88) contends that, as an implementation strategy, monitoring serves as an important instrument for improving project delivery and impact since information gathered from such exercises enables management to take appropriate remedial actions. And that monitoring also reduces implementation costs through the elimination of bottlenecks and ensures efficiency in resource utilisation.

### **3.7.2.2 Policy monitoring system**

Monitoring policy implementation comprises two broad complementary activities, namely monitoring the implementation process and monitoring the attainment of results (Valadez and Bamberger 1994:121). To accomplish these activities, there is a need to design an effective monitoring system. This thesis considers a monitoring system to be a network of

units and planning mechanisms dealing with data management issues that need to be addressed through monitoring planning efforts, the key aspects to be monitored including monitoring indicators, monitoring tools and methods for data collection and mechanisms for reporting findings.

An effective monitoring system can provide many benefits to project management. These include: (a) identifying targets and objectives for project implementation, (b) maintaining easily retrievable records of project implementation which can later be used for evaluation, (c) identifying problems encountered by the project and (d) providing readily available analyses for decision-making (World Bank 1989:3).

In designing a monitoring system, a number of issues need to be addressed. These include: approaches to the design of the system; monitoring indicators; monitoring tools and methods; monitoring data reporting system; and the features of an effective policy monitoring system

**(a) *Approaches to the design of a monitoring system***

When a monitoring system is to be designed, two approaches can be considered during project preparation: (a) the blueprint approach, in which detailed specifications are provided on what will be done and by whom; and (b) the process approach, in which only the main objectives of monitoring are defined, leaving the detailed design to be handled by project managers during project start-up. The advantage of the process approach is that project management is more likely to support a system if it is engaged in its design. The disadvantage is that little may be done if the managers themselves are inexperienced and do not appreciate the purpose of such a system. In such a case, a blueprint approach is preferable, although project staff should be involved in its detailed design at the earliest possible stage (World Bank 1989:3). In the Ugandan context, the existing monitoring system seems to carry more of the characteristics of the process approach as the decentralisation policy framework does not provide the detailed specifications on what should be done and by whom in the monitoring process. The framework only defines the nature and main objectives of an effective monitoring system. Senior officials in LGs are expected to provide the detailed design of the system. However, the challenge which this study addresses itself to is the capacity of the LG officials to design a sound monitoring system and effectively utilise the system as envisioned in the policy framework.

**(b) *Indicators for monitoring policy implementation***

Indicators constitute an important component of a monitoring system. Indicators are measurement instruments used to track and assess progress in the attainment of objectives and outcomes (Rabie & Cloete 2011:204). Miles (1989:16) defines an indicator as a measuring instrument used to give concrete measurable but indirect value to an otherwise immeasurable intangible concept. Atkinson and Wellman (2003:6) consider indicators as pointers that show whether goals are achieved. The World Bank (2004:6) considers indicators as measures of inputs, processes, outputs, outcomes and impacts for development projects, strategies or programmes. Establishing indicators for the various levels of the policy implementation process is significant as they provide information on different aspects of the policy and also provide performance information at various stages of the policy process. Input and process (activity) indicators, enable managers to track performance, detect problems and take corrective measures and predict ultimate success. Indicators for output, outcome and impact are essential to establish the success of the intervention and to determine the form of future intervention based on the experience from the previous interventions (Rabie & Cloete 2011:206).

The various types of indicators often used in a monitoring system to measure policies and programmes include: input indicators — which measure the financial, physical, human, information and time resources that are fed into the project; process indicators, which measure the way in which resources or inputs have been converted into policy outputs and outcomes in terms of efficiency and compliance to good governance principle and normative considerations; output put indicators — which measure the quantity and quality of goods and services created through the use of inputs; outcome indicators— which measure the quantity and quality of results achieved through the provision of project goods and services; impact indicators -which measure the long term societal implications of a project; efficacy indicators — which show how well the results at one level of project implementation have been translated into results at the next level in terms of efficiency of inputs, effectiveness of project outputs and sustainability of project impact; and exogenous indicators — which cover factors outside the control of the project but which might affect its outcome, including risks and the performance of the sector in which the project operates (Mosse and Sontheimer 1996:11-14; Chen 2005:10; Chimwendo 2010:6-9). While there are various indicators that can measure the progress and performance of projects, the challenge, is how to define the

indicators for particular projects and how to effectively track the indicators in order to establish the performance of projects. In a situation where the monitors lack the capacity in terms of knowledge, skills and competence to design and apply the indicators for particular projects, the indicators will remain mere prescriptions.

***(c) Tools and methods for monitoring policy implementation***

A monitoring system defines monitoring tools and methods. There are various tools and methods that can be used for monitoring policy implementation. As the World Bank (2004:5), observes, some of these tools and methods are complementary; some have broad applicability, some are substitutes, while others are quite narrow in their application. The choice of which is appropriate for any given context will depend on a range of considerations—including the uses for which monitoring is intended, the costs involved in using the tools; the speed with which the information is needed and the main stakeholders who have an interest in the monitoring findings.

The various monitoring tools and methods include: Path Analysis which involves specifying the sequence of various components of an initiative to plan activities, determining and influencing the earliest possible completion time; Gantt Charts which track activities and outputs; Logical Framework which helps to clarify objectives, the identification of the expected causal links of “programme logic”—in the following results chain: inputs, processes, outputs, outcomes and impact; Formal Surveys which are used to collect standardised information from a relatively large number of people; Rapid Appraisal methods which mainly consist of key informant interview, focus group discussion, community group interview and direct observation; participatory methods which consist of stakeholder analysis, participatory rural appraisal, beneficiary assessment and participatory monitoring; public expenditure tracking surveys which track the flow of public funds; and cost-benefit analyses which are used for assessing whether or not the costs of an activity can be justified by the outcomes and impacts (Valadez & Bamberger 1994:121; Kusek & Rist 2004:97; World Bank 2004:6-20). It is obvious that there are various tools that can be used in the monitoring process. The concern particularly regarding the LGs in Uganda is whether the monitors know how to design such tools and how to effectively utilise them in the monitoring process. The findings of the study provide empirical evidence regarding this concern.

**(d) *Monitoring data reporting mechanisms***

A monitoring system should provide formal mechanisms for reporting monitoring information to various users of the information. Formal reporting is required to provide information to the decision makers. Reporting of monitoring results serves the following purposes: It demonstrates accountability and delivery on political promises; advocates and promotes a particular point of view; indicates what does or doesn't work and why; promotes organisational learning; documents findings; develops institutional memory; and promotes stakeholder participation and support (Kusek & Rist 2004:130). When one is reporting, it is imperative to bear in mind the expectations, the needs and interests of the audience and to present performance data in clear and understandable form (Kusek & Rist 2004:131-132). The findings have to be clear and summarised in a user-friendly format that can persuade policy makers of their validity and usefulness and ensure positive effect on future policy processes (Hogwood & Gunn 1984:237).

It is important to note that utilising the findings produced by the monitoring system is the essence of the system. Findings may be used to enhance accountability, formulate budget requests, motivate personnel, inform operational decisions, build public trust, enhance and reward performance of staff and enhance efficient service delivery (Kusek & Rist 2004:134). There are different users of monitoring data and their particular information needs. Boyle and Lamaire (1999:28), provide categories of the different users. Some of these include: programme user who focuses on procedures, operational targets and client satisfaction; executive user who focuses on the attainment of programme and organisational objectives; legislative user who focuses on the attainment of objectives and distribution of benefits to the public; and public user who focuses on the quality and value of output. This implies that in a situation where the users are not interested in or do not effectively utilise the monitoring data, the monitoring efforts would not be relevant to the programme implementation process. The monitoring data become relevant only when they are utilised by the various categories of users to make decisions that inform the implementation process to achieve programme goals and objectives.



**(e) *Features of an effective policy monitoring system***

A well-crafted monitoring system that adequately tracks and thus effectively supports the policy reform process has a number attributes. According to USAID (2000a:2-3), such a system, provides a user-friendly means of understanding the current status of the relevant policy; is cost-effective for the operating unit; follows the policy reform process through completion of implementation; describes in detail the stages for rating implementation progress; defines key terms, such as “operational,” “fully functioning,” or “fully implemented”; describes in detail the methodology used for monitoring the implementation process; provides a rationale for current and future performance targets; and includes policy reform stakeholders as partners in reviewing the process of implementation and in setting future performance targets.

The Ministry of Local Government in Uganda (MoLG 2003) considers a reliable policy monitoring system under decentralisation as the one which is effective and efficient. An effective monitoring system is one where monitoring is done at the desired time, designs the correct indicators, involves a wide range of stakeholders, produces the correct results, is based on experience gathering from the field, informs decision making and results in follow-up action. An efficient system has attributes such as employing the correct methodology and tools, utilising the correct amount of resources and taking reasonable amount of time to produce results (MoLG 2003:67).

De Coning, Cloete and Wissink (2011:269) drawing from South African experience, contend that a system for monitoring policy results requires: conceptual development of monitoring frameworks; gathering reliable information based on agreed upon specific indicators; assessing and interpreting monitored results; timely reporting of information to decision makers and evaluating of monitored results with practical and useful outcomes.

It is obvious that an effective monitoring system is defined by a number of features. The question is the extent to which the monitoring system in Uganda reflects such features. The findings of the study provide empirical evidence on the extent to which the monitoring system in local governments reflects the features discussed.

### **3.7.2.3 Institutionalising the monitoring function**

Institutionally, monitoring is an ongoing function necessitating the availability of dedicated and full time personnel. Monitoring, therefore, unlike evaluation which is periodic, requires full time organisational units and establishment of effective inter organisational (and interdepartmental) relationships (De Coning, Cloete & Wissink 2011:269). The challenge is that in many cases, especially in developing countries, the personnel that carry out monitoring activities tend to have inadequate technical capacity. The findings of the study provides empirical evidence that supports this position.

### **3.7.2.4 Policy implementation monitoring challenges**

The monitoring function has a number of challenges. Mackay (2009) drawing from World Bank experience in its efforts to assist governments to institutionalise monitoring and evaluation systems, provides some of the challenges: Institutionalisation of the monitoring functions with reliable data systems so that users regard the generated monitoring information as valuable; the need for a powerful champion and stewardship by a capable ministry; the excessive number of indicators; aligning the monitoring system with national strategic goals; the need for incentives to ensure good monitoring practices and utilisation of information; and enhancing the technical capacity of public officials to effectively apply monitoring methods, tools, approaches and concepts (Mackay 2009:175-180).

There are a number of other challenges associated with monitoring the implementation of policies. As noted in the introductory chapter (see *supra* para 1.9.1), when the implementing actors expect that monitoring data are eventually being used for accountability, they tend to withhold or distort information on implementation activities. Besides, monitoring is also seen by implementers as requiring an additional effort and being distractive from primary tasks. Harmans (2010:1-2) observes that while monitoring data are being collected through different systems — addressing issues such as policy inputs and impacts, what happens in between policy inputs and impacts remains a black box of policy implementation. He contends that monitoring information that helps to trace the transformation from inputs to impacts is scarce. That opening up this black box of what happens between inputs and impacts apparently remains a big challenge.

In the case of the local governments' monitoring role in implementing decentralisation policy in Uganda, the purpose of monitoring the policy implementation, the approaches to the design of monitoring system, the monitoring indicators, the tools and methods for monitoring policy implementation, the monitoring data reporting mechanisms, the features of an effective monitoring system and the monitoring challenges discussed above, are some of the issues the study addresses. The study findings provide evidence of the empirical dimensions of these issues.

### **3.8 DECENTRALISED POWERS IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT**

Decentralised power is derived from the broader concept of decentralisation. In the public sector, institutions of government are designed to act on more than just one level. They are organised into several territorially defined levels. Beside the national institutions, institutions exist at sub-national level or regional level and local level. Hence the term, local government is used to refer to institutions of governments operating at the lowest level of the territorial governmental structure. In order to attain higher levels of efficiency, national governments decentralise their powers by transferring some of their functions downwards along the geographical scale—thus the concept of decentralisation that has been embraced by developed and developing countries (United Nations 2000:22).

Proponents of decentralisation have a number of different aims. At one end of the spectrum, decentralisation is considered as a way to: a) bring services to hitherto neglected peripheral areas; b) obtain a more equitable distribution of public services; and c) increase popular participation in policy choices. At the other end, decentralisation is considered mostly as a way of reducing the burden on national politicians by offloading service responsibilities to LGs. To complete the equation, is also the existence of a *bandwagon* effect. Decentralisation has become a popular process. Political leaders are tempted to experiment with it, hoping that it will increase their popularity at home (Brosio 2000:2). In Uganda, as pointed out at the beginning of this thesis, (see *supra* para 1.1), one of the reasons for adopting decentralisation is that it was considered as a means by the National Resistance Movement (NRM) government (which had come to power through an armed struggle) to secure legitimacy and support for its new government.

Ahmad, Devarajan, Khemani and Shah (2005:1) contend that even when it is not openly stated, improving service delivery is an indirect motivation behind most decentralisation efforts. The reasons according to the authors are threefold. First, basic services such as education, health, water and sanitation which are the responsibility of the state, are failing systematically especially for poor people. National governments are failing to provide adequate services to their people at various levels. At the macro-economic level, the spending of public funds, does not result in the expected outcomes. Secondly, the reason why improving service delivery is the reason behind most decentralisation efforts, the authors contend, is that these services are consumed locally and were also historically provided locally. Governments and their electorates attribute the problems of service delivery to the Centralisation of these services. Centralisation implies that the allocation of resources among local services may not reflect local preferences. Thirdly, central government provision is likely to increase levels of corruption and misuse of funds, as the service recipients at the local level cannot monitor the public officials or politicians in the capital city.

Concerning the specific question of decentralised powers, decentralised power takes the form of political, administrative and fiscal dimensions of decentralisation. Political (democratic) decentralisation normally refers to situations where political authority has been partially transferred to sub-national/regional and or local levels of government. The most obvious manifestations of this type of decentralisation are elected and empowered sub-national and local governments ranging from village councils to sub-national/regional councils or assemblies. **Devolution** is considered a form of political (democratic) decentralisation that reflects a true mode of decentralising government. Devolution is an arrangement in which distinct bodies are created by law, separate from the central government and in which local representatives either elected or appointed by the population, are assigned powers to decide on a range of public matters and access to resources which can be utilised at their discretion. The political base is the locality where powers are devolved to. The main objectives of devolution are political—changing the political landscape by redistributing power and in so doing enhancing democratisation and the participation of citizens. It is a long-term institutional transformation process. It also aims to improve overall government performance in the delivery of services by bringing government closer to the people. Devolution exists if local entities have substantial authority to employ, dismiss, tax, spend, invest, plan, set priorities and deliver services (European Commission 2007:15-16). In Uganda, theoretically, the adopted form of decentralisation as indicated later (see *infra*

para 5.4.2) is devolution that is intended to empower LGs to make decisions and allocate resources based on local needs and priorities.

Administrative decentralisation aims at transferring decision making powers, resources and responsibilities for delivering a select number of functions or services from the central government to lower levels of government, agencies or field offices of central government line agencies. Administrative decentralisation is associated with three possible variants, each with different characteristics: (i) de-concentration, (ii) delegation and (iii) divestment (European Commission 2007:16).

**Deconcentration**, is a process whereby governmental functions are transferred downwards within the hierarchical system of the state bureaucracy. It involves hierarchical and functional distribution of functions between the central and non-central government units. Internal administrative efficiency and the service provision efficiency are both expected to be improved by deconcentration. Since deconcentrated government units are closer to the people than the core units, they can act with a better knowledge of the local conditions, better communicate with the service consumers and better implement administrative decisions (United Nations 2000:22-23).

**Delegation** is a more extensive form of administrative decentralisation. It redistributes powers and responsibilities to local units of government or agencies that are not always necessarily branches or local offices of the delegating authority (for example service agencies, local authorities, public enterprises, housing authorities and semi-autonomous school districts). While there is transfer of responsibility to the sub-national or local government units to which power is being delegated, accountability is still vertical and rests in the delegating central government unit (European Commission 2007:17).

**Divestment** (a term originating from finance and business), occurs when planning and administrative functions or other public responsibilities are transferred from government to voluntary, private or nongovernmental institutions. This often involves partially contracting out service provision or administrative functions, deregulation or full privatisation (European Commission 2007:17-18).

Regarding fiscal decentralisation, this dimension of decentralisation refers to resource reallocation to LG levels, including the delegation of funds within sector ministries to the local levels. Resource allocation arrangements are often negotiated between central government and LGs based on a numbers of factors, including availability of resources at all levels of government, interregional equity and local fiscal management capacity. Fiscal decentralisation transfers two rights to local governments: (i) funds (to deliver decentralised functions) and (ii) revenue-generating powers (to decide on expenditures). There are five major forms of fiscal decentralisation: (i) self-financing or cost recovery of public services through user charges, (ii) co-financing through which users participate in providing services and infrastructure through labour or monetary contributions, (iii) expansion of local revenue through indirect charges or property or sales taxes (iv) intergovernmental transfers that transfer general revenues from taxes collected by the central government to LGs for general or specific users, (v) authorisation of LG borrowing and the mobilisation LG resources through loan guarantees (European Commission 2007:18). In Uganda, the form of the fiscal decentralisation is mainly intergovernmental transfers to local governments through conditional and unconditional grants (Kakumba 2008:101).

### **3.9 WORKING RELATIONSHIP IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT**

Working relationship can be individual to individual, group to group or organisation to organisation. It exists between superiors and subordinates, between colleagues in the same or different departments. Regardless of the nature of relationship, the need for effective working relationship based on mutual expectations, trust and influence with the complex network of people is paramount for achieving set goals and objectives (*Hill 1996:2*). Working relationship, can be productive or detrimental to the achievement of organisational objectives.

Managers are enmeshed in a web of relationships with people who make what often seem conflicting or unending demands. Their job is to reconcile the numerous and conflicting expectations of those that they interact with by developing a framework within which they can make strategic decisions for their organisations' 'course of direction'. As the formal authority for their units, managers, are uniquely positioned to manage and balance inevitable tradeoffs and to equitably negotiate and integrate their units' interests with those of others. Managers can achieve their organisations' objectives only by effective networking with a

complex set of players (groups and individuals) both inside and outside their organisations. Managers rely on the networks to perform their functions (Hill 1996:1). In Uganda, under decentralisation, managers both at central and local government levels need to effectively manage and reconcile the interests of personnel from various governmental and nongovernmental units who are key role players in the monitoring process. These include personnel from central government line ministries and agencies; personnel from local governments' political and civil service organs; and the personnel from CSOs.

### **3.10 CAPACITY BUILDING IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT**

Capacity building as the process by which individuals, groups, institutions and societies develop their abilities, individually and collectively to perform functions, solve problems and set and achieve goals and objectives (UNDP 1997:2), is important in public administration for effective delivery of services. The World Bank (2005:7) observes that public sector capacity building in Africa needs to address three dimensions of capacity: human capacity—for equipping individuals with skills to analyse development needs, design and implement policies, strategies, deliver services and monitor results; organisational capacity—for enhancing the capacity of groups of individuals bound by a common purpose with clear goals and objectives, systems, staffing and other resources to achieve them; and institutional capacity for enhancing the formal rules and informal norms that provide the regulatory framework within which organisations and people operate. In Uganda, under decentralisation, as indicated in Chapter Five (see *infra* para 5.6.4) of this thesis, capacity building efforts target elected political office bearers and appointed officials, members of statutory boards and the CSOs to equip them with the skills necessary for effective management and delivery of decentralised service and development programmes.

### **3.11 COLLABORATION IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT**

Collaboration is a process through which autonomous actors interact through formal and informal negotiation, jointly creating rules and structures governing their relationships and ways to act or decide on the issues that brought them together (Thomas 2001 cited in Thomson & Perry 2006:23). Collaboration can be among organisations in the same sector or across sectors. Collaboration across sectors is referred to as cross-sector collaboration. Cross-sector collaboration involves the linking or sharing of resources, activities, information and capabilities by organisations in two or more sectors to achieve jointly an objective or a

goal that could not be achieved by organisations in one sector separately (Bryson, Crosby, & Stone 2006:45).

In recent years collaboration has become important in politics, public-sector reform and relationships between the state and the business community. The concept of collaboration first entered the public sector through public-private partnerships (PPP) in developing and developed countries. Through collaboration, public administration pursues innovative ways of providing more efficient and effective services to citizens. Beyond the growing numbers of public-private partnerships, “collaboration”, “collaborative governance” and “collaborative public management” have also become central to public administration and management. Indeed, there is a paradigm shift with the “command and control” image of public administration giving way to an emphasis on “collaborate and connect”. Collaboration across government agencies and CSOs has come to play a critical role in delivering public goods, confronting the dynamic globalisation challenges and meeting taxpayer expectations (Künzel & Welscher 2011:5).

### **3.12 CONCLUSION**

The above discussion has shown that (P) public (A) administration, both as a discipline and an activity, have experienced major transformations from the ancient to contemporary times which have enriched its theory and practice. The critical aspects of the evolution and transformation which have had implications for the public policy making process in general and policy implementation monitoring in particular have been examined. It has been noted that the focus of the evolution and transformations has been the search for public administration systems that can serve society better; a task that continues to this day for public administration practitioners and academics.

Efforts have been made to provide a definition of public administration as an activity and discipline. The generic administrative functions have been invoked, but with a focus on the policy-making function under which policy implementation and monitoring in the public sector is embodied. The relationship between public administration and public management has been commented on with the main observation being that management cannot take place if the outputs of public administration in the form policy spelling out the objectives of the institution do not enable those in managerial positions to manage. Attempts have also been



made to locate the study themes of decentralised powers, working relationships, capacity building and collaboration in the field of public administration and management. The following chapter (Chapter Four) shifts the focus to the role of local governments in the implementation and monitoring of decentralisation policy reforms in respect of international perspective.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF DECENTRALISATION POLICY REFORMS: INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Local governments have come to play an important role in the implementation of decentralisation policy reforms. One such role is monitoring the implementation of the decentralisation process. Their monitoring role involves the routine tracking of pieces of information on inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes that are expected to change as a result of the programmes being implemented. It focuses on identifying the content of the decentralisation policy; its scope; the adherence of the policy programmes to stated procedures and goals; the quality and efficiency in which the programmes are being implemented; the progress being made; and the achievement of the desired results. Broadly, the purpose of monitoring the implementation of decentralisation is to gather information on the performance of the decentralisation process so that it can be modified where necessary to achieve its goals more efficiently (Hutchinson & La Fond 2004: 21-22).

Many national constitutions and other national laws on regional and local autonomy, assign an extensive role to local governments (LGs) in the implementation of the decentralisation policy. Under decentralisation policy, LGs are mandated to implement and monitor programmes including those designed by LGs themselves, those designed by central governments and civil society organisations (CSO) programmes to ensure that they are all efficiently and effectively implemented. This chapter, from an international perspective, assesses the monitoring role of LGs in implementing decentralisation policy. The chapter broadly contextualises the role of LGs in the decentralisation policy by examining the rationale of the LGs' role in decentralisation reforms and the scope of this role with a focus on the monitoring role. It then examines the LGs' efforts to monitor the implementation of the policy and the factors that influence the LGs' performance in executing their role. Experiences are drawn from developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The essence of drawing examples from these countries for a study on the LGs' monitoring role in Uganda (a developing country) is that, though there are varying contextual factors specific to particular countries and their experiences, the foundations of the political and social-economic paradigms of developing countries as indicated in the introductory chapter (see *supra* para

1.7) are fundamentally alike. Experiences are also drawn from some developed countries, to provide a picture of the best practices.

## **4.2 CONTEXTUALISATION OF THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN DECENTRALISATION**

### **4.2.1 THE RATIONALE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS' ROLE IN DECENTRALISATION REFORMS**

Decentralisation and the role of local governments continue to attract attention from governments in various countries. In both developing and developed countries, various governments are increasing the powers of local governments; assigning them a crucial role in development and service delivery programmes; and working to make them more responsive and effective. The reasons for these reforms vary. Some countries emerging from dictatorships are seeking to transfer power to smaller governmental units. Others are reducing the size of the central government as part of a transition to a more efficient market economy. Many others endeavour to increase citizen participation in government decision-making. Where some are responding to donor pressures, others are expecting that the poor performance of the national governments can be solved by allocating local governments the role to provide fundamental local public services (USAID 2000b:5).

One of the most significant effects of empowering local governments is that the state as a whole gains legitimacy. When the citizens trust their officials and are more actively involved in the improvement of their community, their relationship to the state as a whole also improves. Thus, while the authority of the central government may be diminished by decentralising powers and responsibilities to local governments, the legitimacy of the state as a whole could be enhanced. Decentralisation can therefore be considered as a way to mutually benefit all levels of government and the citizens simultaneously (UNDP 2003:8). The rationale is that decisions about public expenditure that are taken by a level of government which is closer and more responsive to local reality are more likely to reflect the need for local services than similar decisions taken by a remote central authority. One result could also be that citizens show willingness to pay taxes for services which they find to be responsive to their priorities, especially if they have participated in the decision-making process for delivering the services. The essence of transferring power from central government to local governments is to ensure that public services meet the preferences and demands of local people. The aim is to increase community participation and ownership of

programmes, ensure more efficient and equitable allocation of resources, promote accountability to stakeholders, build local capacity and respond more effectively to local needs to promote rural development. It is expected that by giving more authority and responsibility to lower levels of government, there will be mainly greater efficiency and accountability; improved local development; and enhancement of democracy (UNDP 2003:9; Okorley, Gray, & Reid 2009: 237). The subsequent discourse examines the main assumed benefits.

#### **4.2.1.1 Greater efficiency and accountability in service delivery**

It is generally assumed that local governments can perform better than national governments in terms of efficiency and effectiveness for service delivery. Improved service delivery is achieved by better matching of public services to citizens' needs and preferences; and improved technical efficiency because of "a race to the top" as different local governments compete with each other for taxpaying firms and residents by providing more attractive service mixes and incentives (UNDP 2003:9; Brinkerhoff & Azfar 2006:5).

A decentralised authority in comparison to central government can be more accessible and responsive to local needs. Programmes can be easily adapted to particular local conditions and needs, because local authorities are more knowledgeable about local circumstances than central government authorities. The necessary information to plan and implement programmes is more available. The potential close relationship between the community and government at the local level fosters accountability. Decision-making close to the people provides an instrument to prevent governments from abusing their powers, as it is more difficult to hide corruption among those in authority when the citizens know the officials than in situations where the "Government" is far away and inaccessible. Therefore employees holding authority in the local governments are, less likely to have the opportunity to hide their corrupt practices. In addition, it is easier to hold local public officials and political office bearers accountable for their actions than it is to impose accountability on officials and politicians at higher levels of government, as members of local governments are often less 'protected' politically than officials and politicians at the central government level (UNDP 2003:9).

Both the availability of information necessary for making proper decisions and the potentially higher degree of accountability should lead to a better use of available resources. This should provide an opportunity to achieve efficient utilisation of resources. Government resources can be allocated most efficiently if responsibility for each type of public expenditure is given to the level of government that most closely represents the resource beneficiaries. In this way, decentralisation should contribute to a reduction of service delivery costs (UNDP 2003:9-10).

Experience reveals that community participation in local government programmes does not necessarily lead to more accountability. Accountability may be determined mainly by factors such as the political commitment and discipline imposed by the central authority. Olken (2005) found that in Indonesia, while community monitoring increased citizen participation and oversight, it had little impact on local government corruption in infrastructure development expenditures. In a similar case, Grindle (2007) found that, in a number of municipalities in Mexico, participation in local government programmes under decentralisation did not increase accountability. Brautigam's (2004) observation that horizontal accountability institutions of central government may be more effective in curbing local government corruption than community monitoring supports these findings.

Regarding greater efficiency and improved service delivery in local governments under decentralised authority, as the extent to which this has been realised in practice, especially in developing countries, is an ongoing debate. Crook (2003), for example, in a study on African decentralisation and responsiveness to citizens in poverty reduction programmes in Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast), Nigeria, Kenya and Tanzania, finds very little relationship. This means that decentralised service delivery does not necessarily match public services to citizens' needs and preferences. For the expected technical efficiency through inter-jurisdictional competition where local governments compete with each other for tax bases, experience in developing countries shows limited tax bases in local governments. From countries in Asia to Latin America and Africa, the experience is that limited local tax bases negatively impact on decentralised service delivery in local governments. In Pakistan, LGs have had to contend with significant financial constraints which have an impact on their performance (Zaidi 2005:37). In Kyrgyz Republic, a limited tax base at local level prevents most LGs from properly maintaining local infrastructure and providing services to their communities (Gerster 2004:17), while in Thailand, inadequate local revenue resources and

poor mobilisation of existing revenues hamper local service delivery (Chandra-nuj Mahakanjana 2006:23). For Latin American countries, Stein (1998:11-12) notes that the potential revenue from the tax bases that can efficiently be exploited locally is more limited than the spending obligations assigned to local governments in decentralised economies. In many African countries, governments impose expenditure responsibilities on local governments without reassignment of revenue sources and yet local governments have limited local revenue bases. In addition to limited local revenue bases, the levels and types of local taxes often result in the tax burden falling more on the poor than on the relatively better off members of the community. The situation is not improved by central governments' abolition of local taxes, mismanagement and wide spread tax resistance (Odd-Helge & Rakner 2003: vi).

Besides the question of a revenue tax base, one needs to note that merely decentralising service delivery to local governments in the absence of LG capacity to create effective community empowerment cannot result in greater efficiency and responsiveness in service delivery. Community empowerment requires mechanisms that increase participation and inclusiveness. Empowering the community should involve bringing all community members into the budgetary process; providing effective information on government intentions, plans and activities to all citizens; using citizen report cards, or service satisfaction surveys; and forming effective community service users committees that regularly interact with providers (Brinkerhoff & Azfar 2006:16).

Comparatively, while the decentralisation relationship between central governments and LGs differs from country to country, reflecting the distribution of political power, economic functions and institutional arrangements, fiscal decentralisation in the European Union countries has generally made tangible improvement in the fiscal performance of local governments as well as central governments. This is consistent with the expected efficiency associated with the spending autonomy of local governments under decentralisation (Escolano, Eyraud, Moreno, Sarnes & Tuladhar 2012:17). This implies that there has been improved efficiency in the utilisation of resources and the delivery of decentralised programmes in the European Union member states.

#### **4.2.1.2 Improved local development**

In many countries, one of the primary motives for decentralising power and responsibilities to local governments is the prospect of improving local development. It is often argued that local governments are in a better position to improve local development projects. Local self-governance can remove institutional and legal obstacles to 'self-help' and it encourages innovative forms of solutions for local needs and problems. Development activities executed with the participation of the beneficiaries enable the adjustment of development activities to the specific development priorities of the local population (UNDP 2003:9-10).

Experiences in various countries have shown that most people are willing to contribute to local development projects if they can participate in the decision-making and accept that the particular project will improve their particular situations. When the local people determine how a particular programme should be designed, it enhances the sense of ownership and responsibility for the project. It also provides the citizens with a personal stake in the programmes' success. The citizens are, therefore, more likely to put more effort in furthering the project's goals. This in turn contributes to better results than if the development activities were decided upon by the central government. Local governments may make development activities more sustainable by engaging project beneficiaries more directly in the implementation and monitoring of projects. The local population input in the early planning phases of a development project in turn also encourages the local population to carefully monitor and protect the results of their planning efforts (UNDP 2003:10).

Local or regional development is currently a natural part of local government and territorial division in the countries of the European Union. In pursuing local development benefits of decentralisation, the creation and strengthening of local government institutions at regional level are often included. As the EU attaches great importance to local governments and regional policies in promoting development, it also becomes important for countries intending to join the Union to adopt decentralisation policies (UNDP 2002:53). Local government and subsequently local development are considered by the EU as key factors for sustainable growth and EU integration. Local governments, according to the EU, are expected to play a vital role in the improvement of the lives of their citizens as they are much closer to the citizens. LGs are also seen as being efficient in managing and using the resources that might belong to local government entities (ALDA 2011:5).

It is important to note that the argument that local governments have a clear understanding of the local conditions and, therefore, are in positions to match development activities to the specific needs of the local population has not been supported by experience especially in the developing countries. In the Philippines, Azfar, Kahkonen and Meagher (2001) found that there was no evidence of public officials at the provincial level of government having better knowledge of development preferences of the local population. Local officials at lower levels (municipalities) had only limited knowledge of the preferences. Regarding encouraging innovative forms of solutions for local problems through community participation in the decision-making process, it is argued (Brinkerhoff and Azfar 2006:23) that community participation may make innovation more difficult. The processes may disproportionately empower groups that are more organised than other members of the community. In Asian developing countries such as Cambodia, Mansfield and MacLeod (2004:22) note that for participation in monthly meetings (where local community development issues are discussed), participation of community members is limited in many communes. It is the village chiefs who attend, while in others, village development committee (VDC) representatives attend the meetings. In many African countries, despite the increasing momentum for decentralising development and service delivery programmes, citizen participation in these programmes is still low. In a recent study on opportunities for citizen participation in local governance in Burundi, Gaynor (2011) found that despite an existing framework and a set of procedures for citizen participation, levels of both citizen participation in local governance and local authority accountability to citizens remain weak. Gaynor's findings corroborate Massoi and Norman's (2009) findings which concluded that in Tanzania, while decentralisation has improved central government administrative structures, actual participation by the rural and urban populace in the local development process has not been realised.

While there are still some concerns about limited citizen participation in local government activities such as budgeting processes in developed countries (Berner 2001:24), the level of participation in the developed countries is comparatively higher than the citizen participation in developing countries. In countries such as the United Kingdom of Britain, United States of America and Canada, the use of modern technology through cable TV broadcasts, video libraries, e-mail notification and policy websites, offers opportunities for quick and cost-effective ways to disseminate information about local governments' development issues to reach diverse groups of citizens. This leads to wider citizen participation and involvement in



local government organised community development meetings and other local development activities (Berner 2001:24-26).

#### **4.2.1.3 Enhancing democracy**

The notion of democracy cannot be restricted to participation in national elections only. Although the right to elect leaders of national government is certainly a principle of democratic government, democracy also includes the ability to influence the decisions that directly affect peoples' lives. Local governments are expected to provide these aspects of democracy in a way that central governments often cannot. Local governments constitute the institutional arena for achieving decentralisation's democratic objectives and it is in this arena that community empowerment interacts with local governments to further these objectives (UNDP 2003:10; Brinkerhoff & Azfar 2006:1).

The local governments' structures theoretically provide opportunities for improved skills and capacities for citizens to participate effectively in public affairs. They also create a new and expanded cadre of leaders with democratic skills. Mechanisms such as participatory budgeting, citizen oversight committees, service delivery report cards, information campaigns, direct elections, re-calls and referendums provide avenues for citizens to engage with LGs in a variety of voice-related activities. To the extent that community members pursue these various options, they have the potential to build democratic participation skills. Through the expanded political space, individual members of the community pursue being elected to local political office and this contributes to an expanded pool of local government leaders. In addition, there can be a *trickle-up* effect in cases where leaders who have gained democratic skills and experience in decentralised local government endeavour to be elected to office at higher levels of government (Brinkerhoff & Azfar 2006:18-19). Donors, having recognised this potential, have come to support local governments in various countries especially in the developing countries to ensure that these benefits are realised. Guggenheim, Wiranto, Prasta and Wong (2004) found that donor supported programmes such as the World Bank's Kecamatan Development Programme in Indonesia, which engage communities in large-scale participatory planning and management schemes for local service delivery, have helped villagers to acquire skills and capacity for collective action. This enhances prospects for continued progress with local democratic governance.

Although a state's respect for democracy and individual rights do not depend on transferring power to local governments, such a form of government may further these two fundamental values. The participation in decision-making procedures on a local level enhances true democracy. Decentralisation can create a sense of community and permit more meaningful participation in local self-governance. This of course implies that local governments are well organised to facilitate effective participation. Distribution of power to different government levels and the competition between the levels create a system of checks and balances that can set limits to the central government if it attempts to abuse its powers. In this way, local self-governance would constitute a specific expression of the constitutional principle of the separation of powers. Furthermore, elected local government and decentralised administrative structures enable a wider range of people to participate in public affairs. Experience shows that local offices are much more accessible to women, young people and to people of varied occupations (UNDP 2003:10).

It is imperative, to note that, as Gaventa (2005 cited in Brinkerhoff & Azfar 2006:4) argues, democratic enhancement concerns not simply the structures and procedures by which democratic governance is exercised, but its quality and substance as well. For example, in principle, formal representative structures provide for political participation for citizens. Yet in practice, if political parties and elections function such that the interests of the poor, women, or minorities are consistently excluded, then the quality of democracy is called into question. The argument here is that enhancing democracy must effectively address issues of inclusiveness and participation. As Fung and Wright (2003) contend, enhancing democracy requires the active engagement in public affairs of citizens from all socio-economic strata. Central-local relations play a significant role in influencing whether transferring powers and responsibilities to local governments will achieve the expected democratic outcomes (Manor 1999; Crook 2003). It is imperative to note that the acquisition of participative skills and capacity may not apply to all citizens. Rao and Ibanez (2003), in a study of local social investment fund in Jamaica, found that, the better-off community members, the better educated and better connected, dominated decision-making for the social investment funded projects. These had higher access to information and higher involvement in village local government organised programme activities than members of poorer households.

In the developed countries, the situation seems to be different. For instance, decentralisation has registered substantial progress in enhancing local democracy in the European Union

member states. Guided by ideological commitment to decentralisation and local governments' autonomy, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe has given a high priority to local democracy to its member states. Many recommendations of the Congress on areas such as reintegration of street children, gender equalities and protection of minorities have been addressed and adopted at local government level. In reality, all programmes that have the public participation as integral to their operation are executed by the local governments which are in closer contact with the citizens. As a result, the citizens feel more involved in the processes and in decision-making. Whereas decentralisation still has to develop and whereas the level of local democracy and the quality of local governance still vary in Europe with room for improvement, local democracy is an accepted reality in the European member states (ALDA 2011: 7-8).

Based on the above discussion, it can be stated that the objectives of assigning decentralisation implementation responsibilities to LGs in Uganda fall within the broader (global) rationale of assigning LGs a crucial role in development and service delivery programmes under decentralisation. As discussed in Chapter Five (see *infra* para 5.4.1), the objectives focus on improving accountability; programme efficiency and effectiveness; promoting local development through peoples' ownership of programmes; and ensuring that programmes are tailored to local conditions. These mirror the expected greater efficiency, accountability and improved local development which constitute part of the rationale for assigning LGs a crucial role in implementing decentralisation from an international perspective.

Regarding the extent to which in practice, the expected benefits of assigning a crucial decentralisation implementation role to LGs have been realised, based on the experiences from the various countries, it can be argued that the benefits of decentralising responsibilities to LGs have been largely aspirational in terms of what can be achieved if the LGs effectively execute their responsibilities rather than real (what is seen in practice). This is especially so in the developing countries. For developed countries, although there are still some issues to address, the extent to which the benefits of decentralisation have been realised is comparatively higher. An important lesson, however, is that legal and political frameworks that assign decentralisation responsibilities to LGs and define the expected benefits of assigning such responsibilities alone are inadequate. Issues such as state commitment and willingness to decentralise; issues of financial and human resources for LGs; empowerment

of all citizens to enable them to effectively participate in the development process; and commitment to democratic principles such as transparency and accountability have to be addressed if the expected benefited are to be realised.

#### **4.2.2 THE SCOPE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS' MONITORING ROLE**

In most countries implementing decentralisation, constitutions, laws and regulations codify the rules by which a decentralised system is supposed to function. Structurally, the desirable architecture of these rules is quite straightforward. The constitutions should be used to enshrine the broad principles on which the decentralisation policy is to operate, including the rights and responsibilities of all levels of government; the description and role of key institutions at central and local levels; and the basis on which detailed rules may be established. Generally, the national constitutions and numerous pieces of legislation and decrees on decentralisation and local governments in these countries which include developing and developed countries define the structures, the powers and the scope of LG's role in terms of functional areas of responsibilities and policy guidelines on the execution of these responsibilities. Through decentralised planning and budgeting, local governments are responsible for determining, implementing and monitoring the implementation of budgets and projects for development and service delivery. Local infrastructure and services; health; education and agricultural development; social welfare services such as social housing; arts and cultural affairs; natural resources and environmental matters; and cooperatives and land management tend to dominate the common sector areas of responsibility (World Bank 2001a:1-2; World Bank 2002: 9; Escolano *et al.* 2012:7). Local governments are responsible for designing, implementing and monitoring programmes in these areas in addition to monitoring the implementation of central government and nongovernmental sector programmes.

From Asian countries to African countries and from Latin American to European countries, national constitutions define the scope of roles and responsibilities of local governments. In India, for example, the 1993 'Eleventh Schedule' of the 73rd Amendment to the Constitution identifies numerous areas over which local council governments (*Panchayats*) have jurisdiction. Many of these such as agriculture, minor irrigation, animal husbandry, fisheries, forestry, small-scale industries and land reforms focus on particular sectors within the rural economy. Others are primarily concerned with the provision and maintenance of rural

infrastructure while some cover the provision of key rural services such as health, sanitation and education (Raja Graig 2003:18). In Burkina Faso, according to the 1998 Decentralisation Laws, local governments are mandated to undertake activities regarding the social, economic and cultural development of the community, health, education, environment and to conclude contracts with the central government, other local governments and nongovernmental sector organisations regarding local development and service delivery programmes (World Bank 2002:19-20). In Venezuela, the Constitution of 1999 assigns local governments several areas of responsibility under decentralisation. A number of them include primary health care, pre-school education, care for infants, adolescents and the elderly, sewers, drainage and treatment; electricity and gas; housing, parks, plazas and beaches; and public transport, environment and cultural activities (Gonzalez & Mascareno 2004:192-193).

In Albania, according to the National Constitution and Law No.8652 of 2000 on the organisation and functioning of local governments, the local governments play an important role in implementing decentralisation. Their areas of responsibility include functions such as education, public health, traditions and culture, minorities and civil society development. The local governments also share responsibilities with the central government in development and service delivery programmes (Murthi 2011:4-5). In the United Kingdom of Britain, the laws passed in 1998 establishing new subnational institutions in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland set out responsibilities between the national and subnational and local governments. A number of areas of responsibilities such as health, education, culture, the environment and transport responsibilities were devolved to local governments (Paun & Hazell 2009:5).

The numerous areas of responsibilities assigned to local governments under decentralisation in the developing and developed economies provide the parameters for the scope of LGs' monitoring role in implementing the decentralisation policy. It is in these sector areas of responsibility that local governments are supposed to monitor the designed policy development and service delivery programmes to ensure that they are efficiently and effectively implemented. The challenge is whether local governments have the resources required to effectively and efficiently execute such enormous role. The subsequent part of this chapter examines the local governments' efforts to execute this role and the factors influencing the performance of local governments in execution of the role.

### **4.3 MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DECENTRALISATION REFORMS**

Local governments have made numerous efforts to execute their monitoring role in implementing decentralisation policy. Such efforts include designing monitoring systems, developing capacity for monitoring programmes, engaging the community in monitoring process and collaborating with the nongovernmental sector in implementing and monitoring of programmes.

#### **4.3.1 Designing monitoring systems**

In monitoring the implementation of programmes under decentralisation, local governments, make efforts to design monitoring systems to ensure successful monitoring. A monitoring system can be considered as a network of units and planning mechanisms dealing with the issues that need to be addressed through monitoring efforts. A sound monitoring system provides for effective planning through which monitoring plans are designed to guide the monitoring process. A monitoring plan mainly sets out the monitoring purpose and goals, what is to be monitored (areas to monitor), the monitoring indicators, the methods of data collection, methods of presenting information (data management), distribution of responsibilities, reporting and feedback mechanisms. LGs in both developing and developed countries (OECD 2002; MLGRD 2004:4-5; Mansfield & MacLeod 2004:7-8; Kusek & Rist 2004:27; Bathgate 2007:1) have made several attempts to develop monitoring systems. The systems usually provide guidelines for project monitoring and evaluation; mechanisms for collecting, analysing and presenting monitoring information; utilisation of software system to support the monitoring process; creating and maintaining LGs information profiles; designing and executing monitoring plans that mainly define monitoring indicators, roles, strategies and mechanisms for raising community awareness and input into the monitoring process; and establishment of monitoring teams that make regular project review meetings and provide progress reports.

While considerable efforts have been made in designing monitoring systems, in practice, more especially in developing countries, not much has been achieved in terms of efficiency and effectiveness. There are still significant gaps in the data collection and analysis; poor and different formats of reporting; poor data management; poor feedback mechanisms; inadequate capacities of local government staff to carry out monitoring assignments; several different players in the field resulting in lack of an effective and holistic approach to the

monitoring process; and poor dissemination of monitoring information to the stakeholders (Kusek & Rist 2004; MLGRD 2004:6-7; Mansfield & MacLeod 2004:21-22).

Experiences in the developing countries are identified from Ghana and Cambodia. For developed countries, reference is made to OECD countries in general and New Zealand in particular. In monitoring the implementation of poverty reduction projects in Ghana, guidelines for district based monitoring (and evaluation) define the data collection tools and data management mechanisms. The guidelines define key monitoring indicators and provide for the creation of district information profiles. The information is then updated on a regular basis and sent to the regional level for harmonisation. The system also provides for co-ordination between Regional Poverty Monitoring Group (RPMG) and District Poverty Monitoring Group (DPMG) in the monitoring process (MLGRD 2004:4). Notwithstanding the considerable effort and progress made, experience from the northern region of the country indicates that data collection tools have not been effectively utilised leading to a lack of uniformity in reporting. There are also issues of poor data management mechanisms and poor information response from the community because information requests are made without demonstrating any change once the information is gathered (MLGRD 2004:7-8). In Cambodia, commune council LGs design monitoring plans that define indicators and provide for monitoring teams, regular progress reports and progress review meetings. The teams are also mandated to mobilise citizens to participate in the monitoring activities; collaborate with relevant agencies and CSOs to provide capacity enhancement training; and to co-ordinate with other actors involved in commune activities (Mansfield & MacLeod 2004:7). However, in practice, achievements have been limited. For example, progress review meetings by monitoring teams have been less than regular mainly due to inadequate resources. For dissemination of information to the community, many villagers still do not receive reports from the council meetings. There is a lack of understanding about partnership projects with the nongovernmental sector and councils still have difficulty in understanding their role in the monitoring process (Mansfield & MacLeod 2004:22-23).

With regard to the developed countries, while different countries—developed and developing alike—will be at different stages with respect to designing monitoring (and evaluation) systems, many developed countries have developed systems that generally function better than developing countries. Experience shows that although there are still some problems such lack of linking performance targets to expenditures for government programmes (OECD



2002: 12), the majority of the OECD countries currently have integrated monitoring systems at local and national levels (Kusek & Rist 2004:27-28). An OECD survey indicates that result based monitoring and evaluation systems have taken root in OECD countries especially in budgetary and programme management practices (OECD 2002). There are many cases of LGs with well-established and effective monitoring systems. Dunedin City Council of New Zealand illustrates such cases. Based on a project management approach and stakeholder consultation, LG authorities of the city council design and effectively implement monitoring plans. The plans clearly specify monitoring indicators and strategies; clarify the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders; and integrate existing research on various sectors of the economy (Bathgate 2007:1-3). The lesson from the Dunedin City Council LG experience is that an integrated approach that involves stakeholder consultations; clear definition of monitoring indicators and strategies; and clarification of stakeholder roles and responsibilities is an essential requirement for an effective monitoring system.

What can be deduced as Kusek and Rist (2004:27) state, is that building an effective monitoring system is easier said than done. There are a number of systems that function well in developed economies and fewer in developing economies. It is not that governments are not making efforts—many of them are. But creating and implementing such a system takes time, resources and a stable democratic political environment.

#### **4.3.1.2 Capacity building for monitoring the implementation of programmes**

Local governments in the developing and developed countries with support from their national governments, the donor agencies and development organisations, continue to develop capacities for monitoring the implementation of decentralisation. In many countries, several capacity development programmes have been organised mainly through training, seminars and workshops to enhance the capacity of LG personnel and other local actors involved in the monitoring process. The capacities being developed focus on a number of areas such as monitoring (and evaluation) tools for making more informed decision-making and learning; enhancing the capacity to collect, analyse, interpret, stock and update data and relevant information; and developing procedures and systems for exchange of information and statistical data (Mansfield & MacLeod 2004:9; Le Bay & Loquai 2007:4). In spite of the progress made by LGs in building the capacity for monitoring the implementation of decentralisation programmes, experience from various countries more especially developing



countries, indicate that the efforts have not enhanced the capacity of local governments. LGs' capacities remain inadequate in many areas. In most cases, LG personnel have not been effectively equipped with the required skills to collect and analyse monitoring data. They have also not acquired the skills needed to effectively produce disaggregated data for planning (Mansfield & MacLeod 2004:10; Le Bay & Loquai 2007:7-8).

In the developing countries, cases are provided from the West African countries of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana, Mali and Niger; and the Asian states of Mongolia, Cambodia and Kyrgyz Republic. In the developed economies, reference is made to the OECD countries in general and to Finland and Hungary in particular. In the respective West African countries, the capacity building efforts have shown some positive effects on the capacities of LGs and municipal advisory centres to collect and select relevant statistics. They have also resulted in stepped-up collaboration among supervisory authorities, LGs, civil society and private sector agents at the local level (Le Bay & Loquai 2007:6). Notwithstanding the efforts and progress made by LGs in improving the capacity for monitoring of decentralisation programmes, local governments still lack the capacity to obtain baseline data and statistical information to draw upon to analyse the social, economic and cultural situation in their territories. Municipalities and district staff often lack specialised skills to collect background data and diagnose development issues before engaging in the planning process. Often, LGs do not have the capacity to produce sufficiently disaggregated data for local planning and municipal level planners (Le Bay & Loquai 2007:6-7). In the Asian countries of Mongolia, Cambodia and Kyrgyz Republic, the capacity building efforts have registered considerable progress in improving LG skills in project planning and management (Mansfield & MacLeod 2004:9-10). Notwithstanding the progress made, overall, their capacity to monitor the implementation of programmes under decentralisation in the respective countries remain weak. In Cambodia for example, experience indicates that despite the attendance of training programmes, LG personnel have not acquired the skills required for implementation and monitoring of programmes. This is *inter alia* evidenced by the fact that councillors commonly request repeated training in the same areas (Mansfield & MacLeod 2004:10). The situation is not improved by poor training service from the trainers who often lack the capacity to elaborate on issues. This leads to councillors getting confused about the relevance of the training for their work (Mansfield & MacLeod 2004:10-11; Rusten, Sedara, Netra, & Kimchoeun 2004:104-105).

In most OECD countries, capacity building training and development efforts have substantially improved the strategic planning capacity (including monitoring and evaluation capacity) at both national and LG levels (OECD 2009a:15). However, while substantial progress has been made in enhancing the capacities of LGs through well targeted capacity building training, there are also some capacity issues that remain unresolved. Experience from Finland for example shows that despite the tremendous achievements made in developing monitoring systems, there are a number of difficulties. Each government agency tends to define its performance targets only from its own narrow perspective which, at the aggregate level, leads to suboptimal results. There are invalid monitoring indicators which do not capture the essential substance of expressed strategic goals. There is lack of consistent and informative performance reporting. Government agencies (at both national and local level) lack the capacity to review the achievements of performance targets used. There are also claims that a number of programme activities are so unique that it is difficult to find valid indicators for measuring their performance (OECD 2009a:15-16). In Hungary, although there has been improved programme implementation and (monitoring) capacity at regional level, planning capacity remains relatively weak at the LG level – calling for the need to create platforms for LGs to build common strategies and commitment for joint implementation and monitoring of programmes (OECD 2009a:47).

#### **4. 3.1.3 Engaging the community in the implementation process**

Governments, especially at the local level, are employing different ways to engage citizens in development and service delivery programmes under decentralisation. While the nature and purpose of these initiatives vary greatly, they are united in so far as they “aspire to deepen the ways in which ordinary people can effectively participate in and influence policies which directly affect their lives” (Fung & Wright 2003:5). It has been suggested (Cuthill & Fien 2005:63) that local government, as the level of government closest to the people, has an important role to play in facilitating opportunities for local citizens (as individual and group members of the community) to actively take part in local development and sustainability.

Local governments in both the developing and developed countries have made efforts to involve citizens in the implementation and monitoring of decentralisation programmes. Such efforts include establishing standing committees tasked to ensure the participation of the people by engaging them in local level planning as well as local development process;

establishing community participation methodologies such as village level participation approaches (VLPAs); establishing participatory local management teams for local development and service delivery programmes; establishing mechanisms for participating in the budget process that target citizens and members of the civil society; and the establishment of participatory strategic planning mechanisms (World Bank 2002:2-3; Siddiqui 2005:163; Šarenac 2007:11-14; USAID 2008: 21-23; Haque 2009:58). In spite of the efforts and progress made in engaging citizens in the implementation and monitoring process of decentralisation, experience reveals that much more needs to be done especially in developing countries to achieve effective participation of citizens in the decentralisation implementation and monitoring process. In the case of developed countries, although there are still some issues to address in order for local governments to effectively engage citizens in the decentralisation process, more efforts and progress have been substantially made to engage citizens in the decentralisation programmes compared to the developing countries.

Specific experiences in the developing countries are provided from Bangladesh in Asia, Peru in Latin America and the West African countries of Niger, Benin and Cameroon. In the developed countries, examples are drawn from Italy. In the case of Bangladesh, a number of citizen committees have been set up to participate in monitoring and evaluating local programmes. These include finance; education, health, family planning and epidemic control; audit and accounts; agriculture and other development works; social welfare and community centres; and fisheries committees. In practice, however, the reality has been contrary to expectations. People have very little access in the decision making-process of standing committees mostly because of lack of clear participation procedures (Hague 2009:58). There are also many other challenges including: irregular meetings of standing committees; poor co-ordination among different standing committees; lack of committee members' interest in non monetary related activities; committee members being preoccupied with their personal work and therefore unable to contribute enough time to the committee activities; and lack of sincerity on the part of committee chairmen (Hague 2009:55-56).

In the respective West African countries of Niger, Benin and Cameroon, although village level participatory committees have been useful in developing the community's work plan, monitoring development programme activities and evaluating the programmes, experience shows that there are still formidable challenges (World Bank 2002:8). For example, while the village level participatory approach (VLPAs) proposes an "overall assessment meeting," to re-

adjust the local development plans, in a number of VLPA communities visited by World Bank field staff, it was found that no community had conducted any overall assessment meeting (World Bank 2002:14-15). This situation is not assisted by the existing capacity gaps. Although communities were willing and eager to participate in the monitoring and assessment of local development programmes, members often lacked the skills to participate in programme planning and monitoring or evaluation. Without an explicit focus on building these skills, community development projects stand little chance of "empowering" communities to effectively participate in the local development process (World Bank 2002:18).

In the case of Peru, the establishment of local technical committees, consensus groups for poverty eradication programmes and participatory budgeting process committees under the Pro-Decentralisation Programme (the PRODES) has registered a number of achievements in enhancing the participation of citizens in the implementation and monitoring of decentralisation programmes. These include prioritisation of projects and project groups in conglomerates; co-ordination of actions agreed on between regional and municipal technical teams; synchronisation of regional, provincial and district participatory budgeting time lines; expanded opportunities for discussion of public issues; and increased knowledge of public programmes (USAID 2008:25-26). In spite of the achievements, there remain a number of challenges that need to be tackled if LGs are to achieve effective participation of the community. For example, whereas participatory budgeting has become firmly established, there is need to promote results-based budgeting. This represents a significant challenge, as it requires implementation capacity that does not exist in local governments. In addition, there is need to develop a series of mechanisms for participatory processes, from invitations and accreditation of participating stakeholders to the prioritising of programmes, signing of service agreements in the participatory budget and management accountability (USAID 2008:31-32).

For the developed countries, the case of Italy illustrates the substantial effort and progress made by local governments in promoting the participation of citizens in development and service delivery programmes. Since 2000, the municipality of Trento has initiated a new participatory approach in developing and implementing local policy programmes. An important step in getting the local governments closer to citizens is rendering the decision-making processes for local government programmes transparent. Citizens are informed about what is going on before they take part in these processes. In the municipality (Trento),

all information related to local government programmes can be found at the Internet portal of the municipality or obtained through the Office for the Relations with Citizens (Šarenac 2007:14). Under the participatory approach, there are a number of mechanisms through which citizens can participate in monitoring the implementation of local programmes. One such mechanism is the organisation of guided tours for all interested citizens to the sites of public works projects in the city (Šarenac 2007:10). Notwithstanding substantial progress registered in promoting citizen participation, there are a number of challenges. Though the leaders of the Trento municipality have been found to be overall satisfied with the level of citizen participation in local programmes, representatives of local associations regard the level of citizen participation as insufficient. There is a perception that citizen participation has been more reactive than proactive. In a survey study, citizens reported that actually the administration does not care much about citizens' participation in local programmes (Šarenac 2007: 18-19).

#### **4.3.1.4 Collaboration with civil society organisations**

In recent years, there has been a trend of LGs' efforts to promote collaborative relationships with civil society organisations (CSOs) in the implementation of development and service delivery programmes. Considered as a broad range of social institutions (nongovernmental organisations, private voluntary organisations, community based organisations, peoples' organisations, civic clubs, professional associations) that operate outside the confines of the state and the market, civil society organisations have come to be considered as strategically important in the search for a middle way between sole reliance on either the state or the market in service delivery. Governments (at both national and local level) are increasingly viewing CSOs as an integral part of the institutional structure particularly for addressing the poverty problem. This is reflected more especially in the poverty reduction programmes in developing countries (Ghaus-Pasha 2004:9; UN 2004:24). The United Nations (UN 2004:24) regards civil society organisations as being crucial for designing and implementing income-generating programmes, improving community skills through training and providing potential source of financial support to carry out various poverty alleviation programmes.

In developing and developed countries, local governments have made considerable attempts to involve civil society organisations in the implementation and monitoring of decentralisation programmes. Through collaborative partnerships, civil society organisations have

supplemented local governments' efforts in implementing and monitoring decentralisation programmes. Their activities cover their own initiated programmes and those initiated by national and local governments. The participation of civil society organisations in local development and service delivery programmes have, *inter alia*, included designing of monitoring systems, active participation in monitoring of programmes, mobilising community participation in local programmes and providing capacity building to local government personnel and the community as well (Hill 1996: 2-4).

Through the collaborative partnership between LGs and CSOs, participatory development and community empowerment processes have been established which have had a significant positive impact on socio-economic conditions and resulted in institutionalised participatory planning and monitoring systems. Joint planning between LGs and CSOs has been undertaken in many cases. Co-ordination committees with stake holder representation have been established to provide a platform for dialogue and joint action in the design, implementation and monitoring of programmes. There has also been inclusion of government representatives in CSO structures to further improve implementation and monitoring of programmes through better communication and joint activity planning. In a bid to promote an effective collaboration, CSOs have been involved in building the capacity of LG staff in designing monitoring and evaluation systems, sensitising and creating awareness about the role of stakeholders in the decentralisation process (Ghaus-Pasha 2004:11; UN 2004:27-28; NPC 2005:7; Turé & Verdecchia 2005:15; Borchgrevink 2006:56-57; Egli & Zürcher 2007:13-14).

Although the collaboration between LGs and CSOs has registered some achievements, there are a number of formidable challenges that negatively impact on their collaborative efforts in the implementation and monitoring of decentralisation programmes. Such challenges include insufficient competent human resource capacity to manage the collaborative relationships; inadequate funds; lack of effective communication and information sharing mechanisms; overlapping roles and responsibilities and lack of adequate sensitisation about the roles and responsibilities of partners, communities and other stakeholders; lack of a comprehensive partnership policy frameworks; conflict of interests; lack of proper co-ordination between the partners; negative attitude of LG personnel towards CSOs; and lack of mutual trust between the collaborating partners (Hashemi 1996:127;

Sattar & Baig 2001; Rosenbaum 2002:1-2; Buckland 2004:155-156; NPC 2005:6; Turé & Verdecchia 2005: 20-25; UN 2004:27; Egli & Zürcher 2007).

Specific examples of the collaboration between LGs and CSOs in implementing decentralisation programmes in the developing countries are identified from the Asian countries of Nepal and Pakistan; African states of Tanzania, Namibia and Sierra Leone and the Latin American states of El Salvador and Nicaragua. In the developed economies, specific reference is made to the United Kingdom of Britain. LGs in Nepal, in collaboration with CSOs, have established Participatory District Development Programmes (PDDPs) to enhance community empowerment and participation in the implementation processes for local development and service delivery programmes (UN 2004:27). In Pakistan, the Orangi Pilot Project (OPP) for water supply and sanitation in the local squatter settlement community of Orangi in Karachi district LG provides a good example of substantial progress registered by collaboration among LGs, CSOs and the community in implementing and monitoring decentralisation programmes. Based on participatory approaches, the joint project has largely been successfully implemented — significantly reducing the incidence of disease and illness. The project which is an epitome for social mobilisation and the principle of self-reliance has expanded to include microcredit facilities for local authorities and individuals (Ghaus-Pasha 2004:11-12). In spite of the progress, a number of challenges remain. For example, locally elected bodies were placed at the centre to promote programmes including community participation yet these elected bodies lacked any prior development experience (UN 2004:27). In Bangladesh, according to studies by the World Bank (1996) and Amin (1997), in collaboration with LGs, effective implementation and monitoring of CSO programmes, has had a significant impact on the social and economic reality of many marginalised households. However, some studies have demonstrated that CSOs do not reach their stated target “the poorest of the poor” and that there is a lack of economic linkages (a trickledown effect) between the CSOs’ programmes and the poor people (Buckland 2004:150-151). In Tanzania, CSOs based on applied research publish monitoring indicators for development and conduct various capacity building programmes to strengthen LGs’ capacity to implement and monitor service delivery programmes. However, their heavy dependency on donor funding; lack of effective information sharing mechanisms; overlapping reform initiatives and programmes; lack of linkages of CSO programmes with the private sector and national government limit the achievements of the collaborative relationship between LGs and CSOs (Egli & Zürcher 2007:13).



In Namibia, various development committees (regional, local constituency and settlement development co-ordination committees) have been established to promote joint planning between LGs and CSOs (NPC 2005:7-9). However, in practice, effective CSO participation in Namibia, has arguably been minimal. In many cases, CSOs are insufficiently aware of policy components and miss the opportunity to actively participate in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of policy programmes (NPC 2005:5). Regarding the case of Sierra Leone, LGs and CSOs have established joint programme implementation and monitoring committees to co-ordinate and monitor the implementation of programmes but problems such as insufficient competent human resource capacity to manage the collaborative relationships; untimely release of funds for implementation of programmes; lack of effective communication among the collaborative partners and conflict of interests are barriers to successful collaboration (Turé & Verdecchia 2005:11-12). In El Salvador, whereas progress has been registered in collaborative programmes from fishing cooperatives to economic development programmes (Rosenbaum 2002:1-2), there is extreme lack of co-ordination of state institutions (at both national and local level) and CSOs (Borchgrevink 2006: 57-58). For Nicaragua, LG implementation and monitoring councils and committees have representatives of different CSOs. The LG personnel meet with the representatives of CSOs to elaborate local development plans and implementation strategies and to prioritize municipal budget expenditures (Borchgrevink 2006: 56-57). The collaboration however according a survey study (Borchgrevink 2006) remains with a number of problems which include poor co-ordination mechanisms between the collaborating partners; poor consultation and information sharing mechanisms; lack of mutual trust between the collaborating partners; and negative attitudes towards civil society organisation local political leaders.

For the developed countries, the case of the United Kingdom of Britain illustrate the nature and performance of the collaborative partnership between LGs and CSOs. Under devolved administration, LGs and CSOs partnership framework sets out the key principles that should underpin the relationship between the partners. The principles are that the partnership enhances the ability of public bodies and of the CSOs or the 'third sector' as they are commonly referred to in the United Kingdom, to fulfill their own purposes; partnership imposes a responsibility to contribute towards achieving common aims and objectives according to the capacity of each partner; and that with purposeful consultation, partnership improves policy development, builds relationships and enhances effective design,



implementation and monitoring of service delivery programmes. The framework also defines among others, the roles and responsibilities of the partners and provides for communication, consultation and information sharing mechanisms (East Herts District Council 2003:14). In order to promote effective collaborative partnership, government has introduced an extensive array of reforms including financial provisions for funding capacity building that includes how to manage collaborative partnerships effectively which has contributed to the growth of the partnership in local service delivery programmes (McGregor 2007:6-7). While there have been substantial achievements in improving the collaborative partnership between LGs and CSOs that have resulted in the expansion of the 'third sector' in the implementation and monitoring of local service delivery programmes, there are still some barriers to effective partnership. Barriers at LG level include those that result from a poor environment and those that are the result of a lack of organisational skills. The environmental barriers include lack of trust between local authorities and the CSOs; inadequate channels of communication; and inadequate data on the make-up of the local CSOs (third) sector. The organisational barriers come from weaknesses in the organisations involved in joint working. For example, LGs do not have effective data systems that record detailed information about the nature of the CSOs in the local area while many CSOs lack the necessary professional skills needed to manage service delivery programmes (McGregor 2007:11-12).

From the literature review above, it can be deduced that, while there are varying contextual factors peculiar to particular countries and their experiences as indicated earlier (see *supra* para 4.1), the efforts made by LGs in Uganda to monitor the implementation of decentralisation programmes reflect those made by other LGs especially in the developing countries. As discussed in Chapter Six (see *infra* para 6.2), LGs' efforts to monitor the implementation of decentralisation policy in Uganda have included attempts to design a monitoring system; and to prepare and execute monitoring plans. The design of a monitoring system has involved establishment of data management mechanisms in terms of structures for data collection, organs for data analysis, and information dissemination and data storage mechanisms. The preparation and execution of the monitoring plans have included definition of project monitoring areas and performance indicators, definition of data collection methods and establishing reporting and feedback mechanisms. Similarly, these efforts constitute some of the efforts made by other local governments in the various countries.

For the case of developed countries where local governments have comparatively made more substantial efforts and progress in executing their role in implementing and monitoring the decentralisation programmes, there are some lessons to be learnt for the developing countries in general and Uganda in particular. The Key that can provide lessons seems to lie in greater commitment and the political will of national governments to deploy the decentralisation policy; relatively more availability of financial and human resources; application of advanced technology and information management facilities; existence of relatively more enlightened and educated citizens; and a relatively stable and better organised nongovernmental sector — including the private sector and civil society in the developed countries.

#### **4.3.2 FACTORS INFLUENCING PERFORMANCE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS**

An examination of the efforts that have been made by various local governments to monitor the implementation of development and service delivery programmes under decentralisation, indicates that a number of factors influence the performance of LGs. While their scope and magnitude differ from country to country in the developed and developing countries, such factors generally include the autonomy of LGs in exercising decentralised powers; the levels of capacity development in local governments; the working relations among intergovernmental organs; the degree of community participation in the monitoring process; and the effectiveness of collaboration between local governments and civil society organisations in programme delivery.

##### **4.3.2.1 Local governments' autonomy in exercising decentralised powers**

The degree of autonomy of local governments in exercising decentralised political, fiscal and administrative powers has considerable influence on their performance in monitoring the implementation of decentralisation. While decentralisation appears to be the dominant logic for the current public administration philosophy, the practice does not reflect a total willingness of central governments to fully deploy the decentralisation policy (Deborah 2003: 9-10). Promoting political decentralisation would entail putting in place structural arrangements and practices that empower and facilitate local governments and communities to exercise not only the voting power in the choice of their local leaders and representatives but also to have strong influence in the making, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policy decisions that concern their socio-political economic well-being (Kauzya 207:4). Regarding fiscal powers, the decentralisation of responsibilities must go hand-in-hand with

the financial autonomy (empowerment) of local governments—with established sound financial systems. For administrative decentralised powers, the local governments are supposed to be independent in managing their human resources and carrying out decision-making on mandated responsibilities for the delivery of a select number of service programmes (European Commission 2007:20).

Insufficient local governments' autonomy in exercising decentralised powers in both developing and developed countries has constrained LGs' efforts to effectively monitor the implementation of decentralisation policy. Despite the existence of constitutionally defined decentralised institutions, the tendency with many governments has been to concentrate power at the central government level. In many cases, LGs more especially in developing countries are ineffective, because there is insufficient will at the national level to fully transfer power (and resources) to LGs. Decentralising power has become mere rhetoric as resources (necessary for effective implementation of decentralised programmes) are controlled and allocated by the central governments (Byrne & Schnyder 2005:6; Burton 2008). In many developing countries, over 70% of the national revenue is controlled by central governments. This is coupled with inadequate fiscal transfers from the central governments to LGs. The fact that in most cases the transfers are discretionary, means that, central governments have powers to determine the total amount to be transferred. The situation is not improved by the fact that central governments control major tax revenues leaving LGs with limited own local tax revenue sources. In addition, central governments continue to exercise control over LG budgets which limits the autonomy of LGs to determine their expenditure priorities. Central governments also set ceilings on the proportion of the budget that can be spent on certain budget items (Stein 1998:2; Brodjonegoro & Asanuma 2000:5; Adedokun 2005:13-14). Furthermore, the central governments retain too much power and control over political and administrative decision-making and can overrule decisions made at the local level if they are not within the priorities set by central governments. LG authorities, more especially in the developing countries, do not have the political and administrative autonomy to make their own policies and plans in response to the needs of their localities. Decisions regarding human resource management and design and implementation of policies and development plans are largely determined by the central governments. In many programme areas, such as education, health and local roads, LGs do not make the final decisions (Seymour & Turner 2002:40; Mzee Mzee 2008: 27-28; Burton & Andrews 2011:3).

Case references in the developing countries are made to Indonesia and Bangladesh in Asia; Nigeria, Zimbabwe and Tanzania in Africa; and Peru, Chile and Brazil in Latin America. In developed countries, references are made to OECD countries, particularly the USA, the Nordic countries, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and Japan. Regarding the specific cases, in Bangladesh, the reforms made concerning transferring powers to LGs have been considered as being merely superficial as the necessary resources for implementing decentralisation are controlled and allocated by the state through patronage networks (Byrne & Schnyder 2005:6-7). In Indonesia, 80 per cent of all income tax, 100 per cent of value added tax, 85 per cent of oil revenue and 70 per cent of gas revenue are under central government control (Brodjonegoro & Asanuma, 2000:5-6). For Nigeria, major tax bases remain under the central government. LGs are tightly controlled and subordinated by state governors through sundry mechanisms, including manipulation of the disbursement of financial transfers to them. More often than not, the states usurp and erode the revenue yielding areas of the LGs (Adeyemo 2005:85). In Zimbabwe, there is no formula for sharing revenue between the central government and LGs. Every provision of the funds depends on the will of the central government. This is not improved by ministerial intervention in the LGs' areas of spending and revenue raising (Zimbabwe Institute 2005:19-20). In Tanzania, in many programme areas, LGs do not make the final decision. For example, LGs' education plans have to be approved by the Ministry of Education and their road maintenance master plans have to be approved by central government Road Fund Board (Mzee Mzee 2008: 28-29). In the case of Peru where all financial transfers are discretionary, central governments have the liberty to determine the total amount to be transferred and to direct resources to the areas deemed to have the greatest need irrespective of the LGs' preferences (Stein 1998:11-14). In Chile, LGs experience a weak position with a low level of policy making autonomy. The central government prohibits LGs from borrowing money. It controls major tax revenues leaving LGs too dependent on government transfers (Burton 2008). As regards Brazil, municipal governments are heavily reliant on federal and state transfers which constrains their efforts to effectively implement and monitor programmes (Burton & Andrews 2011:3).

For the developed countries, in recent decades, reflecting increasing democratic trends, most OECD countries have undertaken substantial reforms aimed at increasing the autonomy of local governments in matters of public governance and allocation of resources. However, with the exception of the United States, Nordic countries and Switzerland, local governments in OECD countries have no substantial autonomy in general (especially with

respect to control over taxation and budgeting). This negatively impacts on local governments' efforts to implement and monitor decentralised programmes. In countries like the United Kingdom, local governments are strongly controlled by central governments (Ehtisham, Brosio & Tanzi 2008:10). A look at the current United Kingdom fiscal system (Darby, Muscatelli, & Roy 2002:1) indicates that in a number of respects the central government retains a tightly controlled fiscal system. Generally, the degree of autonomy in exercising political and administrative powers enjoyed by the UK's local governments is inadequate. Giving oral evidence to a House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee (HCCLGC), Sir Richard Leese, Leader of Manchester City Council, argued that lack of substantial authority was inhibiting the council's ability to create the requisite partnerships with stakeholders at the local level. Citing the example of tackling unemployment where the local council needed to be joined up with other stakeholders such as Job centre Plus and the Learning and Skills Councils, the leader noted that there was a need for more powers to enable the local government council to effectively engage in partnership with key stakeholders (HCCLGC 2009:27). In Japan, although local autonomy is considered to be crucial in exercising decentralised powers to local government assemblies, in reality, local assemblies cannot make independent decisions in a system whereby administrative tasks are imposed on local governments by the central government. Unable even to determine the level of a single tax without central government approval, local assemblies have found it impossible to achieve substantial autonomy to operate effectively. This has resulted in calls for the need to increase the autonomy of local governments in terms of their organisation and operation (including tax and public finances) and the need for expansion of their annual income autonomy in terms of tax finances including the right to levy taxes independently (IIPS 2010:1-2).

In Uganda's situation, insufficient local governments' autonomy in exercising decentralised powers which negatively impact on local governments' performance of their monitoring role as discussed in Chapter Six (see *infra* para 6.3) is manifested in a number of political, administrative and fiscal aspects. These mainly include LGs' determination of their development priorities, recruitment and management of human resources including remuneration matters and powers to appoint LG statutory bodies; LGs' determination of their expenditure areas; mobilisation of LGs' own revenue; fairness in revenue sharing between central government and LGs; and revenue transparency.

#### 4.3.2.2 Capacity development levels in local governments

The level of capacity development is essential for local governments in the implementation and monitoring of decentralisation programmes. For LGs to implement and monitor the delivery of the higher-quality local services envisioned under decentralisation, they need relevant knowledge, skills and competences to do so. The process of decentralisation itself can have important implications for capacity needs at the local level. The devolution of public service responsibilities requires both a broader variety of skills and a greater depth of knowledge in specific areas such as financial management, planning and programme performance monitoring. Moreover, local political leaders need to learn to supervise public officials, mobilise more own-source revenues, interact with local constituents and develop local institutions' technical capacities (Green 2005:132). The level of capacity development in local governments will, *inter alia*, influence their performance in monitoring the implementation of development and service delivery programmes. In many LGs especially in developing countries, limited capacity which impacts on their performance is frequently manifested by lack of managerial and technical skills to plan, implement and monitor programmes. Lack of managerial and technical capacities at local government level represent critical constraints to effective implementation of development and service delivery programmes under decentralisation. Limited capacity of staff particularly in areas of project planning and management, budgeting and financial management, knowledge and skills in new technologies and information management; and the mismatch between required and available skills at the local level continue to impact on the performance of LGs in implementation and monitoring decentralised programmes (Gulyani et al 2001:22-23; IADB 2001:52-53; UN 2004:21-22; USAID 2005:7-8; Popic & Patel 2011:25).

Examples to illustrate the capacity development situation in the developing countries are drawn from Philippines, Vietnam and Sri Lanka in Asia; Egypt, Ethiopia and Mozambique in Africa; and Bolivia and Uruguay in Latin America. For developed countries, reference is made to the OECD countries in general. In the Philippines, the overall implementation — including monitoring of devolved programmes is running up against limited capacity of staff in local governments, particularly in areas of planning, budgeting and financial management (Green 2005:138-139). In Vietnam, a recent audit found an absence of record keeping in the communes which makes it difficult for local managers to effectively oversee the service programmes and track the use of funds in local programmes (Green 2005:143). In Sri Lanka,

urban councils are lacking competency in all major areas of local government management, including planning, financial management, human resource management and information management especially in the area of information technology (USAID 2005:7-8). In Egypt, in spite of numerous capacity development efforts, local governments experience low technical capabilities to implement and monitor the delivery of decentralised services (USAID 2004:46). In Ethiopia, a rapid assessment study on municipalities (Gulyani, De Groot, Tessema, Ayenew & Connors 2001) revealed that one of the major constraints to effective delivery of decentralised programmes is weak human resource capacity associated with low levels of education and lack of technical skills among the local government staff to design, execute and evaluate programmes. With regard to Mozambique, according to USAID (2010: 17-18), lack of human resource capacity in public administration plagues all levels of local governments. In Bolivia, according to Daniere and Marcondes (1998:15-16), there is a clear lack of capacity at the local government level. Council members (*dirigentes*) even lack skills and experience on how to direct meetings, organise discussions and reach consensus. The low capacity development is generally characterised by insufficient and untrained personnel and poor management as well as insufficient management systems and procedures. For Uruguay, inadequate human resource capacity at local government level to design, implement and monitor projects poses a serious obstacle to the delivery of programmes especially with the local authorities being increasingly ineligible for major investment projects from the World Bank or Inter- American Development Bank, which require technical expertise and sufficient management abilities that do not exist among the Uruguan municipalities (Melin & Claverie 2005:11).

In most of the OECD countries, there are still some capacity gaps such as lack of consistent and informative performance reporting; and lack of steering capacity to systematically review the outcome of performance targets used which affect local governments' efforts to implement and monitor decentralised programmes. Compared to most developing countries, however, through well targeted training programmes, strategic planning capacity at both national and local government levels have considerably improved in most of the OECD countries (OECD 2002:13-14).

In the case of Uganda, the capacity deficit which negatively impact on local governments' performance of their monitoring role in the implementation of decentralisation programmes is reflected in a number of aspects. As discussed in Chapter Five (see *infra* para 5.6.4),



these aspects mainly concern lack of technical knowledge and skills for problem analysis; needs identification and prioritisation; project design; managing financial, human and information resources; targeting the correct beneficiaries; and project monitoring and evaluating programme outcomes such as beneficiary satisfaction levels.

#### **4.3.2.3 Working relations among intergovernmental organs**

Effective working relations are built on mutual cooperation with each individual, group or organisation working towards the achievement of shared goals and objectives. For intergovernmental working relations, the relationship among levels of government resulting from decentralisation is characterised by mutual dependence since it is impossible to have a complete separation of policy responsibilities and outcomes among levels of government. Therefore building effective working relationship among the organs involves addressing a number of issues such as identifying the differences and or shared goals and values that exist among the organs; superiority attitudes associated with vertically higher level organs, establishing co-ordination mechanisms; defining roles and responsibilities; power relations; and establishing mechanisms for managing and resolving conflicts (OECDb. 2009:2-4). The effectiveness of the existing working relationship among the levels of government impacts on the performance of LGs in the implementation and monitoring of decentralisation programmes.

Poor co-ordination among intergovernmental organs especially in developing countries limit the performance of local governments in their decentralisation programme implementation efforts including monitoring and evaluation. A serious problem which has arisen is that of horizontal and vertical co-ordination among agencies belonging to different levels of government. This creates problems of duplication or gaps in service provision, lack of synergy and waste in the utilisation of resources. A fundamental problem arises in institutions where a particular project is designed by a line agency of a higher level of government and subsequently transferred to LGs for operation and maintenance. Because of lack of consultation at the planning stages, facilities are frequently over-designed beyond the affordability of local communities to sustain on an on-going basis. Consequently, once constructed, many such projects tend to remain underutilised and depreciate rapidly. These co-ordination problems are serious in many decentralisation programmes such as water and sanitation, irrigation and roads where the financial requirements and technical complexity



require involvement by higher levels of government (UN 2004:17). Ambiguous definitions of roles and responsibilities at times accentuated by resistance from bureaucratic officials at higher levels to relinquish certain responsibilities, have generated conflict among intergovernmental organs in the implementation and monitoring of decentralisation programmes. The situation has not been improved by superior attitudes associated with central government officials which are resented by local governments' personnel and lack of mutual trust among the intergovernmental organs which have all had negative impact on the implementation and monitoring of programmes under decentralisation (Wilson 2006:8; Saavedra & Kailash 2007:8).

Examples regarding the existing working relationship among intergovernmental organs are identified from India in Asia; Nigeria and Namibia in Africa; and Brazil in Latin America. For the developed countries, examples are identified from the United Kingdom of Britain, Sweden and Australia. In India, mutual interaction between different levels of state and LGs is not a regular affair. There is a clear top down approach with regard to dealing with LG matters which is resented by LGs. Hierarchy rather than collective (cooperative) decision-making has characterised the working relations among intergovernmental organs which has negatively affected the implementation of decentralised programmes (Saavedra & Kailash 2007:8-9). In Nigeria, in a study on the relationship among the three levels of governments between 1999 and 2004, Adele (2008) found that in spite of the existing legislative and policy provisions, the working relationship has been in conflict rather than cooperation. Levels of government since the 4<sup>th</sup> democratic dispensation have been accusing one another. A particular case of such bad relationship involved the confrontation between the LGs against both the federal and state governments with the latter reaching a point of supporting the scrapping of LGs. In Namibia, Kaapama, Blaauw, Zaruka and Kakungu (2007) found that despite the existence of Regional Councils Act and the Local Authorities Act with provisions requiring communication between regional councils and the local authorities, there is lack of a common platform and formal procedures for consultation and communication between the central and LG staff. In Brazil, there have been tensions among the intergovernmental actors with the federal government and its bureaucracies attempting to maintain political and financial control over services and transferring responsibilities without clear demarcations and co-ordination mechanisms. LG bodies, taking advantage of the ambiguous definitions of intergovernmental responsibilities, have attempted to assign themselves more responsibilities leading to conflicts with the federal government (Wilson 2006:8-12).

While problems of working relations among intergovernmental organs which negatively impact on the local governments' performance in implementing and monitoring decentralised programmes are more pronounced in developing countries, the developed countries also face challenges. In Sweden, co-ordination of different welfare systems among the levels of central government and local governments has been a problem with overlapping objectives and target groups. Differences in rules and responsibilities for different levels of government have not only carried the risk of inefficiency and misuse of resources but have also created misunderstandings among intergovernmental organs especially in areas of exercising controls (Svensson 1999:2-3). In the United Kingdom, the Local Government Association (LGA) leaders, appearing before a House of Commons, Communities and Local Government Committee (HCCLGC), observed that there was need for cultural change in the way the central government and its organisations relate to the LGA and its member councils. It was also observed that greater clarity with regard to the demarcation of a number of responsibilities among intergovernmental organs was needed. For instance, the leaders noted that the responsibility of citizen well-being sounded fine in theory but in practice it was more of an accountants' and solicitors' charter—implying that it could not be easily understood by the majority officials at the central and local government levels (HCCLGC 2009:29). Lack of clarification of roles among the intergovernmental organs implies that there is potential for adoption of conflicting approaches, duplication of resources and lack of unity of purpose in the implementation and monitoring of decentralised programmes

There are however many cases in the developed countries where deliberate efforts to improve working relations among intergovernmental relations have tremendously improved the performance of local governments in implementing and monitoring decentralised programmes. The case of Australia highlights such cases. In Australia where, for long, state and local government organs, have shared an unhealthy and antagonistic relationship filled with suspicion and distrust (see Newman, Parker & Spall 2000:6), successful efforts have been made to reverse this trend. In order to build mutual cooperation and trust necessary for effective implementation and monitoring of programmes in local governments, numerous deliberate efforts involving two-way communication, joint design of programmes, flexibility and establishment of co-ordination mechanisms have been made. The case of the Property Information Project in the Victoria state is such an example of successful efforts to improve

working relations among intergovernmental bodies in implementing and monitoring projects under decentralisation. In this particular project, an effective framework for cooperation was designed. The framework allowed flexibility to cater for many variations of LGs within the state. Trust was built up throughout the project as local governments and state government's staff collectively analysed the nature of the problem and jointly developed a works programme capable of meeting the objectives of both the parties. The framework clarified roles and responsibilities of the parties and established information sharing mechanisms. A co-ordination committee comprising local government and state government personnel was established to co-ordinate project activities. A two-way communication strategy was developed for the project, followed up by a series of presentations to senior executives to ensure high level commitment. There were regular briefings of key stakeholders as well as the preparation of a project newsletter. These efforts resulted into effective working relations that have provided the basis for the success of the project (Newman, Parker & Spall 2000:8-9). An important lesson from the case study experience is that for improvement of working relationship among intergovernmental organs involved in monitoring the implementation of decentralisation, a number of issues have to be addressed. These mainly include joint design and review of programmes, clarification of roles and responsibilities, effective co-ordination mechanisms, reliable information sharing mechanism and effective communication.

#### **4.3.2.4 The level of community involvement/participation**

The notion of citizen participation in development has been gaining momentum in the process of human empowerment and development. Decentralisation provides the most popular strategy for citizens' participation in local developments as it requires local governments to involve the community in development and service delivery programmes. The degree of community participation will impact on the performance of local governments in the implementation and monitoring of programmes. The participation of citizens in designing, implementing and monitoring programmes enhance the likelihood of project success as it creates a sense of ownership and responsibility. Vaiciuniene (1999:2) proposes that citizen participation in planning encourages local governments and the public to work together regularly to solve community problems, set priorities, make plans and decisions, design, implement and monitor policy programmes effectively. Vaiciuniene contends that this partnership works only if local governments provide and create an environment that enables citizens to participate. When citizens and local government officials work together in project

planning, then, the author elaborates, community needs and priorities are identified; local governments are enabled to design programmes and services that meet the needs of their constituents; local governments are given access to community resources; public support for local government can be built; long term community building can be developed; and a trusting atmosphere between the local governments and the community could be established.

Experience from various developing and developed countries indicate that the level of citizen participation in decentralisation programmes influences the effectiveness of local governments' performance in the implementation and monitoring of such programmes. In many developing societies, in spite of efforts made by local governments to involve the community in implementation and monitoring of local development and service delivery projects, the degree of participation remains low negatively impacting on the performance of the local governments in delivering services to the local community. Because the citizens who are the beneficiaries of the programmes are not involved in the design and implementation of the programmes, the programmes have not benefited the citizens as expected. Where there has been high participation of the community in the implementation and monitoring of decentralisation programmes, considerable success has been registered. For developed countries, where citizen participation has comparatively been higher, there has been better performance of local governments as regards implementation and monitoring of decentralised development and service programmes (USAID 2000b:46; World Bank.2001b:1; Widianingsih 2005:5; Šarenac 2007:18).

Experiences for developing countries are drawn from Bangladesh and Indonesia in Asia; Ghana and Nigeria in Africa; and Brazil in Latin America. Regarding developed countries, experience is provided from the United States of America. In Bangladesh, there has been little scope of participation for common people in decision-making, management and supervision of local government development projects. As a result, such programmes have failed to produce desired outcome. Poor villagers still live in misery and deprivation; their basic human needs are not fulfilled. Their well-being has not been improved by decentralisation programmes as much as it was expected (Mohammad 2010:3). In Indonesia, despite the general lack of effective citizen participation in many local government programmes, there are cases of successful implementation and monitoring of programmes largely attributed to effective citizen participation. In some municipalities (LGs) such as Solo municipality, with high level commitment of the local government authorities, the local

government authorities adopted community participatory planning approach in local development project management in 2001. This has been accorded recognition through a 'participatory award' from Logo Link, an international network for participatory planning initiatives (Sugartoto 2003:202). The participatory planning process begins with development meetings at village level, moves to the *Kelurahan* (sub municipality) and to the municipality level. Decisions reached are taken to *Bapeda* (regional planning board) for approval and budget allocation before projects are undertaken at community level. A forum has been elected from the community, government, university and private sectors to oversee project implementation and monitoring (Sugartoto 2003: 100). The local governments' experience in Solo municipality implies that direct involvement of community in all the stages of the participatory project planning process (from design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation) creates a feeling of inclusion and a sense of purpose which has positively impacted on the effectiveness of the municipality local government efforts in implementing decentralisation programmes.

In Ghana, an assessment report on the District Assemblies' Common Fund (DAFC) projects (SEND Ghana 2010:32-33) revealed that for projects where there were more citizens participation co-ordinated by community level officials, such projects were generally more successful than those with less or non participation. It was revealed that in areas where the projects registered success, about half of community members were involved in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the projects. The participation levels of citizens, the study indicated was premised on access to project information; and the effectiveness of communication system employed by local authorities that involved equipping of community members with participation skills. For Nigeria, a number of projects were initiated in Zango-Kataf LG in Kaduna State under a five-year rural integrated development programme in the community of Farman. The projects included building of a primary health centre and quarters for secondary school staff, digging of water wells in the community and construction of feeder roads. Similarly, another integrated three-year programme was launched in the neighbouring community of Kapil involving projects like setting up health centre, home economics centre, milling industry, soap industry, rice and piggery farms, boreholes and water tanks. The programmes in both cases were highly participative with steps being undertaken to ensure involvement of marginalised groups such as women, youths and the elderly. Monitoring and evaluation indicators were jointly agreed upon by stakeholders. Monitoring project task forces were then established for collecting monitoring and evaluation data and providing regular

reports to village heads and elders. Timely reporting ensured that bottlenecks to progress of the project being monitored were addressed before the project could suffer serious setback. The programme was such a success that its results were documented and disseminated within the two communities to neighbouring communities. Copies of the results were also made available to other relevant bodies to serve as a guide for similar intervention programmes either in the area or elsewhere (NIRADO 2000:2-8). In Brazil, community participation in local programmes has been traditionally less effective (USAID 2000b:47). However, through effective involvement of the community in decentralised programmes for poverty reduction in the north eastern region, local governments focusing on empowering the poor have had resounding successes at reducing unemployment, improving quality of life standards and building a sense of ownership (World Bank 2001b:1-2).

The cases in the respective developing countries where there have been high community participation that has resulted in registering considerable success in the implementation and monitoring of decentralisation programmes suggest that these successes can be replicated. With commitment of local government authorities to involve the community; prior consultations with project beneficiaries before the design of the project; empowering all community members with the required skills for effective participation; participatory approaches that begin from the lowest village level of the community; community members access to information; and effective communication, it is possible for local governments in developing countries elsewhere including Uganda to achieve similar considerable success.

In developed countries, although some problems of effective participation of the community in local development and service delivery programmes still persist (Šarenac 2007:18-19), the degree of participation as indicated above, has been comparatively higher than in developing countries. This in many cases has led to better performance of local governments in the developed countries as regards the delivery of decentralised development and service programmes. In the case of the United States of America, with relatively effective integrated methods of citizen participation such as direct mail; news releases and mass media; displays and exhibits; public education meetings; websites; open houses (an informal setting for citizens to interact with local government officials and the people in the community involved in planning); public hearings; focus groups; opinion surveys; citizen advisory committees; and citizen planning committees, local governments have made high level impact in

delivering development and service programmes to local community members (Grabow, Hilliker & Moskal 2004: 46-58).

#### **4.3.2.5 The effectiveness of collaboration between LGs and CSOs**

Civil society organisations in developed and developing countries have emerged in order to address the gaps or failures of the state to effectively deliver services and development to all its citizens. Civil society organisations are vital not only in the implementation and management of service delivery programmes but also in promoting good governance (Essia & Yearoo 2009:368). The collaborative partnerships between governments (at both national and local level) are meant to ensure that government development and service delivery programmes reach the grassroots, the poor, the marginalised and the disadvantaged in society. The effectiveness of the collaborative relationship between local governments and civil society organisations in monitoring the implementation of programmes therefore, has considerable influence on the performance of local governments.

Where collaborative partnerships between government and civil society organisations in service delivery programmes have been relatively effective, local governments' performance efforts to implement and monitor decentralised programmes have yielded positive results more especially in developed countries (Manor 2002:2; East Herts District Council 2003:14). But for developing countries, while there have also been some cases of successful collaborative arrangements (Gaus-Pasha 2004:11-12), on the whole, the collaborative partnerships between local governments and civil society organisations in development and service delivery programmes under decentralisation as earlier indicated (see *supra* para 4.3.1.4) have been weak.

Based on the above discussion of the factors that influence the performance of LGs in the implementation and monitoring of decentralisation programmes, one can argue that, in the Ugandan context, the factors that influence the performance of LGs in monitoring the implementation of the decentralisation policy appear to be more or less the same as those affecting local governments in other countries more especially the developing countries. While their scope, magnitude and impact vary from country to country, the factors influencing the LGs' performance of their monitoring role in Uganda as discussed in Chapter Six (see *infra* para 6.3-6.) similarly include the autonomy of LGs in exercising decentralised powers;



the level of the capacity development in LGs; the working relations among intergovernmental organs; and the effectiveness of the collaborative partnership between local governments and civil society organisations.

#### **4.4 CONCLUSION**

The above review of an international perspective on local governments' role in the implementation of decentralisation policy reforms proves that, internationally, many national constitutions and other national laws on regional and local autonomy in both the developed and developing countries bestow a significant role on LGs in the implementation of decentralisation policy. One such role being monitoring the implementation of the decentralisation policy programmes in various sectors. The chapter has brought out the rationale for allocating such a role to LGs which is mainly based on the expected benefits such as greater efficiency, effectiveness and accountability; improved local development; and enhancement of democracy. However, while these expected benefits theoretically sound very impressive, the chapter based on the experience shows that, notwithstanding some progress made, the realisation of these benefits has largely remained a distant reality especially in developing countries.

The examination of LGs' monitoring role across countries in implementing decentralisation policy reforms and the factors influencing their performance have demonstrated that LGs have made numerous efforts to execute their role. These have included designing monitoring systems; developing capacity for monitoring of programmes; collaborating with civil society organisations; and engaging the community in the implementation and monitoring process. While in developed countries, LGs have made more progress in their efforts than in developing countries, which provides some learning lessons for developing countries, much more is needed in all countries to address the issues of insufficient autonomy, capacity development deficits, poor intergovernmental relations, limited citizen participation and ineffective collaborative partnerships between LGs and CSOs if LGs are to effectively execute their role. For developing countries however, an extra effort will be needed to address issues of governance, resource allocation, commitment of national leaders to relinquish power to LGs and the empowerment of citizen to effectively participate in policy matters. The subsequent chapter turns attention to the LG system and decentralisation policy reforms in Uganda



## CHAPTER FIVE

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT SYSTEM AND DECENTRALISATION POLICY REFORMS IN UGANDA

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

Uganda is a former British colony that gained independence in 1962. It is a land locked country located in the east African region. It borders the recent independent nation of South Sudan in the north, Kenya in the east, Tanzania in the south, Rwanda in the south west and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in the west (see Appendix 7 for a geopolitical map of east Africa showing the location of Uganda). According to the United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) World Fact book, Uganda's population is estimated at 33.6 million people as per July 2012. In terms of government, the President is both head of state and head of government. The President appoints a Vice President, a Prime Minister, cabinet ministers, state ministers and resident district commissioners (RDCs) to assist him in governing the country. The RDCs are appointed in each district local government. The country, having emerged from a non-party "Movement" system (National Resistance Movement) instituted by the current President, who has been in power since 1986, is now under a multiparty political dispensation. Unlike in the non-party system where parties were not allowed to compete for any elective positions, parties have, since 2005, participated in all elective positions right from the presidency, parliamentary membership positions, to positions in local government councils. However, the National Resistance Movement, which transformed itself into a political party that is currently the ruling party, continues to dominate the government of the country with majority membership in both national Parliament and local government councils.

The local government system in Uganda through which local governments operate has been designed to enable the local governments to implement the decentralisation policy programmes. This chapter provides a historical overview of the local government system in Uganda. It describes the current local government system and structures in Uganda; explains the objectives and principles of decentralisation in Uganda; and analyses the rationale for monitoring the implementation of the decentralisation policy programmes. The chapter also reviews the policy and institutional framework for the implementation of decentralisation; including the powers and scope of local government roles and responsibilities; the local government organs involved in monitoring the decentralisation implementation process and

their responsibilities; the envisaged monitoring system and monitoring planning in local governments; the institutional capacity building framework in local governments; the role of central government organs in monitoring the implementation of programmes under decentralisation; and the collaborative partnership between local governments and civil society organisations in monitoring the implementation of decentralisation programmes.

## **5.2 A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT SYSTEM IN UGANDA**

During colonialism, the local government system that evolved in Uganda was meant to serve the interests of colonialists. The system evolved as a control mechanism to facilitate exploitation and utilisation of resources. Local governments were responsible for maintaining public order and could only provide a few services but were not involved in the design and implementation of any development programmes. The system was never meant to democratise or facilitate community and civil society participation in local public affairs (Tukahebwa 1998:12-13). There was no separate specific law regulating the affairs of local governments. However, in the advent to independence, some tentative efforts were made by the colonial government to devolve some powers and responsibilities to local governments. Through the District Administration Ordinance (1955), some responsibilities for service delivery and collection of local revenue were decentralised. Under the Ordinance, local governments were also assigned powers to elect district council members. However, substantial powers remained at the central government level with local government technical personnel reporting to central government. The powers of central government were actually increased with the Local Administrations (Amendment) Ordinance (1959) which gave the colonial governor powers to appoint chairmen of local government councils (MoLG2006:9).

More efforts towards decentralising powers to local governments were made with the enactment of the semi-federal independence Constitution of 1962 (Uganda Constitution, 1962). The local government system was structured into four provinces—Northern, Eastern, Buganda, and Western regions. Below the province were district, county, sub county, parish and village administrations. Through the Local Administration Ordinance of 1962, the Constitution granted considerable powers to local governments. The local governments had powers to raise local revenue through taxes, prepare and execute budgets, determine the composition and election of council members and deliver a number of services. The services over which the local governments had jurisdiction included local roads, land administration,

agriculture extension services, rural water supplies, primary and lower secondary education, dispensaries, and preventive health services (Tukahebwa 1998:13; MoLG 2006:10). Local governments, however, continued to rely heavily on central government for funding. As Karugire (1980:190-92) argues, the central government continued to run and interfere in the matters of local governments.

The 1962 semi-federal constitutional arrangement remained in place until 1966 when the constitution was abrogated. This was followed by the republican constitution (The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1967) which recentralised most of the responsibilities that had been assigned to local governments. Through the 1967 Local Administrations Act, the local governments were made mere agents of central government and according to Leys (1967) reflected in Tukahebwa (1998:13), the local governments even changed the name “Local Government” to “Local Administration” reflecting their diminished powers. Under the Act, the Minister responsible for local government had powers to determine the number of local councils; approve the budgets of local councils; approve local council elections and bye-laws; and dissolve the councils. The minister even had powers to take over the administration of any local government entity that in her/his view lacked the ability to function effectively. According to the Act, all employees in local governments were appointed by central government with even the lowest level employee being appointed by the President.

The situation of local governments’ diminished powers was not improved by the military coup of 1971 which replaced the elected government of Apollo Milton Obote and ushered in Amin’s military regime. The regime suspended the Constitution, abolished Parliament and dissolved local government councils. Local administration was reorganised into ten provinces headed by military governors. While the districts under the provinces were headed by appointed district commissioners largely drawn from the traditional civil service, the counties, sub counties, parishes and sub parishes were headed by paramilitary chiefs. The local administrations were made avenues through which military orders could be communicated from the top to the village level. There was no participation of the community in the local affairs and organised civil society virtually ceased to exist. The military governors, other than implementing directives from the military ruler, had few real tasks, and were known to engage themselves in mundane tasks such as personally arresting smugglers at the borders and arresting petty traders suspected of ‘inflating’ prices for the scarce commodities (Tukahebwa 1998:13-14; Golola 2001:4).

Following the dissolution of the military regime in 1979, the short lived National Liberation Front (NLF) Government made some attempts to reorganise the local government system based on *Mayumba kumi* (village councils representing ten house cells) at the village level with an elected chairman, treasurer and secretary. The councils were mandated to mobilise communities to participate in self-help activities. Other than being instrumental in curbing local insecurity, the councils turned out to be mainly used for distribution of scarce essential commodities such as soap, salt and sugar. The second Obote government which came into power through the disputed general elections of 1980 reverted to the 1967 Constitution and the Local Administration Act, 1967, but with intensified patronage in the local government system. The local government chiefs became party functionaries while those who belonged to opposition parties were dismissed (Tukahebwa 1998:14).

Following five years of guerilla warfare, the second elected government of Milton Obote was replaced by the National Resistance Movement under the current President in 1986. This was after the military defeat of the short lived military junta that had just overthrown the Obote government. The following year (1987), a commission of inquiry was set up to review the local government system and make recommendations for appropriate reforms. Based on the recommendations of the Commission (MoLG 2006:10-11), the Resistance Councils and Committees Statute, 1987, was enacted aimed at reversing the centralist tendencies of the 1967 Constitution. The Statute assigned powers and responsibilities to local governments including electing their councils and providing a number of services to the people. The Statute, however, did not provide the local governments with sufficient powers especially in the management of financial and human resources.

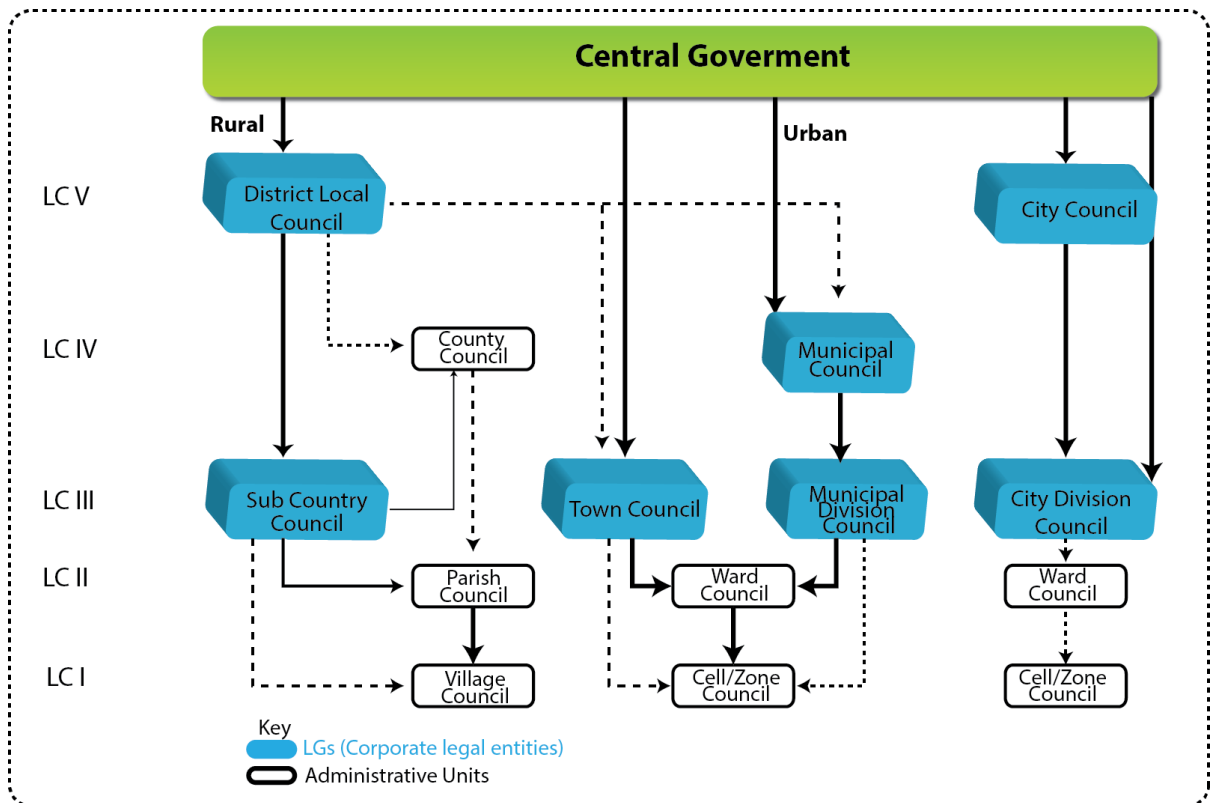
The new National Resistance Movement government (NRM) decided in 1992 to devolve powers to local governments in a bid to improve service delivery and promote democracy through popular citizen participation in decision-making. A new law was subsequently enacted—the Local Governments (Resistance Councils) Statute, 1993. The Statute among others, provided for the principle of non subordination to prevent higher local governments from dominating lower ones. Most of the provisions of the 1993 Statute were later enshrined in the Uganda Constitution, 1995, which were further operationalised by the Local Governments Act, 1997 devolving various powers and responsibilities to local governments (Makerere Institute for Social Research 2000:2; MoLG 2006:10-11-12). The Constitution,

1995, and the Local Governments Act, 1997, provide the backbone of the legal framework for the current local government system and decentralisation reforms in Uganda.

### **5.3 CURRENT LOCAL GOVERNMENT SYSTEM AND STRUCTURE IN UGANDA**

The structure of the current local government system in Uganda is composed of higher and lower levels of local government. According to the 1995 Constitution under article 176, the district (which is equivalent to a city ) is the highest level of local government below which are lower local governments (*cf.* Figure 5.1 below for the organisational structure of local government system in Uganda). In the rural areas, the higher local government (HLG) is a district council (LC V), the lower local governments (LLGs) are sub county councils (LCIII). In urban areas other than the city, the higher local government is also the district council (LC V), while the lower local governments are municipal councils (LC IV), municipal division and town councils (LC III). For the city, the higher local government is a city council (LCV) and the lower local government is a city division council (LC III).

The respective local government councils, according to section 6 of the Local Governments Act, 1997 as amended in 2008, are established as corporate legal entities. However, within the structure of the local governments, there are, according to section 45 of the Act, administrative units (councils) which are not corporate legal entities. Table 5.1 below illustrates the key features of Uganda's decentralised local government system.



**Figure 5.1: Organisational structure of local government system in Uganda**

**Source:** Adapted with amendments from Tumushabe, G., Mushemeza, E.D., Tamale, L.M. and Ssemakula, E. 2010. Monitoring and Assessing the Performance of Local Government Councils in Uganda: Background, Methodology and Score Card. ACODE Policy Research Series, No. 31, 2010. Kampala p, 22

Table 5.1: Key features of Uganda's decentralised local government system

Local council (LC) area of jurisdiction	Level of LG & administrative unit	Political head & selection of representatives	Administrative Head
District/City Council	Higher Local Government(LCV)	District Chairperson or City Mayor elected by universal adult suffrage; councilors from sub counties of city divisions-women(1/3),youths and disabled	Chief Administrative officer (CAO) or City Chief Executive Officer
Municipal Council (Urban)	Lower LG in relation to the district but higher LG in relation to Municipal division (LCIV)	Municipal Mayor; Council made up of all municipal division(LCIII) executives	Town Clerk (urban areas)
County Council(rural area)	Administrative Unit (LCIV).	LCIV Chairperson together with her/his executives are elected by sub county (LCIII) executives.	Assistant CAO (rural areas).
City Division Council (urban area)	Lower LG(LCIII)	Mayor elected by universal adult suffrage. Councilors elected from wards, and women(1/3), youth delegates	Town Clerk (urban areas)
Sub County Council (rural area)/Town Council(urban area)	Lower LG(LCIII)	Sub county council chair person / mayor elected by universal adult suffrage. Councillors elected from parishes/ward, women (1/3), and youth delegates	Sub county Chief in rural areas/Town clerk (urban areas)
Parish Council(rural area)/Ward Council (urban area)	Administrative Unit(LCII)	Chairperson selected by all village (LC1) executive members who make up the council	Parish Chief (rural area)/Ward Administrator or Town Agent (urban area)
Village Council (rural area) Cell/Zone Council (Urban area)	Administrative Unit(LCI)	Chairperson elected by universal adult suffrage. And all adults (18 years) are council members	

**Source:** adapted with amendments from the Local Governments Act (LGA), 1997 as amended in 2001

According to Section 9 of the Local Governments Act, 1997 as amended in 2008, a council is the highest political authority within the area of jurisdiction of a local government and has both legislative and executive powers. Under Section 4 of the Act, in terms of powers and functions, a city council is equivalent to a district council, a city division council is equivalent to a municipal council, and a municipal division and a town council are equivalent to a sub county in terms of powers and responsibilities.

Each council is headed by an elected political head responsible for political leadership of the respective local council jurisdiction. At the district level, the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) is the head of local government civil servants and is the accounting officer. The chief administrative officer who is appointed by central government under section 64 of the Local Governments Act, 1997 as amended in 2008, is responsible for the implementation of district council and central government policy programmes and decisions. The chief administrative officer is also responsible for supervising civil servants, co-ordinating planning in the district and advising the chairperson of the district council. Municipal and town councils have a town clerk as the head of local government civil service administration while city division councils are entitled to assistant town clerks. Under section 65 of the Local Governments Act, 1997 as amended in 2008, a town clerk of an urban council, except in the case of a city or a municipality (these are appointed by Public Service Commission), is appointed by District Service Commission and is responsible for implementing the policies and decisions of the council. In addition, the town clerk, advises the council, supervises and co-ordinates all officers and departments of the council and is responsible for expending the council's funds as the accounting officer.

In the rural areas, at the county council level which is an administrative unit, an Assistant Chief Administrative Officer (ACAO) is the head of local government civil service administration in the county. At the sub county local government level, a sub county chief (Senior Assistant Secretary) is the head of administration. According to the Local Governments Act, 1997 as amended in 2008, Section 69, the sub county chief who is appointed by the district Service Commission is the accounting officer of the sub county local government and is responsible for implementing the policies and decisions of the council. The sub county chief among other responsibilities co-ordinates and assists the council in planning, budgeting and budget implementation. At the parish administrative unit level, a



parish chief according to Section 69 of the Act is the administrative head and an accounting officer of the parish.

It is only at the lowest level, the village council for a rural area and the cell/zone council for an urban area, where there are no local government civil service employees. All the administrative matters at this level are handled by the council chairperson and her/his committee. There are concerns about the absence of a trained administrator at the lowest level, yet it is at this level where the impact of decentralisation programmes can be experienced.

## **5.4 OBJECTIVES, PRINCIPLES AND ASSUMPTIONS OF DECENTRALISATION**

### **5.4.1 Objectives of the decentralisation policy**

There are a number of specific objectives, the decentralisation policy in Uganda is intended to achieve. According to the Government of Uganda (GoU1997:9) and the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG2006:16), the main objectives of the decentralisation policy are:

- to transfer real power to the districts and thereby reduce the workload on remote and under-resourced central government officials at the centre;
- to bring political and administrative control over services to the point where they are actually delivered, and thereby improve accountability, effectiveness, efficiency and promote local development through peoples' ownership of programmes executed in their local governments;
- to free local managers from central government constraints and enable them to develop effective and sustainable organisational structures that are tailored to local conditions;
- to improve financial accountability and responsibility by establishing a clear link between payment of taxes and provision of services; and
- to improve the capacity of local governments to plan, finance and manage the delivery of services to the community

The extent, to which such objectives have been realised, could only be objectively ascertained with empirical findings which this study provides in the subsequent chapter.

#### **5.4.2 Guiding principles of the decentralisation policy in Uganda**

In order to give effect to the objectives of the decentralisation policy in Uganda, the policy is anchored in a number of principles. The Ministry of Local Government (MoLG 2006:18-19) outlines such principles as devolution of power; good governance; subsidiarity; partnership; non-subordination; and accountability. These principles are briefly explained below:

In the Ugandan context, the decentralisation policy is implemented within the framework of good governance. Good governance, under the decentralisation policy, is considered as the exercise of political, administrative and managerial authority and order which are legitimate, accountable, transparent, democratic, efficient and equitable in the allocation of resources and utilisation, and responsive to the critical needs of promoting human welfare and positive transformation of society. It should manifest itself through a number of benchmarks such as mechanisms for checks and balances on government, efficient service delivery mechanisms, good leadership, security, the rule of law, freedom of expression, participation by citizens, informed citizenry, regular, free and fair elections, strong civil society, protection of property and life and political stability (Nsibambi 1998:5).

The devolution of power (ideally) as a principle of decentralisation in Uganda is intended to empower local governments to make decisions and allocate resources based on local needs and priorities. Power is also devolved from higher to lower local governments to enable decision making at the lowest level of service delivery. The devolved powers are supposed to be used in the interests of the people to enhance provision of services, reduction of poverty and improvement of peoples' livelihoods (MoLG 2006:18).

The principle of non-subordination under decentralisation serves to prevent higher local governments from dominating lower local governments. Although non-subordination does not mean that a local authority should not be accountable to the central authority, it serves to provide local authorities or governments with substantial powers to enable them to make decisions over their local development matters (Romeo & El Mensi 2008:12).

According to the collaborative partnership principle, local governments are supposed to implement decentralisation policy in cross sector collaborative partnerships with central government agencies, civil society organisations, the private sector and development

partners from the international arena. Such cross sector collaborative partnerships according to Bryson, Crosby and Stone (2006:48), are more likely to succeed when their planning processes make use of stakeholder analyses, emphasise responsiveness to key stakeholders, use the process for building trust and the capacity to manage conflict and to build on distinctive competencies of the collaborating partners.

The principle of subsidiarity which states that decisions should be made at the lowest possible level where competencies exist (Anderson 1999:2), is intended to allow local matters to be decided at the point where they are most experienced to guarantee relevance to the beneficiaries. The approach is that central government should have a subsidiary function, performing only those functions which cannot be performed effectively at the local level. The overarching principle of subsidiarity is that problems are best addressed at the local level where they occur. Local authorities are encouraged to address their local problems and resolve their conflicts themselves without referring them to higher authority. Whatever solution is adopted, the local authority should execute it. Since their consent is essential, the best situation is for them to resolve their matters independent of central authority (Olsen 2007:5-6).

Finally, the principle of accountability basically, focuses on the use of public resources in local development and the extent to which development interventions are transforming peoples' livelihoods and material wellbeing. The accountability principle under decentralisation provides for multiple channels of accountability. These include downward, upward and horizontal channels. Downward accountability in local governments occurs mainly through the electoral process where citizens choose their LG council members and hold the councils accountable to them. Horizontal accountability implies that the local executive/administration is accountable to the LG councils while upward accountability means that local governments are accountable to central government (Romeo & El Mensi 2008:12; Smoke, Muhumuza & Ssewankambo 2010:10).

The guiding principles for decentralisation are meant to assist the decentralisation policy to realise its overall objective which is to fundamentally transform the society by empowering citizens to take charge of their development agenda in order to realise improved livelihoods. This fundamentally focuses on poverty reduction through the promotion of production and development programmes in order to raise people's income and material well-being (Bitariho

2008:2). However, issues such as limited discretion in the allocation of resources; lack of transparent and accountable use of power and resources; and poor collaborative partnerships continue to surface (Walera, Wamai & Wamai 1997; Golola 2001:8; Makara 2008:348). These raise the question of the extent to which such principles have been adhered to. They also have implications for both the realisation of the decentralisation overall objective and LGs' performance of their monitoring role. The study provides empirical evidence of such implications.

#### **5.4.3 Critical assumptions of the decentralisation policy in Uganda**

The success of decentralisation policy in Uganda is premised on a number of critical assumptions. According to the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG 2006:20), the following constitute the critical assumptions of the decentralisation policy:

- a) local governments have adequate human, financial and material resources to manage devolved responsibilities and care is taken not to burden them with unfunded mandates;
- b) a rational, unified, efficient and effective service delivery system is put in place at the local government level;
- c) greater community involvement in decision making is promoted to generate local development agendas that reflect peoples' problems, needs and priorities;
- d) inequalities between and within local governments are addressed through capacity building and allocation of resources;
- e) central government capacity for policy making, planning, co-ordination and oversight are adequately enhanced;
- f) local administrative matters are left entirely in the hands of elected councils;
- g) local financing and control over local programmes, facilities and staffing are enhanced to allow more flexibility in management of local governments;
- h) decision making processes are improved and streamlined to overcome delays caused by long distances and poor communication systems between the centre and LGs and within LGs;
- i) provision of services and local economic development are promoted to improve people's incomes and well-being;
- j) regular free and fair elections are held at local level on the principle of adult suffrage; and

- k) the implementation of the decentralisation policy is reviewed and refined regularly.

Whereas the above conditions that are presupposed to exist in local governments on which the implementation success of decentralisation is premised sound impressive, there seems to be questions regarding the attainment of such conditions (see Nkongi 2002:5-6). The decentralisation implementation process appears to have been dominated by issues such as local government inadequate capacities, less community involvement in decision making, poor information flow, unhealthy intergovernmental relations and local governments' lack of flexibility in decision making (Onyach-Olaa 2003:19; Kebba & Ntanda 2005:7). All these issues have implications on local governments' effectiveness in monitoring the implementation of decentralisation programmes in particular and the success of the decentralisation policy in general. Gaining a deeper understanding of such issues and their implications require an empirical assessment which was undertaken through this study.

## **5.5 PURPOSE OF MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DECENTRALISATION**

The prime purpose of monitoring the implementation of programmes under decentralisation in Uganda is to ensure effective and efficient implementation of the programmes. It is with this prime purpose that the monitoring of decentralisation programmes intends to achieve a number of objectives including compliance with project schedule and resources; relevancy of project outputs to the beneficiaries; measuring progress; quality compliance; compliance with national budget framework and financial regulations; targeting the relevant beneficiaries; accountability; and documentation of lessons learnt ( MoLG 2003:32-36). It is clear that local governments have a huge task of ensuring that such numerous objectives are realised. The challenge is whether they have the capacity to effectively execute such role.

While the prime purpose of monitoring programmes under decentralisation is to ensure effective and efficient implementation of the programmes, reports suggest that there are inefficiencies and ineffectiveness in the implementation of the decentralisation programmes. Issues that involve time schedule performance where projects fail to comply with national budget framework and time frames; and where delays in project implementation lead to some part of the project funds not being spent by the end of financial year continue to be raised. Other issues involve project cost/budget performance where projects fail to operate within the approved budget; input-output performance where the actual inputs and outputs are less

than planned; and work quality where work produced does not comply with technical specifications in terms of the required standards, the right mix of materials and the acceptable dimensions. There are also issues raised regarding process monitoring where laws and regulations regarding finance management, planning, procurement and contract management procedures are not complied with; activity monitoring where actual activities are less than planned or are not carried out in time and within the projected resource limit; and targeted beneficiaries where the correct beneficiaries are not targeted and the expected quality of goods and services-including accessibility and client satisfaction are not achieved (JARD 2007; IG 2008; OAG 2009; *The New Vision*:5, 6 August 2009; Tumushabe *et al.* 2010; *The Daily Monitor*: 7, 9 May 2011; *The New Vision*: 3, 21 March 2011).

In order to gain greater insight and understanding of the effectiveness and efficiency issues mentioned above in respect of realising the purpose of monitoring the implementation of decentralisation policy, it was appropriate to carry out an intensive investigation which provides empirical findings on such issues. The findings also provide empirical dimensions of the factors contributing to the occurrence of such issues of effectiveness and efficiency.

## **5.6. DECENTRALISATION INSTITUTIONAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK**

The institutional and policy framework for implementing decentralisation policy reforms in Uganda define the powers and scope of local government responsibilities, the local government organs involved in the decentralisation process and their responsibilities, the monitoring system and monitoring planning process in local governments, the role of central government organs in the decentralisation process, the institutional capacity building extended to local governments, and the collaborative role of nongovernmental organisations such as civil society organisations in the monitoring process. It could thus be argued that the decentralisation institutional and policy framework clearly indicate that there are many role players in the monitoring process and recognise the need for enhancing the capacity of local governments to execute their monitoring role.

### **5.6.1 Powers and scope of local governments' responsibilities**

Like many national constitutions supporting the implementation of decentralisation, the Constitution of Uganda, 1995 stipulates decentralisation as the form of government to be applied in Uganda. It assigns local governments political, financial/fiscal and administrative

powers in the implementation of decentralisation policy reforms. The Local Governments Act, 1997 as amended in 2008 which operationalised the constitutional provision for decentralisation, under Sections 30, 35, 38 55 and 84, provides the details of these powers and defines the sector areas over which local governments have jurisdiction. The political powers that are devolved to local governments include powers to elect their leaders ranging from the lowest level (village/zone) to the highest level (district/city) and powers for elected leaders at higher and lower local government levels to form their own “cabinet” — executive committees; powers to determine their development priorities through making and approving their own development plans; legislative powers to make ordinances and bye-laws; and powers to act as legal entities that can sue and be sued. The fiscal powers include the powers to develop, approve and execute their own budgets; powers to raise and utilise revenue according to their priorities; powers to negotiate with central government on the nature and utilisation of intergovernmental transfers from the national consolidated fund; and powers to borrow money or accept grants and donations for development. The administrative powers include: powers to appoint local government administrative statutory bodies; powers to establish and abolish offices; powers to hire, manage, develop and exercise disciplinary control over personnel; powers to manage their own pay role; and powers to implement, monitor and evaluate approved development plans. Through these provisions, it appears that theoretically, local governments are provided with extensive powers that should enable them to execute their monitoring role in implementing the decentralisation.

The sector areas over which local governments have jurisdiction as provided under the *second schedule* of the Local Governments Act, 1997 as amended in 2008 include education services, which cover nursery, primary, secondary, trade, special education and technical education; medical and health services covering non referral hospitals, health centres, dispensaries, maternity and child welfare services and control of communicable diseases; water services; road services covering construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of non central government roads; agriculture; forestry; land management; lighting of street and public places; and public parks gardens and recreation. It is obvious that local governments are responsible for an extensive range of services. The challenge is to render such services on a sustainable basis to the different communities considering the existing resource constraints.

While the legal framework defines the powers and scope of responsibilities of local governments, the degree of autonomy in exercising the powers and responsibilities in the decentralisation process has been an issue of debate (see Olum 2004:4-5). It is imperative to note that local government legislative frameworks as Katorobo (2005:7) argues usually define the powers and resources transferred; they define the jurisdiction of each level of government and which functions are shared among the government levels. The frameworks define legal provisions for the conduct of the respective government levels and may create institutions to maintain checks and balances, transparency and accountability at the local government level. However, Katorobo, observes, even if there are legislative provisions for the establishment of decentralised government, they will not be implemented unless there are leaders who are commitment and believe in the benefits of decentralised government (Katorobo 2005:7&9). According to the World Bank (1999:108), a government has not decentralised unless there is an autonomous local elected government that can take binding decisions in at least some policy area. Based on the respective authors' views, it could be deduced that even when the legal frameworks define the powers and scope of responsibilities for local governments under decentralisation, local governments still face serious limitations regarding the autonomy to execute their roles and responsibilities effectively.

The decentralisation of responsibilities has to be supported by the financial empowerment of local governments with sound financial systems. Freinkman and Prekanov (2010:124), basing their views on Russian fiscal decentralisation experience, argue that the measure of fiscal devolution at the local government level is revenue autonomy, or the share of local government expenditure financed by own revenue — revenue over which local governments have powers to determine the sources and expenditure without undue interference from the central government.

The devolution of power under the decentralisation policy is meant to strengthen local governments so that they can exercise autonomy in carrying out mandated responsibilities. However, as Page and Goldsmith (1987:5) argue, for local governments to 'fulfill' a service, it does not necessarily mean that they influence the way in which the service is delivered because they may have little discretion. Page and Goldsmith propose discretion as a measure of the autonomy of local governments. Discretion describes the power local governments have in deciding on the type and number of services they can deliver.



According to Nyiri (1998:11), real access to decision-making and revenues are the fountains of true decentralisation and local governance.

In the Ugandan situation, the degree of political leaders' commitment to decentralisation; and the degree of local governments' autonomy in making political, financial and administrative decisions, have implications for local governments' execution of their monitoring role. In the absence of empirical research and literature on the implications of these issues, an empirical assessment undertaken by the study was appropriate.

### **5.6.2 Local governments' organs involved in the monitoring process and their responsibilities**

Under the Local Governments Act, 1997 as amended in 2008 (Sections, 13(1); 17; 24(1); 26(1); 30 (6); 64 (2); 65(2); 69(3)), various local government organs are mandated to monitor the implementation of policy programmes in the various sector areas under the scope of their responsibilities as examined below.

#### **5.6.2.1 Political organs**

There are political organs both at higher and lower local governments under decentralisation in Uganda which play crucial monitoring roles in the implementation of decentralisation programmes. The respective organs according to the Local Governments Act, 1997 as amended in 2008 (Sections 3, 10, 16, and 25) include the district council; the district council chairperson's office; and the district council's executive committee. In the case of a city, the political organs include the city council, the office of the city mayor and the city council executive committee. For a municipality, the political organs include the municipal council, the office of the municipal mayor and the municipal executive committee. In a municipal division or a city division, the organs include a city division or municipal division council, city division or municipal division council chairperson's office and a city division or municipal division council's executive committee. In a township, the organs include the office of the town council chairperson, a town council and a town council executive committee. In a sub county, the organs include office of the sub county council chairperson, a sub country council and a sub county executive committee.

The council, the council chairperson and the executive committee at the respective levels of local governments provide leadership in the monitoring process and are expected to focus on the outcome/impact, policy and vision implications. This means, that, their focus is on information/indicators that relate to the overall outcome of a project or programme. This, however, does not imply that they should not be interested in a project's operational matters. Actually, it is emphasised that, they should be interested, but their focus should primarily be on mission/vision-related issues (MoLG 2003:69).

The council according to Section 9 of the Local Governments Act, 1997 as amended in 2008 is the highest political organ of each respective level of local government. It exercises political and executive powers. In monitoring the decentralisation programmes, the council does not only monitor the implementation of the programmes but also monitors the performance of local government civil servants involved in the monitoring process of the development and service delivery programmes. The council's specific roles include (MoLG 2003:36) monitoring of project funds disbursement; project fund allocation and utilisation including financial books of accounts and the auditing process; ensuring community contribution in the implementation and monitoring process; supervising and ensuring the functioning of project management committees; encouraging and overseeing the participation of the nongovernmental sector and monitoring the progress of projects including budget performance and certification of works, compliance with Local Governments Act, regulations and procedures.

The council chairpersons who, according to Section 12 and 24 of the Local Governments Act, 1997 as amended in 2008, are the political figure heads of local government entities, report to their respective councils and on behalf of the councils, monitor the implementation of council decisions and government programmes. They also supervise the local government civil servants involved in the monitoring process of the development and service delivery programmes. In the case of a higher local government, section 13 of the Local Governments Act, 1997 as amended in 2008 and article 179 of the Constitution of Uganda, 1995 mandate its chairperson to monitor and co-ordinate the activities of lower level local governments.

The executive committee which is nominated by the chairperson and approved by the council according to the Local governments Act, 1997 as amended in 2008 (Section 17), is mandated to monitor the implementation of central government programmes, council

programmes and policies, nongovernmental organisation programmes and co-ordinate all the activities of the nongovernmental organisations in its area of jurisdiction.

From the above articulation, it is clear that the political organs of local governments consisting of the chair person, the council and executive committee of the respective local government entities are assigned enormous strategic role in monitoring the implementation of decentralisation policy programmes. The challenge is whether they have the required knowledge, skills, resources and the autonomy to execute such a role.

#### **5.6.2.2 Administrative Units /Councils**

Under the decentralisation policy in Uganda, Section 48 of the Local Governments Act, 1997 as amended in 2008 mandates administrative units, to actively participate in the monitoring process. The administrative units as provided under Sections, 45, 46 and 47 of the Act include county, parish (ward) and village (zone) councils. The county council consists of all the members of sub-county executive committee and all district councillors from the sub-counties within a county (as ex officio members). The parish (ward) council consists of all the members of the village (zone) executive committee in the parish and all sub county councillors representing parish constituencies of the sub county. The village (zone) council consists of all persons of 18 years and above residing in a village and willing to act as members (see Table 5.1). The respective councils consist of elected chairpersons who appoint executive committees to assist in running the daily activities of the council. The concept of willing village residents is intended to provide for the right or freedom not to associate or to belong to the council which is in line with the principle of good governance.

The chairperson, the executive committee and councillors at the respective levels, monitor the project implementation process including status of the projects being implemented and operation and maintenance of the projects in their areas of jurisdiction. At the village (zone) level, monitoring is done by the council chairperson, his or her executive committee and village residents who are above 18 years of age and willing to participate in the monitoring process (GoU 2008:55-57). At this level, the monitoring function is critical as it involves monitoring the end points of programmes being implemented.

### **5.6.2.2 Local government civil service organs**

The Ugandan civil service structure consists of both central government civil servants and local government civil servants. The structure is also characterised by separate and integrated personnel systems. Under separate personnel system all the central government civil servants are appointed by the Public Service Commission while senior middle and lower civil servants in local governments are appointed by the District Service Commission. Under the integrated system, the appointment of the topmost civil servants in local governments is done by the Public Service Commission (see Constitution of Uganda, 1995 as amended in 2006: Article 176[2f]). This has implications for local governments' performance in execution of their monitoring role as such civil servants tend to be accountable to the appointing authority. The findings of the study in Chapter Six provide the empirical dimensions of the implications.

According to Sections 64, 65 and 69 of the Local Governments Act, 1997 as amended in 2006, the civil service organs at the various levels of local governments, in addition to other duties, are involved in the monitoring of government programmes under decentralisation. At the district level, the organs include the office of the chief administrative officer or chief executive officer (in the case of a city), the office of chief finance officer; the district technical planning committee; the district planning unit; office of the internal auditor; district departments or directorates; and sections. At sub county, municipal, municipal division or town council level, they include the office of the town clerk or sub county chief, departments and sections. At the parish (ward) level they include parish chiefs or town agents and community development assistants.

Regarding the roles and responsibilities of the civil service organs, the local government civil service structure reflects a highly departmentalised system with different levels of the organisational structure being responsible for specific functions. But within the same organisational structure, there are those levels that are responsible for overall performance of the structure. Such levels include the office of the chief administrative officer, the office of the chief finance officer and the district technical planning committee and planning units (MoLG 2003:69). The chief administrative officer according to Section 64 of the Local Governments Act, 1997 as amended in 2006 is the head of local government civil service in

the district and the accounting officer. S/he among other duties, supervises, monitors and co-ordinates the implementation of all programmes in the district.

The civil service organs are involved in the monitoring process at both strategic and operational levels. At the district level (HLG), the strategic management level consists of technical planning committee; the office of chief administrative officer; the district planning unit; the office of the chief finance officer and the internal auditor. This level focuses on issues such as output indicators; and quantity and quality of programme outputs. The operational level consisting of departments, sections and field personnel is supposed to focus on issues such as project inputs, practices, time frames and quality specifications. At the lower local government levels, the respective accounting officers and technical planning committees are at the strategic management level while departments and field staffs are at the operational level (MoLG 2003:69-70). The internal audit, which is part of the strategic management level, is vital for efficient and effective management of decentralisation programmes. It provides the internal mechanisms which ensure that public money is spent efficiently, effectively and economically (Tukahebwa 1998:18). The local government Internal Audit Manual, 1995, requires the internal audit departments to continuously review financial and accounting system in operation in each department to establish whether they conform to financial regulations. They are also supposed to ensure that procedures for procurement of goods and services are adhered to; that public funds are properly utilised and that there is value for money in all programme expenditure activities. It is obvious that the civil service organs are expected to play extensive strategic and operational roles in monitoring the implementation of decentralisation programmes. The question that should be born in mind like in the case of the political organs, is whether they have the required capacity in terms of knowledge and skills; financial resources; and autonomy to execute these roles.

While the decentralisation legal framework mandates the various local government organs to monitor the implementation of the policy programmes, there has hardly been an empirical assessment of the organs' performance in execution of their role. Given the existing gaps in empirical research regarding the extent to which the various local government organs have effectively and efficiently executed their roles; the kind of working relationship among the organs; and the impact of such relationship on local governments' performance of their monitoring function, the investigation that was undertaken to provide empirical findings on these aspects was necessary.

### 5.6.3 Role of central government in the monitoring process

Under decentralisation, Sections 95, 96, 97 and 98 of the Local Governments Act, 1997 as amended in 2008 provide for central government line ministries and other state agencies to monitor and co-ordinate decentralised programmes that fall within their respective sectoral areas. It is in line with these provisions of the Act, that a number of central government actors have been involved in monitoring the implementation of decentralisation programmes. These include line ministries personnel; personnel from the president's office and prime minister's offices; and statutory organs such as the office of the Inspector of Government (IG) and Office of the Auditor General (OAG) ( Tumushabe *et al.* 2010:17-18).

The involvement of central government agencies in monitoring the implementation of decentralisation programmes in local governments which are already being monitored by various local government organs at higher and lower local government levels, increases the number of government organs which are involved in the monitoring process. This calls for effective working relationship among the various organs (intergovernmental organs). It has been observed (OECD 2009:1) that, in pursuit of effective relationships among intergovernmental organs, governments regardless of their degree of decentralisation need to determine how to manage interdependencies in public policy programmes at different government levels. Other authors such as Ancher (2007:15-16) have emphasised power relations as being central to any working relationships. With specific reference to government, Beach (2011:1) observes that within governments, numerous power relationships exist. These may include power relationships among the different branches of government such as the executive, judicial and legislative branches and power relationships among elected office bearers and appointed officials at different levels of government. Such relationships according to Beach need to be effectively managed to achieve government objectives [such as implementing a decentralisation policy effectively-emphasis added]. This implies that for the case of monitoring the decentralisation policy programmes in Uganda, there is need to effectively manage the working relationships among the central government organs, the local government organs, the local government political and civil service organs, the higher local government organs and the lower local government organs which are all involved in the monitoring process.

The extent to which the central government agencies effectively perform their role, their working relationship with local governments and the impact these have on local governments' performance could not be established in the absence of empirical research and relevant literature. The study addresses this gap by assessing the role of central government and the impact of its working relationship with local governments on monitoring the implementation of the decentralisation programmes.

#### **5.6.4 Capacity building extended to local governments**

As mentioned earlier, the decentralisation policy framework provides for the capacity building of local governments. Capacity expresses the ability to effectively, efficiently and sustainably perform functions, solve problems and set and achieve objectives. Capacity is the *power* of an organisation, a system or a person -individually or collectively to produce or to perform (World Bank 2001c:2-3). Loquai and Le Bay (2005) in their 'methodological guidance' for building capacities for monitoring and evaluating decentralisation and local governments in West Africa, underscore the importance of strengthening the capacities of local governments to monitor and evaluate decentralisation implementation and local governance processes. Capacity building for local governments, the authors argue, should focus on improving decision-making, building capacities for self-evaluation with actors in local governments, promoting democratic control, facilitating learning (on specific aspects of local development), tracing and assessing the impacts of decentralisation processes and accounting to central government/donors/citizens for the use of resources.

In the Uganda's case, the key element of the capacity building policy framework is to enhance the capacity of elected office bearers and appointed officials, members of statutory boards and commissions in local governments, the civil society organisations and private providers to address deficiencies in service delivery to the public (Onyach-Olaa 2003:45 ). Such deficiencies include lack of technical knowledge and skills for problem analysis, needs identification and prioritisation, project design, managing finances, targeting of the right beneficiaries and assessing beneficiary satisfaction levels. The policy framework aims at identification and development of the necessary skills in managing financial, human and information resources; and managing government programmes effectively including monitoring and evaluating programme outcomes to guide future activities (MoLG 2005:3-4).

According to the national local government capacity building policy, as actors involved in the monitoring process, LGs are required to have capacity building plans linked and integrated into their development plans and harmonised with the national capacity building programme (MoLG 2005:17). Sound capacity building plans should be based on an effective capacity needs assessment mechanism that focusses on three key elements: human resources—in terms of the knowledge and skills gaps; institutional and infrastructural capacity—in terms of the systems and structures necessary to allow the human resources to be used effectively; and networks and partnerships as a means by which capacities can be strengthened within and across organisations (WHO 2009:2). The study findings provide empirical dimensions of the capacity building planning in local governments.

The central government has been making efforts to enhance the capacity of local governments' technical officials and political officer bearers under the capacity building fund for local governments. Capacity building initiatives such as short term and long term skills development, training, retooling, attachments, mentoring, systems development and understudies have been extended to local governments. All these initiatives are aimed at enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of local government organs to execute their roles including monitoring the implementation of government programmes for delivery of services (Bashaasha, Mangheni & Nkonya 2011:5).

The capacity building to enhance the capacity of local governments to effectively execute their roles has been going on over a period of time. However, no effort has been made to carry out an intensive study on the nature of the capacity building, its approaches and effectiveness in enhancing the capacities of local governments to effectively and efficiently execute their monitoring role—a gap which this study bridges.

#### **5.6.5 Collaboration between local governments and civil society organisations**

Based on the 1995 Constitution and the Local Governments Act of 1997, the decentralisation strategic framework provides for collaborative partnerships involving, *inter alia*, central government agencies, local governments and civil society organisations (MoLG 2006:33). It is, however, important to note that the general call for collaboration in the public sector between government organisations and the nongovernmental sector organisations, is



confronted with problems of inadequate capacity in terms of professional knowledge and expertise on how to manage it successfully (Künzel & Welscher 2011:5).

While there are problems confronting collaborative relationships between government organisations and the nongovernmental sector organisations, there are also some useful guidelines on building and managing effective collaborative relationships. These mainly centre on the training of partners to build focused collaborative relationships. Effective capacity building should lead to a focused collaborative relationship in which the representatives from each party co-operate to plan, perform and review their activities. In a focused collaborative relationship, mechanisms to facilitate the performance of shared tasks are established. In such a relationship, each party knows its own capabilities that it is contributing to the collaborative venture. There is also mutual trust and clear leadership structure to the joint work of the partnership which allows consultation and open exchange of information and ideas (Day 2006:13). The question here (which is answered by the research findings) is whether the collaborative relationship between local governments and civil society organisations measures up to the requirements for a focused collaborative relationship.

In line with the decentralisation strategic framework, the civil society organisations (CSOs) in collaboration with LGs in Uganda have been widely involved in the implementation and monitoring development and service programmes under decentralisation (Kebba & Ntanda 2005:8). In addition to actively carrying out monitoring activities of their own programmes and those initiated by government, civil society organisations according to Tumushabe *et al.* (2010:19), have been involved in designing monitoring and evaluation systems such as the Community-Based Monitoring and Evaluation System (CBMES) as an approach for engaging communities in continuous monitoring of government programmes. Civil society organisations, according to the authors, have also been involved in promoting participatory approaches used in selecting monitoring indicators, developing monitoring tools, collecting and analysing data and presenting findings.

Whereas under the decentralisation strategic framework, civil society organisations have been working with local governments in the monitoring process as collaborative partners, there has hardly been a detailed assessment of their partnership and its implications on local governments' performance of their monitoring role. It appears that the available literature on the collaboration between local governments and civil society organisation is too general. It

does not provide information on the effectiveness of the partnership in monitoring the implementation of the decentralisation policy programmes. Thus, it was necessary for this study to provide a detailed assessment of the collaborative relationship and its impact on local governments' performance in execution of their monitoring role.

## **5.7 MONITORING SYSTEM AND MONITORING PLANNING IN LOCAL GOVERNEMENTS**

### **5.7.1 The monitoring system**

Local governments under decentralisation are supposed to design a strong monitoring system to ensure effective and efficient implementation of decentralisation programmes. A monitoring system as a network of units and planning mechanisms addresses a number of data management issues such as what kind of data to collect; how, when and which organs will collect the data; organs responsible for data analysis; reporting; and storage mechanisms of the monitoring data (Clifford, Gray and Larson 2005: 411). The designed monitoring system in local governments is supposed to be linked to the National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System (NIMES).

While the local governments are theoretically supposed to design an effective and efficient monitoring system, some authors (e.g. Ssewankambo, Hindson & Ssengendo 2006:10-12) have questioned the effectiveness of the monitoring system in local governments. The authors have particularly questioned the linkage of the monitoring system to the national integrated monitoring and evaluation system; the extent to which the system enhances learning and information sharing both vertically and horizontally; and the extent to which the processes and results within the system provide participatory approaches.

The study assesses the levels of efficiency and effectiveness of the existing local government monitoring system in managing monitoring information. It also examines the extent to which the monitoring system is linked to the national integrated monitoring and evaluation system. The assessment of the system's efficiency and effectiveness and the examination of its linkage to the national integrated monitoring and evaluation system provide empirical dimensions of the questions raised about the monitoring system.

### **5.7.2 The monitoring planning**

In the planning of monitoring tasks and activities, based on an established monitoring system, the actors involved in monitoring the implementation of programmes under decentralisation are expected to design and execute monitoring plans to aid the monitoring process. A monitoring plan is used to manage and document the process of data collection. It ensures that comparable data is collected on a regular and timely basis. It defines the indicators to be tracked, specifies the source, method and schedule of data collection and assigns roles and responsibilities. The plan keeps the monitoring system on track and ensures that data are reported regularly to project management and other stakeholders (PAHO 1999:10).

Theoretically, local governments are expected to design and effectively execute monitoring plans. However, regarding the practice, the existing literature on planning in local governments seem to be general and does not capture the experience of monitoring planning in the local governments. The study on bottom-up planning in local governments by Mutabwire (2008) pays attention to general planning processes with a focus on the participation of key players in the planning process. Other authors like Onyach–Olaa (2003:16-17) have also commented on planning in local governments in general. Given the absence of disaggregated literature and research findings, the extent to which local governments have effectively and efficiently executed the prescribed monitoring planning tasks is a question that had to be answered by an empirical examination undertaken by this study.

## **5.8 CONCLUSION**

The chapter has reviewed literature on the local government structural system and decentralisation policy reforms in Uganda from a historical overview to the current status. Literature regarding the objectives and principles of decentralisation policy; the purpose of monitoring the implementation of decentralisation programmes; the decentralisation institutional and policy framework including institutional capacity building framework in LGs; the key role players; and the envisioned monitoring system and monitoring planning have been reviewed. The review of the existing literature on the LG system and structures where the monitoring of decentralisation programmes is executed provides the entry point for the study. The review has brought to the fore the existing gaps in empirical research on the local governments' efficiency and effectiveness in executing their monitoring role and the factors

influencing their performance. It appears that most of the available literature on the monitoring role of local governments is theoretical, especially regarding issues of local governments' autonomy in exercising decentralised powers; the expected roles and responsibilities of the various players in the monitoring process; the monitoring system and monitoring planning process in LGs; and the capacity building for local governments. The study therefore is aimed at providing empirical findings on these issues. Where the review has revealed reported issues of inefficiency and ineffectiveness particularly regarding local governments' realisation of the monitoring purpose, the study aims at gaining a deeper understanding of such issues. In the next chapter (Chapter Six), the study provides the analysis and interpretation of the study findings

## CHAPTER SIX

### ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF STUDY FINDINGS

#### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to examine the monitoring role of local governments (LGs) in implementing the decentralisation policy in Uganda in view of the institutional factors that influence the local governments' performance of this function. It is from this purpose that the specific objectives of the study were derived. The specific objectives focused on assessing the performance of LGs in executing their monitoring role; and the impact of the degree of LGs' autonomy, the capacity building extended to LGs, the working relationships among intergovernmental organs and the collaboration between LGs and civil society organisations (CSOs) on the performance of LGs. Data collection and analysis were based on systematic arrangement of key themes in line with the five specific objectives of the study. The key themes thus were LGs' performance in their monitoring role; the LG's degree of autonomy in exercising decentralised powers; the capacity building extended to LGs; the working relationships among intergovernmental organs involved in the monitoring process; and the collaboration between LGs and CSOs involved in the monitoring process. The presentation, analysis and interpretation of findings in this chapter are in line with these key themes.

#### 6.2 LOCAL GOVERNMENTS' PERFORMANCE IN THEIR MONITORING ROLE

*Objective One* of this study was to assess the performance of LGs in executing their monitoring role in the implementation of decentralisation programmes. In order to assess their performance, the design of a strong monitoring system; and the preparation and execution of effective monitoring plans were employed as major analytical constructs. The focus of the analysis of the monitoring system that LGs are required to design in order to aid their monitoring function was based on the existing data management mechanisms in terms of structures for data collection, organs for data analysis, data/information dissemination mechanisms, data storage mechanisms and the linkage of the monitoring system to the national integrated monitoring system. For the preparation and execution of the monitoring plans, the focus was on the identification of project areas to be monitored, selection of performance indicators, definition of monitoring data collection methods, reporting and feedback mechanisms and the allocation of required monitoring resources.

## 6.2.1 Designing of a monitoring system

A strong and effective monitoring system is the cornerstone for local governments' effective monitoring of the decentralisation policy programmes. It was pointed out in the previous chapter (see *supra* para 5.7.1) that such system should provide effective data management mechanisms and that it should have strong linkages with the national monitoring system.

### 6.2.1.1 *Data management mechanisms*

Management of monitoring data has particularly been a critical issue in monitoring systems. The greatest failure of monitoring systems is in managing data. It is common to find long-serving projects that have no monitoring files or standard methods for periodically summarising information—which makes it impossible to retrieve any required information on monitoring (IUCN 2004:8). In the management of monitoring data, LGs are expected to design an effective internal data management system with structures for data collection, analysis and dissemination of project information to the different stakeholders. The system should also address issues such as the forms or tools for collecting/recording data (for accuracy and reliability); and how effectively the data will be stored (IUCN 2004:8-9).

#### *(a) Structures or organs for monitoring data collection*

The study established that there are organs that include teams, committees and individuals that are involved in collecting monitoring data. All 18 (100%) LG political office bearers and all 37(100%) LG officials interviewed, indicated that there are defined organs that carry out monitoring activities in LGs. These specifically include joint teams, sectoral teams, technical monitoring teams, project management committees (PMCs), area committees and individual councillors. The joint teams comprise political executive members, councillors and technocrats from sectoral departments. Sectoral teams are constituted by staff members of individual sectoral departments and their respective political heads. The technical monitoring teams are constituted from time to time by the respective office of the accounting officers. The teams do not include politicians. They usually comprise personnel from the office of the accounting officers who are the team leaders, and selected members from sectoral departments. PMCs consist of members appointed from the project beneficiaries. Area committees which mainly handle central government initiated projects such as NAADS include farmers' forums, co-ordination committees and community based committees at sub

county, parish and village levels. Extension workers are members of these committees. The individual councillors are the elected representatives of their respective constituencies.

The joint monitoring teams carry out quarterly monitoring activities. These teams according to the respondents, have made considerable contributions in providing monitoring information that has been used to improve project implementation. Acknowledging their contribution, one of the respondents observed:

*While joint monitoring has its own problems, in a number of cases, the politicians have helped to bring out certain anomalies in project implementation. For example recently we had made a martinet ward with squatting toilets and yet pregnant women cannot squat. During our joint monitoring, the politicians pointed it out and we had to change the squatting toilets to sitting toilets.<sup>2</sup>*

Probed on what problems were associated with the joint monitoring, the respondent revealed that these ranged from limited competence on the part of politicians to grasp technical project issues to their fault finding attitude other than providing the way forward to improve the implementation process. Senior district LG officials interviewed reiterated the problem of limited competence. It was reported that while LGs have put in place joint monitoring exercises as mechanisms to improve project monitoring, there is a big challenge with projects that require monitors to have technical competence which are absent especially among the politicians. A case in point reported was that in a works projects, the politicians will rely almost entirely on the supervising engineer who may provide biased information to cover up his weaknesses.<sup>3</sup> Regarding politicians' attitude, a senior district political official from a different angle observes that: "Because of our inquisitive approach, the technocrats consider us to be fault finders and yet our aim is to have a clear understanding of issues..."<sup>4</sup> The findings in this case imply that there are differences in monitoring approaches between the technical officials and the politicians and these usually extend to the nature of monitoring recommendations that should be made when two parties carry the out joint monitoring exercises usually leading to conflicting positions.

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<sup>2</sup> Interview, Ssemakula Sam, Agriculture Officer, Entebbe Municipality, 29 September 2013.

<sup>3</sup> Interview, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Wakiso District, 28 August 2013.

<sup>4</sup> Interview, Namubiru Rosemary, Vice Chairperson Wakiso District LG, 21 August 2013.

The study noted that the monitoring activities carried out by the joint monitoring teams are not comprehensive. The activities do not cover all the projects being implemented and even for those which are covered; little attention is given to the various aspects of the projects. An overwhelming majority (35 of 37 [95%]) of the interviewed LG officials and the majority (13 of 18 [72%]) of LG political office bearers revealed that, the joint teams' monitoring activities are not comprehensive and that this was because of the limited time allocated to field monitoring visits. One of the LG officials described the situation: "The teams have limited number of days to cover all projects. But even for those which they cover, they do not concentrate on issues. They are always rushing to cover as many projects as possible. They ask some few questions and leave..."<sup>5</sup> The findings suggest that the monitoring teams have not been effective in establishing the exact outputs, outcomes and impact of projects which in turn has negative implications on the effectiveness of LGs' performance in their monitoring role. This position was supported by one official who observed that: "With the narrow and limited coverage of our monitoring, we have not been able to establish the impact of projects..."<sup>6</sup>

The research established that sectoral monitoring teams which focus on specific sectors such as works, agriculture, education and health, have made considerable efforts to provide monitoring data on the respective sectors especially where their activities have been regular. However, the teams, in addition to facing similar problems of competence, attitude and lack of comprehensiveness experienced by the joint monitoring teams, also suffer from lack of integrative approach. All six (100%) interviewed higher local government (HLG) sectoral political heads and an overwhelming majority (12 of 13[93%]) of the heads of department revealed that the teams in their monitoring activities tend to ignore projects belonging to other sectors and that they also rarely share their monitoring findings with the other sectors. One of the heads of department commented: "we do not have interdepartmental forum where we share findings from the various sectors..."<sup>7</sup> These findings suggest that the sectoral monitoring teams do not have harmonised data/information. Lack of an integrative approach to address issues and or challenges identified by the organs in their monitoring findings

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<sup>5</sup> Interview, Lubulwa Michael, District Fisheries Officer, Wakiso District, 19 August 2013

<sup>6</sup> Interview, Atwine Easter, District Agriculture Officer, Ntungamo District, 8 October 2013

<sup>7</sup> Interview, Oyine Joseph, District Production Officer, Wakiso District, 20 August 2013.



implies that there is no sharing of experience and no common position on monitoring recommendations.

The technical teams under the guidance of the office of the respective accounting officers have been involved in providing data that cover all sectoral departments. However, while these teams tend to produce relatively more comprehensive reports, their findings tend to be ignored (particularly) by politicians. The majority (28 of 37[75%]) of the interviewed LG officials reported that there is a tendency among the politicians to treat monitoring exercises solely undertaken by technical officials with bias. This leads to the findings of the teams not being considered significant. Yet according to the interviewees, these teams are relatively better equipped technically to understand monitoring issues. One of the officials explained the situation: “Our monitoring teams produce more comprehensive and competent reports but the politicians are less interested in our reports and do not give us the necessary support especially when it comes to budget allocation ...”<sup>8</sup> Thus it could be deduced that because of lack of political support, the technical teams’ monitoring efforts have not effectively informed the decentralisation implementation process.

The PMCs have been useful in providing data on the status of the projects under their management. However, the committees are overwhelmed by work and yet they are not technically competent enough to execute all their roles and responsibilities. An overwhelming majority (17 of 18 [94%]) of the interviewed lower local government (LLG) officials, indicated that the PCMs were expected to carry out project monitoring activities and report on progress but the experience was that the PMCs did not have the competence to effectively execute such assignment. One of the officials exclaimed about the situation of the committees that: “We expect too much from the PMCs. There is a lot of paper work required beyond their capacity...”<sup>9</sup> With the PMCs lacking the capacity to carry out all the assigned responsibilities, it appears that they have not been effective and efficient in executing their monitoring function. One of the LLG officials interviewed supported this position by observing thus: “Without even properly understanding their roles, one cannot say that PMCs have been

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<sup>8</sup> Interview, Katotoroma John, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Ntungamo District, 11 October 2013.

<sup>9</sup> Interview, Nnakyaze Olivia, Community Development Officer, Wakiso Sub County, 3 September 2013.

effective in executing their duties...”<sup>10</sup> The situation is not improved by the lack of remuneration. The PMCs are considered to be voluntary organs thus their members are not remunerated which affects their performance. An observation by one of the officials confirmed this position: “The performance of these people [project management committee members] is also affected by the fact that they are not paid for their efforts ...”<sup>11</sup>

The study established that the area committees have been useful in providing monitoring data particularly at sub county, parish and village levels. The study also established that while their technical competence may be better than the PMCs as it is improved by members drawn from the extension workers, many of them, especially those from farmers’ forum and community based committees also lack the competence to understand technical aspects of projects and how to collect and report monitoring data.<sup>12</sup> Further, the study noted that even for the extension workers who have considerable levels of competence; their performance according to senior district LG officials interviewed, has not been effective mainly due to poor co-ordination and inadequate resources.<sup>13</sup> This has had negative implications on the performance of extension service programmes. The calls by experts for an overhaul of the structure of the extension service programmes particularly the agriculture extension services confirm this position (*The New Vision*: 26, 21October 2013).

The individual councillors carry out regular monitoring activities. All 18 (100%) LG political office bearers and all 37(100%) LG officials interviewed revealed that individual councillors monitor projects in their respective constituencies. Although the councillors do not provide formal written monitoring reports, the respondents revealed, they have been helpful in providing information in meetings and in informal briefings on the status of project activities in their constituencies. One of the respondents observed: “Individual councillors have been very useful in reporting emergency cases especially through phone calls...”<sup>14</sup> The research further established that the councillors have not performed their monitoring activities as

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<sup>10</sup> Interview, Nakimera Racheal, Community Developpt. Officer, Kakiri Sub County, 19 September 2013.

<sup>11</sup> Interview, NNakintu Prosy, Sub County Chief, Wakiso Sub County, 2 September 2013.

<sup>12</sup> Interview, Sabiiti Moses, NAADS Co-ordinator Ntungamo District, 8 October 2013.

<sup>13</sup> Interview, Oyine Joseph, District Production Officer, Wakiso District, 20 August 2013; Atwine Easter, District Agriculture Officer, Ntungamo District, 8 October 2013.

<sup>14</sup> Interview, Nnamuli, Hadijah, Sub County Chief, Nabweru Sub County, 18 September 2013.

expected. They have actually been less effective. It was noted that, while, like the other monitoring data collection and reporting organs, the councillors also suffer from a lack of technical competence to grasp various monitoring aspects; they, in addition have a problem of exclusion from monitoring facilitation allowances. One of the officials described their situation: “In our monitoring visits, we find councillors in their respective areas and co-opt them but at the end of the day, they are not given allowances not even lunch allowance.”<sup>15</sup> The findings imply that without monitoring allowances to facilitate their monitoring activities, the councillors would have to use their personal resources and yet, as it is shown later (see *infra* para 6.5.2), they do not earn salaries. This, therefore, suggests that councillors’ monitoring activities have also been limited due to lack of monitoring allowance facilitation which could have greatly affected the execution of their monitoring role.

(b) *Forms/tools used to record/collect monitoring data*

As already noted (see *supra* para 6.2.1.1), an effective monitoring system needs to have forms or tools to be used by monitors for recording/collecting data to enhance accuracy and reliability. The findings revealed that there are no standard comprehensive monitoring forms or tools used to record monitoring data. All 18 (100%) interviewed LG political office bearers and an overwhelming majority (35 of 37 [95%] ) of LG officials indicated that lack of a standard monitoring data collection tool was causing problems especially with regard to the specific data the monitors should collect. Highlighting the problem of lack of a monitoring tool in LGs, one of the officials observed that: “When we are conducting monitoring, we just move with note books to the field. Because of lack of a standard tool to guide us, we have no common position on what monitoring issues should be our concern...”<sup>16</sup> The findings also revealed that in cases where some data tools have been designed, other than providing for project description, location and findings or observations, such tools do not provide for the recording of data on the various project aspects. The research further revealed that while central government has designed monitoring tools for its own initiated projects; such tools have not been applied by the LGs to guide their field monitoring activities. One of the official’s observation reflected the situation: “In most cases, central government projects have some monitoring forms but we have not used these forms in our monitoring. I think people do not

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<sup>15</sup> Interview, Maseruka Robert, Chair person, Nabweru Sub County LG, 18 September 2013.

<sup>16</sup> Interview, Adong Roselyn, Chief Administrative Officer, Ntungamo District, 8 November 2013.

know how to use them.”<sup>17</sup> The findings suggest that due to lack of a comprehensive monitoring data collection tool and failure to use the available tools, LGs have not been able to establish the progress on the various project monitoring indicators which has negative implications on LGs efforts to establish the results and impact of the decentralisation programmes.

(c) *Organs for monitoring data analysis*

The findings showed that other than the monitoring teams which conduct monitoring activities and write reports, there are no specific organs responsible for carrying out comprehensive monitoring data analysis. The majority (14 of 19 [76%]) of the interviewed HLG officials reported that, due to lack of organs for analysis of monitoring data, LGs could not establish the exact impact of decentralisation projects. An observation by one of the officials reiterated the problem: “Because of lack of a monitoring Unit, we do not have M&E personnel to carry out comprehensive analysis of monitoring data. Currently for example we do not have analysed consolidated monitoring data on NAADS projects in the district...”<sup>18</sup> Without monitoring data analysis as the findings revealed, it implies that LGs cannot establish the project out puts, outcome, impact and the lessons learnt as well as the trends and over all levels of project implementation performance in the LGs.

The study noted that even in some LGs (4 of 15[27%]) which have functioning offices for statistics and population services, they only process and analyse data on the general performance of LGs. This is done with the use of an Output Budget Tool (OBT) which assists mainly to analyse how funds released from central governments have been utilised in order to provide justification for the next budget releases.<sup>19</sup> The findings imply that even if all the LGs had functioning offices for statistics and population services, they would still most likely not be able to carry out monitoring data analysis without monitoring and evaluation personnel to carry out the analysis.

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<sup>17</sup> Interview, Mwesiga Dedus, District Planner, Ntungamo District, 21 October 2013.

<sup>18</sup> Interview, Sabiti Moses, NAADS Co-ordinator, Ntungamo District, 8 October 2013.

<sup>19</sup> Interview, Kyeyune Nixon, Statistician, Wakiso District, 30 August 2013

(d) *Dissemination of monitoring findings*

Once monitoring data collection and analysis are complete, the next step is dissemination of the findings. The essence of disseminating findings is to ensure that they are considered for use by stakeholders in making decisions and making adjustments to improve the programme outcomes. The findings can be disseminated in multiple ways such as meetings, detailed reports, media and workshops. Muller, Burke, Luke and Harris (2008:173) in a study on a tobacco-control evaluation found that the use of multiple ways of dissemination was the most effective in disseminating results to stakeholders. The findings on monitoring the implementation of decentralisation programmes in LGs revealed that notwithstanding numerous weaknesses, some deliberate efforts have been made to disseminate the monitoring findings to stakeholders in a number of ways.

As a way of disseminating monitoring findings, from the field, monitoring reports are compiled and discussed in sectoral committee, executive committee and council meetings. An accounting officer is then tasked to communicate the monitoring recommendations. The officer normally writes to the implementers and their supervisors and informs them of the recommendations. However, an overwhelming majority (17 of 18 [93%]) of the interviewed LG political office bearers and the majority (28 of 37 [75%]) of LG officials reported that where projects are being executed by contractors, the contractors have usually either taken long to take action or not taken action at all. Although the interviewees also revealed that in such cases, LGs are forced to retain 10% payment of the contract price if they are not satisfied with the contractor's quality of work, the findings suggest that monitoring recommendations do not timely inform the project implementation process to improve project outputs and outcomes.

Another way of disseminating monitoring information has been the practice of copying reports to stakeholders. In some cases, an area MP is provided with a copy of the report. The lower LGs also usually provide copies of their reports to the higher LGs. However these reports seem to be a formality as they are seldom taken seriously. All 11 (100%) interviewed LLG political office bearers and an overwhelming majority (17 of 18 [94%]) of LLG officials stated that, HLGs, rarely respond to the LLGs' reports. One of the officials highlighted the problem: "The district usually ignores our reports. We point out problems, we do not get response. We now have a case of pit latrines. We said that the pit latrines were poorly dug but the

construction went ahead without rectifying the problem.”<sup>20</sup> A district official agreed with this position: “The lower local governments give us copies of their reports but we do not give them feedback. We have no consistent forum where we discuss and act on their findings.”<sup>21</sup> The findings regarding lack of response/feedback from higher to lower LGs concur with Onyach-Olaa (2003:17) who states that there is a weak feedback mechanism from higher to lower levels of LGs under decentralisation. The findings do not conform to Bhola’s two way flow of information theory between the higher and lower levels in the monitoring process discussed in Chapter One (see *supra* para 1.9.1).

Local governments, according to all the 18 (100%) HLG officials interviewed, have used the display of monitoring findings as a way of disseminating the findings. In some cases, summaries of monitoring findings are displayed at notice boards at the respective LG headquarters. However, this serves a very limited number of stakeholders who venture to read the notice boards. Besides, according to the deputy CAO of Ntungamo district, with poor reading culture, people do not bother to read the findings.<sup>22</sup> This was confirmed in a focus group discussion composed of higher and lower LG personnel where it was noted that employees complain of lack of communication and information and yet most information is in various correspondences including reports and notice boards but the employees do not take time to read them.<sup>23</sup>

It was noted that another way of disseminating the monitoring findings has been through Stakeholders’ review meetings such as district management committee, sub county management committee and community meetings. However, according to the majority (14 of 19 [74%]) of the interviewed HLG officials, the meetings are not regular and usually by the time they are held, it is too late to address many of the issues raised in the monitoring reports. The findings here imply that the stakeholder meetings have not been effective in disseminating monitoring information. This position was confirmed by one of the officials who observed that: “The review meetings with stakeholders would have been effective if they

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<sup>20</sup> Interview, Kanyike Justine, Vice Chairperson, Wakiso Sub County LG, 2 September 2013.

<sup>21</sup> Interview, Mwesiga Dedus, District Planner, Ntungamo District, 21 October 2013.

<sup>22</sup> Interview, Katotoroma John, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Ntungamo District, 11 October 2013.

<sup>23</sup> 1½ hour focus group discussion composed of HLG and LLG personnel (7members) held at Wakiso District H/quarters, 12 September 2013.

were regular ...<sup>24</sup> It is thus clear that the meetings do not provide the required regular forum to address monitoring issues raised in the monitoring reports.

(e) *Data storage mechanisms*

As observed earlier (see *supra* para 6.2.1), a sound monitoring system should *inter-alia* define how to store collected data effectively. It was found that in all (15 of 15 [100%]) LGs, efforts are made to file hard copies of the monitoring reports. However, the filing system was poor. Previous reports cannot be easily traced. There is no central location where the monitoring reports are kept. A municipal official's observation aptly captured the situation thus: "We do not have a central data base. We normally file hard copies. But we do not have proper filing. As you can see, it is not easy to trace the reports even for the last one year."<sup>25</sup> This implies that the existing filing system does not facilitate the storage of monitoring data for future reference or for lessons learnt which is the essence of an effective monitoring data storage mechanisms.

**6.2.2 Linkage of the LG monitoring system to the national integrated monitoring system**

It was noted earlier (see *supra* para 6.2.1) that an effective monitoring system in LGs should be linked to the National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System (NIMES). The study established that there have been some deliberate efforts to link the monitoring system in LGs to the centre. Such efforts include the establishment of an Integrated Finance Management System (IFMS), Local Government Information and Communication System (LOGICS) and Output Budget Tool (OBT). However, these sub systems in practice do not effectively capture project monitoring information. The IFMS, whose coverage is still limited to less than 60% of LGs, focuses on revenue and expenditure. It captures data on how the LG revenues are being utilised. While this has implications on project implementation progress, it does not show the specific progress on the various aspects of the projects being implemented.<sup>26</sup> The LOGICS focus on recording data on development service delivery and socio-economic indicators while OBT as noted earlier (see *supra* para 6.2.1.1[c]), also reports on how budget releases from central government have been spent to justify releases for the following

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<sup>24</sup> Interview, Atwine Easter, District Agriculture Officer, Ntungamo District, 8 October 2013.

<sup>25</sup> Interview, SSemugabi Shame. Ag Town Clerk, Ntungamo Municipality, 8 November 2013.

<sup>26</sup> Interview, Gumunye Isa, Asst. Commissioner, Urban Admin., Min. of L G, 17 December 2013.



financial year. The monitoring reports in LGs do not provide information into the national monitoring system and save for the general performance reports; the LGs do not copy their regular monitoring reports to the central government. An observation by a senior central government official acknowledged this position:

*Local governments' reports have not been feeding into our national monitoring system. Even previously, our performance monitoring reports at sector level did not include local governments' reports. This however, will change with the new national policy on public sector monitoring and evaluation.*<sup>27</sup>

## **6.2.2 Preparation and execution of monitoring plans**

The essence of a monitoring plan is that progress of any programme cannot be monitored unless a plan exists to monitor against. According to the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG 2003:75-76), LGs are expected to design and execute effective monitoring plans to guide the monitoring process. Such plans should address a number of key elements which include *inter-alia* identifying project areas to be monitored; defining monitoring indicators; specifying data collection methods, establishing reporting and feedback mechanisms; and allocating the necessary monitoring resources. The study established that save for some LGs (4 of 15 [27%]), the majority (11 of 15 [73%]) of LGs did not have specified monitoring plans but had work plans in which monitoring as a function with its planned activities were reflected. In either case, attempts have been made to address the key elements.

### **6.2.2.1 Defining project monitoring areas**

As a key element to address in the preparation and execution of a monitoring plan, defining project monitoring areas involves identifying specific aspects of the project that need to be monitored during the project cycle. Traditionally, monitoring focused on the inputs and activities of a project. Currently, the focus is increasingly changing towards measuring the outputs and impacts of a project to assess the broader achievement of the development objective. Project inputs and activities however, are also important as they all affect the project outputs and impact. The key monitoring areas of a project include input, activity, output, outcome and impact as well as compliance with existing regulatory issues (DWA 2005:8-9;

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<sup>27</sup> Interview, Kabagambe Richard, Senior Economist M&E, Office of the Prime Minister, 13 December 2013.



ESCAP 2005:3). In monitoring projects, LGs are required to define and focus on such key areas. The study found that LGs especially in respect of central government initiated projects, notwithstanding various gaps, have made efforts to define and monitor a number of key project aspects/areas.

(a) *Project schedule monitoring*

Monitoring of project schedules involves reporting on the details of tasks, activities and completion time. Basically, time monitoring assists in establishing whether the project tasks and activities are being implemented within the defined timeframe (VITA 2006:6; Zubair, Abd.Majid & Mustaffar 2006:28). The study established that monitoring/work plans in the overwhelming majority (14 of 15 [93%]) of LGs indicate planned activities, tasks and the time frame for the completion of activities. In practice however, analysis of existing monitoring reports indicated that although the LGs' reports provide progress on the planned activities, the reporting on the progress is not in tandem with the specific planned activities and does not clarify the status of the project schedules.

(b) *Cost/budget performance monitoring.*

Cost/budget performance monitoring involves continuous tracking of budgeted costs compared to actual costs incurred during implementation of a project to detect cost deviations. Most of the project budget is consumed during the implementation process. Therefore, the responsibility of the monitors is to establish how the budgeted resources are being utilised (Khamidi, Khan & Idrus 2011:124-125). The research proved that monitoring/work plans in the LGs identify the source of funds and the amount budgeted for each project. The study also revealed that, in practice, LGs have made some effort to track project expenditures to ensure that allocated funds are spent on the planned items to guarantee value for money. However, the majority (29 of 37 [78%]) of the interviewed LG officials and an overwhelming majority (17 of 18 [94%]) of LG political office bearers reported that there are many cases where project funds are spent when the work done does not justify all the money spent especially with works projects. One of the LGs official's observation captured the situation: "Although we carry out value for money monitoring to ensure that there are no budget deviations, you will always find many situations where money has been

spent but there is little to show when it comes to the project work done...”<sup>28</sup> The respondents reported that in works projects more especially, there are cases where engineers issue completion certificates when the work does not appear to be complete. In such situations according to one of the LGs officials, “the engineers put up technical arguments using the bill of quantities(BOQs) to defend their positions and because of limited technical competence among the members of the monitoring teams, the engineers’ position tends to prevail”<sup>29</sup>. In this respect, the findings imply that LGs efforts to carry out project budget performance monitoring have not been effective.

The findings on the behaviour of the engineers as project implementers, support Argyris’ organisational learning theory and Marrow’s Game theory. As discussed in Chapter One (see *supra* para 1.9.1), according to Argyris’ organisational learning theory, individuals tend to distort information if they anticipate that true information will be used against them ( in this case the engineers would be held accountable for the poor work if they did not hide under the cover of technicalities). Similarly according to the game theory, individual choices depend on the choices of others. In this case since the monitors would use the information to demand accountability from the engineers, the engineers’ choice is to hide the true information that would make them to be held accountable.

The LGs’ efforts in conducting cost/budget performance monitoring are further affected by absence of pre-payment audits. The central government policy on auditing does not allow pre-payment audits. LGs only carry out post-payment audits. According to all the three (100%) LG chief finance officers and both two (100%) LG senior internal auditors interviewed, lack of pre-payment audits has frustrated LGs efforts to monitor budget performance. It was revealed that due to lack of the pre-payment audits, anomalies are detected when the payment had already been made. One of the respondents captured the prevailing situation thus: “The biggest problem is that we no longer do pre-payment audits to ascertain what has been done before we pay to avoid payment of poor or non existing services. We only do post-mortem...”<sup>30</sup> However, the central government does not fully agree with the position of LGs on government auditing policy. One central government technical officer observed thus:

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<sup>28</sup> Interview, Byaruhanga Nicolas, Internal Auditor, Ntungamo District, 10 October 2013

<sup>29</sup> Interview, Tugaineyo Charles, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Wakiso District, 28 August 2013.

<sup>30</sup> Interview, Nuwamanya Banex, Chief Finance Officer, Ntungamo District, 11 October 2013.

“true, it is a government policy to discourage pre-payment audits because of transaction delays, but the government advises that on a sample basis the pre-payment audits can be done.”<sup>31</sup> Whatever disagreements exist between local and central governments on auditing policy, the fact remains that LGs are not doing pre-payment audits and this affects their efforts to effectively conduct project cost performance monitoring.

(c) *Input-output performance monitoring.*

Input-output performance monitoring involves tracking the financial, physical, human, information and time resources that are utilised for a project. The monitoring personnel are expected to track and capture the quantity and quality of resources provided for project activities and goods or services created (outputs) through the use of inputs (Mosse & Sontheimer 1996:11). This means collecting data that describe the individuals served, the services provided and the resources used to deliver those services (World Bank 2008:21). An analysis of LGs’ work plans proved that save for some LGs (4 of 15[27%]), in the majority (11 of 15[73%]) of LGs, the work plans indicate the planned project inputs and expected outputs. In practice however, it was established that, the monitoring teams are not guided by the plans in conducting their monitoring activities. Their reporting of monitoring findings is not systematic and does not properly identify the status or progress on the project planned inputs and expected outputs. Senior district officials interviewed attributed the monitoring teams’ unsystematic and improper reporting mainly to limited competence in understanding project monitoring concepts on the part of monitoring teams and lack of a standard monitoring tool.<sup>32</sup> The findings here prove that LGs have not been effective in establishing the results of projects being implemented.

(d) *Project quality monitoring*

Quality, as the totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs (Ireland cited in Goff 2008:1), is an important project requirement that needs to be monitored. Work quality monitoring focuses on establishing whether the projects’ technical specifications are being adhered to. The most common measurement used in project quality monitoring is defect counts (Goff 2008:1-2). LGs are

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<sup>31</sup> Interview, IFMS technical support staff member who preferred anonymity, 11 October 2013.

<sup>32</sup> Interview, Oyine Joseph, District Production Officer, Wakiso District, 20 August 2013; and Mwesiga Dedus, District Planner, Ntungamo District, 21 October 2013.

expected to monitor projects' technical specifications to ensure the required standards, the correct dimensions and the correct mix of materials in project implementation (MoLG 2003:35).

An analysis of the LGs' work plans showed that the monitoring requirement of project quality is not well documented to provide guidance on work quality monitoring. Monitoring teams instead use bill of quantities (BOQs) to guide them on issues of project quality. The BOQs provide technical specifications of the projects. The BOQs are, however, not easily understood by members of the teams. All 18 (100%) interviewed LGs political office bearers and the overwhelming majority (35 of 37[95%]) of LGs officials stated that the BOQs were difficult to interpret for most members of the monitoring teams, especially politicians. One of the officials observed thus: "Ideally the teams are expected to rely on the BOQs but they have very limited competence to understand issues in the BOQs."<sup>33</sup> The situation like in many other cases becomes more problematic at lower LG levels where most of the politicians are reported to have low academic qualifications.<sup>34</sup> One of the political office bearers at LLG well provided the scenario: "For projects like roads, we usually make effort to go through the BOQs. But they are difficult to interpret. We sometimes try to get assistance from the community members who may be knowledgeable..."<sup>35</sup> The findings here imply that because members of the monitoring teams have limited competence to interpret the BOQs, contractors and their supervisors may take advantage to cover-up poor quality work. An observation by a political office bearer at LLG level agrees with such position: "When we point out that certain aspects of a project have not been done well, the district engineer and the contractor refer us to the BOQs because they know we cannot challenge them on that [contents of BOQs]."<sup>36</sup> This was in support of the proceedings of a focus group discussion composed of higher and lower LGs employees where it was raised that engineers tend to use the issue of the BOQs to cover up shoddy works.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Interview, Kariyo Apollo, Senior Ass Engineering Officer, Ntungamo District, 10 October 2013

<sup>34</sup> Tumushabe *et al.* (2010) found that because there is no minimum academic qualification requirement for councillors in Uganda, the majority of them had very low levels of education and could not express themselves in English, especially at lower local government levels.

<sup>35</sup> Interview, Maseruka Robert, Chairperson, Nabweru Sub County LG, 18 September 2013.

<sup>36</sup> Kabandize Seperiano, Chairperson, Itojo Sub County LG, Ntungamo District, 21 October 2013.

<sup>37</sup> 1½ hour focus group discussion composed of HLG and LLG personnel (7members) held at Wakiso District H/quarters, 12 September 2013.

(e) *Process monitoring*

Process monitoring focuses on establishing the way in which resources or inputs have been converted into policy outputs and outcomes in terms of efficiency and compliance to good governance principles and normative considerations (Chen 2005:10). In line with these principles, the monitoring personnel are expected to monitor compliance of LGs with laws and regulations regarding planning, financial management, procurement and contract management procedures in project implementation to establish whether they reflect transparency and accountability. Notwithstanding the fact that process monitoring is not reflected in the LGs' work plans, the overwhelming majority (6 of 7 [86%]) of the interviewed HLGs political office bearers and all 19 (100%) HLG officials revealed that LGs have made attempts to carry out process monitoring especially with regard to compliance with rules and regulations governing financial management, procurement and contract managements. One of the officials highlighted the LGs efforts: "We carry out monitoring to establish how the resources are being utilised in order to ensure that the expenditures are made in compliance with financial rules and regulation..."<sup>38</sup> However, the study found that there are various challenges regarding the process monitoring. For example while the procurement of contractors is ideally done through open competitive bidding, in practice, the procurement function has been adversely affected by political meddling. According to an overwhelming majority (18 of 19[95%]) of the interviewed HLG officials, politicians want contracts to be awarded to their firms or their supporters. This makes it *inter alia*, difficult for LGs' personnel to be critical when monitoring such projects as they fear antagonising the bosses. One of the officials described the situation:

*The politicians want to be consulted on whom should be appointed to the Contracts Committee. They front their own firms or those of their associates to be awarded contracts. In monitoring projects executed by such firms, there is always fear to point out certain shortcomings because the implementing firm belongs to a boss. Currently we have a case of a KAIP project. The firm that was awarded the contract belongs to a politician and we are cancelling the whole process now.*<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Interview, Nkubi Luke, Senior Internal Auditor, Entebbe Municipality, 27 September 2013.

<sup>39</sup> Interview, Adong Roselyn, Chief Administrative Officer, Ntungamo, District, 8 November 2013.

Procurement delays in local governments have been a challenge in process monitoring. Because of delays in procurement, there have been cases where particular funds have not been utilised within the prescribed time frame, and these have had to be returned to the treasury at the end of the financial year leaving many project activities unfunded.<sup>40</sup>

For contract management, attempts are made to retain 10% of the contract price for contractors who do either not complete their work or who produce poor quality work. However, according to several LGs political office bearers<sup>41</sup> interviewed and the proceedings of a *baraza* meeting<sup>42</sup> (attended by the researcher), there are cases where completion certificates have been issued when work has not been completed. Besides, it was reported by the interviewees and in the meeting that the 10% retention is in most cases less than what is required to complete the uncompleted work or to compensate for the losses resulting from poorly executed projects. The findings here support Kebba and Ntanda (2005:18) who observe that LGs have exhibited poor supervision especially of contracts involving civil works which lead to substandard outputs.

(f) *Outcome and impact monitoring*

The outcome and impact monitoring involve tracking of measures related to desired programme outcomes and the long term broader societal changes resulting from policy intervention. Outcome and impact monitoring may be conducted through population-based surveys to track whether desired outcomes have been reached and whether the broader development objectives of the project have been fundamentally and sustainably attained (DWAF2005:9; EC 2006:8; World Bank 2008:22). The study noted that despite the fact that work plans in the majority (11 of 15[73%]) of LGs do not indicate the expected project outcomes and impact, most central government initiated projects have monitoring guidelines that provide for project inputs, outputs, outcomes and impact. According to senior district LG officials<sup>43</sup> interviewed, there are some cases where monitors have attempted to assess project

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<sup>40</sup> Interview, Nuwabiine Andrew, Asst. Comm., M&E, Min. of Works & Transport, 20 December 2013

<sup>41</sup> Interviews, Mbabazi Shakila, Secretary for Finance and Planning, Ntungamo District 11 October 2013; Kabandize Seperiano, Chairperson, Itojo Sub County LG, 21 October 2013; and Mukasa Kalisa, Chairperson, Kakiri Sub County LG, 12 September 2013.

<sup>42</sup> Information obtained from the proceedings of a baraza meeting for selected sub counties held on 24 October 2013 at Ntungamo district attended by the researcher as a non participant observer

<sup>43</sup> Interview, Kasumba Paddy, District Planner, Wakiso District, 15 August 2013; Lubulwa Michael, District Fisheries Officer, Wakiso District, 19 August 2013 & Bakeine Charles, District Education Officer, Ntungamo District, 8 October 2013.

impact by asking beneficiaries about the quality of services and changes brought about by a particular project. However, an overwhelming majority (17 of 18 [95%]) of the interviewed HLG officials reported that LGs have not ascertained the changes in peoples wellbeing resulting from decentralisation programmes. One of the officials described the situation: “We have not been able to measure the impact of the various projects we are implementing...”<sup>44</sup> The official attributes this partly to the monitors’ lack of project monitoring knowledge. “Conceptualisation of monitoring issues is still a problem. When you talk of input indicators, output indicators or impact indicators, people get lost” the official observed. Without establishing project impact, the findings imply that LGs have not been effective in executing their monitoring role that should include establishing the impact of programmes on the beneficiaries.

#### **6.2.2.2      *Establishing monitoring indicators***

The definition of project monitoring areas goes hand-in-hand with the establishment of monitoring indicators. A monitoring indicator is a quantitative or qualitative measuring instrument that provides information to monitor performance, measure achievement and determine accountability. A quantitative indicator can be expressed as a number, for instance, kilometers of paved road or the percentage of community members who have access to health services. Qualitative indicators are based on subjective assumptions and focus on people’s judgments’ or perceptions and experiences. For example improved rural women’s attitude towards contraceptives (see Mosse & Sontheimer 1996:3; Tanja 2000:17-18; Hales 2010:14). Indicators are based on the key project variables that relate to project inputs, activities and outputs. For each monitoring area, LGs need to define aspects to be measured for instance classrooms or training sessions and determine the unit criteria of measure such as sizes, numbers or frequency ( MoLG 2003:48; UNFPA.2004:7).

The research established that work plans in an overwhelming majority (14 of 15 [93%]) of the LGs do not define monitoring indicators for the key aspects of the projects such as input, output and outcome or impact indicators. The research further revealed that where attempts have been made, the indicators are not clear and cannot be applied to assess the progress of a project in respect of the key monitoring areas. A senior LG official highlighted the

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<sup>44</sup> Interview, Sabiti Moses, District NAADS Co-ordinator, Ntungamo District, 8 October 2013



situation by stating that: “We cannot talk of being guided by indicators in our monitoring. There are no well-defined monitoring indicators that our monitors can use in their monitoring activities...”<sup>45</sup> The findings here tend to agree with Onyach-Olaa (2003:16-17) who found that most development plans in LGs lacked visions and defined target indicators. Without defining monitoring indicators in the work plans as the findings reveal, it implies that LGs have not been able to measure the results of decentralisation programmes. The findings also suggest that LGs’ monitoring efforts do not conform to the key principles of setting clear and realistic indicators advocated by UN HABITAT (2003) to assist in ascertaining project outputs and outcomes which were discussed in the Introduction Chapter (see *supra* para 1.9.1).

### **6.2.2.3            *Determining methods of collecting monitoring data***

In monitoring the implementation of programmes, LGs are expected to determine methods of collecting monitoring data. They have at their disposal, a plethora of methods that can be used for data collection. The most common of these include observation; interviews; review of project documents; questionnaires; and participatory rural appraisal approaches—which involve the participation of project beneficiaries through methods such as focus group discussions (World Bank 2004:6-20; Kusek & Rist 2004:97). The study revealed that whereas in the majority (11 of 15[73%] of LGs, the data collection methods are not specified in their work plans, in practice, methods such as observations, interviews, documentary review and questionnaires have been used. However, it was established that the monitors lack the necessary competence to effectively use these methods. All the 8 (100%) sub county LG officials interviewed indicated that the monitors were not conversant with the data collection methods. One of the officials observed thus: “Our monitors lack the knowledge to apply the data collection methods... In conducting interviews, they do not know to probe to get better understanding of project issues...”<sup>46</sup> This was emphasised in one of the focus groups discussions composed of political office bearers and technical officials. Group members concurred that those who carry out monitoring are not guided on how to use data collection methods. The members also revealed that the project implementing personnel especially engineers, do not mind keeping a record of project activities and the resources spent on different activities. They claim that they overburdened and too busy to record all activities.

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<sup>45</sup> Interview, Katotoroma John, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Ntungamo, District, 11 October 2013.

<sup>46</sup> Interview, Nnakyaze Olivia, Community Development Officer, Wakiso Sub County, 3 September 2013



Because of this, there are no useful project records necessary for documentary review/analysis as a method of data collection.<sup>47</sup> The findings are in agreement with Hermans' views discussed earlier (see *supra* para 1.9.1) which argue that implementers tend to regard keeping the record of implementation data as requiring an additional effort and being distractive from primary tasks. The findings suggest that data collection methods have not been effectively utilised in the monitoring process. This has had negative implications on the quality of data collected in terms of accuracy and reliability. One LG official supported this view: "Because the monitors do not know how to use the data collection methods, the quality of our monitoring findings is questionable."<sup>48</sup>

#### **6.2.2.4            *Reporting and feedback mechanisms***

Monitoring information is normally documented in progress reports. Progress reports are essential mechanisms for project monitoring to inform management and other stakeholders on the progress, difficulties or problems encountered and lessons learned during the implementation process. They are especially important as they can provide early warning signals on any significant current or potential implementation issues and concerns and to get attention, support and response for actions (IUCN 2004:10). In the monitoring process some information can be presented in the form of formal written reports, while other information can be analysed in meetings or in informal briefings. The research established that local governments have made efforts to report findings and provide feedback to the project implementers though the reporting and feedback mechanisms are not defined in their work plans. The recommendations are usually summarised and communicated to the implementers. However, according to all 18 (100%) LG political office bearers and all the 37(100%) LG officials interviewed, there are no recommendations implementation tracking mechanisms. This implies that the organs making the recommendations may not know or may take long to determine the implementation status of their recommendations which may make it difficult for the organs to make any timely and necessary adjustments to the recommendations.

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<sup>47</sup> Proceedings of 6 member 1½ hour focus group discussion held at Nabweru Sub County, 18 September 2013.

<sup>48</sup> Interview, NNakintu Prosy, Sub County Chief, Wakiso Sub County, 2 September 2013

#### **6.2.2.5 Allocating monitoring resources**

After establishing the tasks to be accomplished in the monitoring plan, local governments are expected to determine the necessary resources. Inadequate or misallocation of resources leads to poor quality monitoring. To ensure effective monitoring, it is imperative to establish the resources that are needed and available (UNICEF 1991:28). An analysis of monitoring/work plans for all the 15 (100%) LGs revealed that there are earmarked funds allocated to monitoring activities. In all cases, however, the allocated funds are inappropriate compared to the planned activities. One district LG official reiterated the problem of inadequate monitoring funds by stating that: “Funding for monitoring is a problem. For example this financial year, NAADS projects have been allocated just 8million shillings [US\$ 3200]. This money is too little to cover the whole district.”<sup>49</sup> The findings suggest that due to limited funding, local governments have not been able to effectively carry out their monitoring activities as many of the projects remain unmonitored. A district LG political office bearer supported this view when she observed that “Because of inadequate funding, our monitoring activities can only cover few projects...”<sup>50</sup> Thus, it could be argued that limited funding has constrained local governments’ performance in monitoring the implementation of decentralisation policy programmes.

### **6.3 LOCAL GOVERNMENTS’ AUTONOMY IN EXERCISING DECENTRALISED POWERS**

The second *objective* of this study was to examine how the degree of autonomy of LGs in exercising decentralised powers impact on the performance of their monitoring role in implementing decentralisation. Effective monitoring of decentralisation programmes by LGs *inter alia* depend on the degree of autonomy of LGs in exercising decentralised powers. The study in assessing the degree of autonomy under this objective focused on the political, administrative and fiscal powers that are indicated to have been devolved to LGs according to the LG Act 1997. The findings provide evidence of the extent to which LGs have exercised the respective powers in monitoring the implementation of the decentralisation programmes.

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<sup>49</sup> Interview, Sabiti Moses, NAADS Co-ordinator, Ntungamo District, 8 October 2013.

<sup>50</sup> Interview, Namubiru Rosemary, Vice Chairperson Wakiso District LG, 21 August 2013.

### 6.3.1 Political autonomy

Political autonomy for LGs implies that LGs have substantial independence in making political decisions regarding their devolved roles and responsibilities. Areas of relevancy for political decisions which were employed as analytical constructs by this study were decision-making on matters of local political governance; and LGs' determination of their own development priorities in implementing and monitoring the decentralisation programmes.

#### 6.3.1.1 *Autonomy in decision making on matters of local political governance*

In order to ascertain the level of political decentralisation, it is necessary to pinpoint the degree of autonomy of LGs in decision making on matters of local political governance. Such matters include the election of local political leaders in a free competitive environment; the autonomy of the elected leaders to mobilise citizens to participate in political decisions; the autonomy of LGs to set up platforms for responding to people's demands; and the freedom of citizens to demand accountability from LGs (Brinkerhoff & Azfar 2006:3-5). The research established that LGs regularly elect their political leaders. All 18 (100%) LG political office bearers interviewed stated that in the local elections political parties are allowed to sponsor candidates to compete for elective positions. It was also found that the LGs endeavour to mobilise citizens to participate in decision making. However, although political parties are free to participate in the elections, the study noted that there is a tendency after elections for the ruling party to influence central government, thus frustrating the LGs whose political leadership largely comprises members of the opposition. A statement captured from a senior LG political office bearer belonging to an opposition party reflects the situation well:

*The central government officials for political reasons always try to frustrate LG councils which are dominated by the opposition and because of this; they cannot effectively carry out their activities. The problem is that they think that successful implementation of projects gives credit to the opposition.<sup>51</sup>*

The findings imply that the central government's frustration of LG councils dominated by opposition parties negatively impact on the performance of such LGs in monitoring the implementation of decentralisation programmes. The findings corroborate the findings of

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<sup>51</sup> Interview, Namubiru Rosemary, Vice Chairperson Wakiso District LG, 21 August 2013.

Olowu (2003:46) which concluded that central government was victimising local councils which are controlled by opposition parties. The current stalemate regarding the mayor for Kampala city who belongs to the opposition, supports the findings. In spite of the court reinstating him as the mayor (see *The Daily Monitor*: 2, 29 November 2013; *The Red Pepper*: 1, 30 November 2013) following a questionable impeachment orchestrated by central government, government has barred him from assuming his duties.

Regarding citizens demanding accountability, the study noted that efforts have been made to provide some platforms for citizens to engage their leaders in demanding accountability. Such platforms include community review meetings and the recently introduced *barazas* (public accountability forums). During the community review meetings, beneficiaries are given an opportunity to seek explanation from government officials regarding projects' state of affairs including project expenditures. However, according to an overwhelming majority (17 of 18[95%]) of the interviewed LGs political office bearers, these meetings are not regular. Besides, the informants revealed, the beneficiaries in most cases have no access to the budget and the officials may select the information that will not compromise them especially in cases where project funds have not been properly spent.

What seems to provide a better platform is the *baraza* initiative co-ordinated by the Prime Minister's office. The *barazas* bring together government officials, public service providers and the users of the services to share public information with a focus on effective monitoring of public service programmes and demand for accountability. During *baraza* meetings, project budgeted resources for all sectors are communicated to the audience and the respective government officials responsible for project implementation are tasked to explain how the resources have been utilised and account for the failure or success of identified projects.<sup>52</sup> The main challenge with these *barazas* is that they require extensive resources to cover all the LGs in the country. They are supposed to be conducted at every sub county and are organised by officials from the central government. With the *barazas* having to be organised by the central government officials who must move from the centre to traverse the country, it implies that it will not only take long to cover the country, but will limit the number of times the *barazas* can be held in each sub county. According to a central government

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<sup>52</sup> Information obtained from the proceedings of a *baraza* meeting for selected sub counties held on 24 October, 2013 at Ntungamo District attended by the researcher as a non participant observer

official, since the initiative was launched in 2009, only about 20% of the LGs have so far been covered.<sup>53</sup> This suggests that its impact will remain minimal for a long time unless LGs are allowed to organise the barazas on their own, without having to wait for the central government to arrange the meetings.

#### **6.3.1.2 Local governments' determination of their own development priorities**

An ingredient in determining the level of political decentralisation is the degree of independence of LGs in determining their own development priorities. Such independence enables the LGs to initiate LG development agendas that reflect peoples' problems, needs and priorities without undue interference from the central government. According to all 19 (100%) HLG officials interviewed, the LGs have been responsible for making development plans in which they set their development priorities. But the officials reported that the central government has retained substantial power over local policy making and planning. The LGs can set priorities in their plans, but their autonomy is limited as the priorities must be set within the guidelines of the central government. In cases where particular LG projects are not within the priorities of central government, the central government will not provide or will restrict financing of such projects. In such cases, LGs' efforts to effectively monitor such projects are constrained. A senior district official deplores the LGs limited autonomy which negatively affects their monitoring activities:

*They talk of the local governments having the autonomy to set their priorities. But what sort of autonomy is it if we cannot do anything outside the central government priority guidelines? For example, currently, we badly need a vehicle for the production department to assist in monitoring a number of projects but because some of these projects are outside the central government priority areas, we cannot be allowed to borrow money from our development account to buy the vehicle.<sup>54</sup>*

#### **6.3.2 Administrative autonomy**

Administrative autonomy under decentralisation aims at transferring decision making powers on administrative matters to facilitate delivery of decentralised public services in LGs. It

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<sup>53</sup> Interview, Nuwahabwe Nelson, Economist M&E, Office of the Prime Minister, 13 December 2013.

<sup>54</sup> Interview, Adong Roselyn, Chief Administrative Officer, Ntungamo District, 8 November 2013.

implies that LGs determine their own administrative structure; are responsible for employing LG personnel—including determining numbers, setting salaries and disciplining (Brinkerhoff & Azfar 2006:3). As pointed out in Chapter Five (see *supra* para 5.6.1), the major administrative powers that are transferred to LGs under the LGs Act, 1997 as amended in 2008 include *inter alia*, powers to recruit and manage human resource including staff remuneration; and powers to appoint LG statutory bodies. The study considered these powers as analytical constructs to assess the administrative autonomy of LGs.

### **6.3.2.1 Recruitment and management of human resource**

Under the decentralisation policy, the power to appoint officials in the office of the district or urban LG, the power to confirm appointments and the power to exercise disciplinary control are vested in each one of the district service commissions (see Constitution of Uganda, 1995: Art.200 (1)). However, the appointment and confirmation of top civil service positions in LGs are done by the central government. The study on this aspect examined the implications of these appointments on the LGs execution of their monitoring role. For the civil servants who are recruited by the LGs, the study assessed the degree of autonomy exercised by the LGs in their recruitment and its impact on monitoring activities.

The research revealed that the top civil servants, that is, the chief administrative officer (CAO), the deputy chief administrative officer and municipal town clerk (TC) who are appointed by the central government tend to pay allegiance to the central government. Though ideally they are supposed to be supervised by the LG political leaders, their performance is assessed by the central government. This implies that they are accountable to the central government. All seven (100%) HLG political office bearers interviewed, reported that the appointment of the top civil servants by central government made them to be accountable to the centre. This has had negative implications on the implementation of programmes in LGs particularly where the respective officers have not paid the necessary attention to issues affecting the progress of project implementation such as lack of regular field monitoring activities. One of the political office bearers highlighted this problem:

*The fact that these top civil servants are appointed by the centre gives us problems. They become so powerful and untouchable as they know that they are accountable to the centre. Currently, we have problems with the CAO. She is questioning the budget we*

*passed. She is questioning the allowances budgeted for executive and standing committees and yet without these allowances, we cannot carry out field monitoring activities.*<sup>55</sup>

The findings on the problems associated with the appointment of top civil servants by central government agree with Kakumba (2008:98) who finds that the appointment of top LG civil servants by central government “makes them subservient to the central government whims that may not necessarily represent the local government priorities.” The findings also support Ssewankambo, Hindson and SSengendo (2006:7) who argue that the appointment of top LG civil service officers by the central government may make them accountable to their appointing authority rather than the LGs they are recruited to serve.

Regarding the middle and lower level civil servants, the research established that although there is a district service commission (DSC) responsible for recruitment, LGs have to first obtain permission from the central government to allow the recruitment/filling of any human resource gaps. Obtaining permission does not only cause delays but also the approvals themselves are not guaranteed as they depend on the central government’s readiness to pay the resultant additional wage bill.<sup>56</sup> Because of this, the study noted that there were important vacant positions which have not been filled due to a lack of central government approval. For example, the planning units and offices in all the 15 (100%) LGs did not have monitoring and evaluation officers. One district official’s observation illustrates the human situation in LGs planning units: “Currently the planning unit which is expected to co-ordinate monitoring activities has no any filled position of monitoring and evaluation staff. The central government says, due to wage bill constraints, it cannot approve the filling of these positions...”<sup>57</sup> This, has negative implications on the LGs’ performance in executing their monitoring role because, without such staff, LGs miss out on critical aspects of monitoring such as technical guidance in the monitoring process and analysis of monitoring data.

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<sup>55</sup> Interview, Mbabazi Shakila, Secretary for Finance and Planning, Ntungamo District LG, 11 October 2013.

<sup>56</sup> Interview, Tumushabe Jacqueline, Senior Human Resource Officer, Ntungamo District, 11 October 2013.

<sup>57</sup> Interview, Mwesiga Dedus, District Planner, Ntungamo District, 21 October 2013.



### **6.3.2.2 Managing of staff remuneration matters**

The autonomy to manage staff remuneration matters means that LGs can determine the salaries, allowances and retirement benefits of their employees. It also implies that they are responsible for managing the payroll or salaries of their employees. The study found that LGs have limited autonomy in managing staff remuneration matters. The staff salary scales are set by the centre. The payroll is essentially managed by the central government. It was reported that basically the role that the LGs play is to prepare human resource data entry forms and submit them to the centre.<sup>58</sup> According to all seven (100%) HLG political office bearers and all 19 (100%) HLG officials interviewed, the management of the LG payroll by the central government has created problems for LGs. These range from late payments to omitting of employees' names on the payroll. The findings imply that the problems created by central governed control of LGs' payroll have been a performance de-motivator to the affected employees. Consequently, this most likely has had a direct negative impact on LGs' monitoring activities. One of the political office bearers supported this position by observing that: "You are talking about monitoring but you cannot tell somebody who has missed his or her salary for the last two or three months as has been the case with a number of our staff here to carry out monitoring."<sup>59</sup> The recent government decision to decentralise civil service payroll system (see *The Saturday Vision*: 5, 11 January 2014) is in recognition of the problems associated with the centrally managed LGs' payroll system.

### **6.3.2.3 Appointment of local government statutory bodies**

There are a number of statutory bodies in LGs which include; the District Service Commission (DSC), the District Public Accounts Committee (DPAC) and the District Land Boards (DLB). LGs' councils are empowered to appoint members to the respective statutory bodies. The study examined the degree of autonomy of the LGs in appointing members to these bodies. The research established that though members of the respective bodies are appointed by the district council; they have to be approved by the central government which subjects them to interviews before approval. Some fail the interviews. It was reported that there have been cases where the central government has rejected nominees to the DSC such as those

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<sup>58</sup> Interview, Ssebi Haruna, Principal Personnel Officer, Wakiso District, 22 August 2013.

<sup>59</sup> Interview, Atuhair Edward, Secretary for Works, Ntungamo District LG, 11 October 2013.



representing the disabled people.<sup>60</sup> The study noted that the most disturbing issue especially regarding the DSC was the rigorous and bureaucratic process for the approval of the nominated members. According to all the seven (100%) HLG political office bearers, LGs on many occasions have failed to carry out recruitment because of the absence of an approved DSC. This has had negative implications on execution of LGs' activities including monitoring. One of the political office bearers highlighted the situation by observing that:

*Recently we had to lose out on an important recruitment that would have boosted the current skeleton staff in our sector because the nominated names to the DPSC were pending approval. And this is affecting us already. For example right now we are organising to go to the field for monitoring but we have no technical officer available to go with us.*<sup>61</sup>

### **6.3.3 Fiscal autonomy**

Devolution of fiscal powers is intended to transfer revenue-generating authority; and funds to deliver decentralised functions to LGs. Fiscal autonomy for LGs can be measured against a number of tenets. Katorobo (2005:28-29), referring to Guess and Vazquez summarises the tenets as principles of fiscal devolution. These principles which are also reflected in the Local Governments Act 1997 as amended in 2006 Sections 79, 80 and 83 include *inter alia*, LGs' autonomy in determining their own areas of expenditure; mobilisation of LGs' own revenue; fair revenue sharing between central and LGs; revenue simplicity; and revenue equity. These principles were the areas of focus for the study in assessing the degree of LGs' fiscal autonomy in exercising decentralised powers and its impact on the LGs' performance in executing their monitoring role.

#### **6.3.3.1 Local governments' autonomy in determining their expenditure areas.**

Under fiscal devolution, local governments should be independent to determine their priority areas of expenditure and have the flexibility in allocating resources to finance their expenditures. The research established that even for projects that are within the central

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<sup>60</sup> Interview, Mbabazi Shakira, Secretary for Finance & Planning, Ntungamo District LG, 11 October 2013.

<sup>61</sup> Interview, Atuhair Edward, Secretary for Works, Ntungamo District LG, 11 October 2013

government development priorities, local governments do not have the autonomy to determine priority areas of expenditure. This is because funds received from central government are earmarked for expenditure on specific items and local governments cannot reallocate them to other items. For example, according all 19 (100%) HLG officials and all seven (100%) HLG political office bearers interviewed, the budget for monitoring activities is not supposed to exceed a specific percentage—usually not more than 15% of the LG budget. The informants reported that the central government also specifies the percentage that should be spent on technical and political office bearers' allowances. All the informants complained that even in allocation of locally generated revenue, the central government influences LGs on which objects it should be spent. One of the political office bearers lamented the central government influence: "The central government is not realistic. It even dictates to us on how to spend our own local revenue..."<sup>62</sup> It could thus be argued that LGs' ability to determine their expenditure priorities which may reflect the most pressing needs in service delivery planning is compromised by central government interference.

The research noted that through bodies like the Local Government Finance Commission and Local Governments Budget Committee, LGs annually negotiate with central government the conditions of the grants. However, according to all three (100%) LG chief finance officers, in the negotiations LGs only receive instructions on how to use the funds. One of the officers summed it up thus: "What takes place is actually not negotiation. We just meet in Kampala to pledge our commitment to use the funds within the central government expenditure priority areas..."<sup>63</sup> The findings suggest that the LGs' lack of autonomy in determining their own areas of expenditure has negatively affected their operations. This is particularly where local governments are restricted not to spend more than the stipulated percentage of their revenue on specific activities such as monitoring activity allowances (field visit facilitation including fuel and subsistence allowances) for politicians. Yet monitoring is a critical function of the politicians. This in turn implies that lack of autonomy in determining areas of expenditure has had a negative effect on local governments' performance in executing their monitoring role. One of the politicians' observation supports this position: "Because central government says

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<sup>62</sup> Interview, Ssentongo Hellen, Secretary for Production, Wakiso District LG, 30 August 2013.

<sup>63</sup> Interview, Mutagubya Fredrick, Chief Finance Officer, Entebbe Municipality, 2 October 2013.

politicians' allowances should not take more than 20% of the local revenue, this has curtailed our monitoring that requires allowances for field activities ..."<sup>64</sup>

The findings on local governments' lack of autonomy in determining areas of expenditure are in agreement with Steiner (2006). Steiner found that under decentralisation, local governments are constrained in the flexible allocation of resources since their funds can only be spent on central government pre-determined goals.

### **6.3.3.2 Local governments' mobilisation of their own revenue**

LGs are supposed to generate their own local revenue in order to substantially contribute to the financing of their programmes without undue interference from the central government. They are supposedly empowered to levy and collect fees and taxes including royalties, rents, licensing fees, rates, stamp duties and any other taxes identified as a source of local revenue. An overwhelming majority (35 of 37 [95%]) of the interviewed LG officials and all 18 (100%) LG political office bearers reported that the LGs' efforts to mobilise their own revenue including identification of new sources are constrained by the limited powers assigned to them. It was revealed that permission to exploit any new revenue source has to be obtained from the central government which may not grant it. It was further reported that because of this limitation, LGs have not benefited from investors in their areas of jurisdiction. One of the officials highlighted the situation thus: "We have not benefited from big investors who would have paid tax as our attempts to tax them are usually rejected by the central government."<sup>65</sup> The situation according to the respondents, is not improved by interference from the central government's pronouncements especially from the president's office directing LGs not to collect specific revenue such as parking fees from motorcyclists and market fees from vendors. The respondents reported that the limitations imposed by central government have adversely affected the amount of locally generated revenue. This in turn has had negative implications on the LGs' monitoring activities. One LG official's observation supported this view: "If we did not have the central government restrictions, we would collect more revenue and these problems of lack of allowances for councillors to carry out monitoring would not be

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<sup>64</sup> Interview, Mbabazi Shakira, Sec. for Finance & Planning, Ntungamo District LG, 11 October 2013.

<sup>65</sup> Interview, Kasumba Paddy, District Planner, Wakiso District, 15 August 2013.

there.”<sup>66</sup> The findings here are in support of Golola (2001:9-10) who contends that LGs’ lack of own sources of revenue has severely limited the extent to which local leaders can deliver decentralised services. This in turn has an effect on the LGs ability to effectively execute their monitoring role.

The study established that local governments’ limited powers of enforcement affect tax compliance. According to all three (100%) LG chief finance officers interviewed, unlike the central government revenue body, the Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) which has express powers to recover tax arrears direct from the bank accounts of tax defaulters, local governments can only use repeated demand notes. One of the officials described the situation:

*Local governments have limited powers of tax enforcement. For example, there are many cases of property tax defaulters but unlike the URA which has express powers to recover money from the bank account of a defaulter, for us we have no such powers. We are told to go to court which is a long and expensive process for us.*<sup>67</sup>

Because of limited powers of enforcement, local governments have many cases of tax defaulters especially in property tax including government itself. In one particular case, government owed one municipal LG property rate arrears for three years amounting to 329,864,049 Uganda Shillings (US\$ 131,945).<sup>68</sup> It was further established that whereas local governments are advocating for express powers, without computerised tax payers’ data base, it may not be easy to apply such powers. The chief finance officer for Entebbe Municipality described the problem as follows:

*Although people are clamouring for express powers, I think we need to put our house in order first. Without automated tax payers’ records, we can mess up peoples’ businesses. For example there is a case before me. I got a list of defaulters last week indicating that we are demanding over 50m Uganda shillings in property rate arrears from Entebbe*

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<sup>66</sup> Interview, Muganga Geoffrey, Town Clerk, Wakiso Town Council, 5 September 2013

<sup>67</sup> Interview, Babiha John, Chief Finance Officer, Wakiso District, 28 August 2013.

<sup>68</sup> Records from Entebbe Municipality CFO’s office accessed on, 2 October 2013.

*cinema hall land lord. But on scrutinising the documents we found that actually the amount is only 330,000 Uganda Shillings. Suppose we had blocked his bank account?*<sup>69</sup>

Irrespective of the status of tax records automation in LGs, the fact remains that, currently, LGs do not have express tax enforcement powers to enable them to recover tax arrears from defaulters— which negatively impacts on tax compliance and revenue. This in turn has had negative implications on financing of monitoring activities.

### **6.3.3.3 Fair revenue sharing**

Fair revenue sharing means that LGs' revenue share from the national budget should be commensurate with the decentralised obligations for service delivery. This does not imply that LGs will necessarily have all the resources they need to deliver services. It points to the need to ensure that central government does not unfairly consume a large amount of scarce national resources at the expense of the LGs. The research revealed that there is unfair sharing of national resources between central government and the LGs. All 18 (100%) LG political office bearers and all 37 (100%) LG officials interviewed, reported that the current LGs' percentage share (17%) of the national budget is unrealistic and is not based on fair costing of service delivery responsibilities that have been assigned to LGs. For example, one of the officials observed that: "while a kilometre of a murram road for central government is allocated a budget of 70m Uganda Shillings [ US \$ 28,000 ], the same kilometre for LGs is allocated 10m Uganda Shillings [ US \$ 4,000 ] which reflects a high level of insincerity on the part of central government."<sup>70</sup> Similarly, it was pointed out that a kilometre of a tarmac road for central government is allocated a budget of 600m Uganda Shillings [US \$ 240,000], but the same kilometre in a town council is allocated 300m Uganda Shillings [US \$ 120,000].<sup>71</sup> One of the officials, reported that "realistically, the percentage of the national budget given to LGs can only finance about 30% of their service delivery responsibilities."<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Interview, Mutagubya Fredrick, Chief Finance Officer, Entebbe Municipality, 2 October 2013.

<sup>70</sup> Interview, Kasumba Paddy, District Planner, Wakiso District, 15 August 2013.

<sup>71</sup> Interview, Muganga Geoffrey, Town Clerk, Wakiso Town Council, 5 September 2013.

<sup>72</sup> Interview, Babiiha John, Chief Finance Officer, Wakiso District, 28 August 2013.

The study found that without additional funding, the central government has continued to decentralise a number of services. Such services include probation, rehabilitation, land, labour and fiscal planning services which have been assigned to local governments without any budget allocation.<sup>73</sup> All 19 (100%) HLGs officials interviewed revealed that local governments have been advocating for a share of 40 percent in order to substantially meet their ever increasing service delivery obligations but their request has consistently been rejected by the central government. One of the official's observation illustrates the problem: "If the central government does not revise the share of the national budget it gives to local governments, service delivery programmes in local governments will remain crippled and those who are talking about effective project monitoring or implementation will have to wait for so long..."<sup>74</sup> This implies that the unfair sharing of national budget between central government and local governments has had and will continue to have negative impact on local governments' efforts to effectively monitor decentralisation service delivery programmes unless the central government increases the funding for local governments.

#### **6.3.3.4 Revenue simplicity**

The simplicity principle dictates that revenue sharing between central government and LGs should be simple and transparent so that the LGs and citizens understand how much is expected, when it will be released and how it will be allocated. The research revealed that expected budget releases from central government are communicated to LGs at regional budget conferences. The research further proved that when LGs receive the funds, the district accounting officers make some deliberate efforts to inform a number of key stakeholders, including the resident district commissioner (RDC), the area member of parliament (MP), the district LG chairperson and the public through newspapers and displays on notice boards. However, according to the majority (14 of 18 [78%]) of the interviewed LG political office bearers and an overwhelming majority (35 of 37[95%] of LG officials, uncertainty and the late release of the funds were major challenges which have had negative consequences on the planning and implementing of monitoring activities. It was reported that there are unexpected budget cuts which result in the LGs receiving less than what was budgeted for. One of the officials observed that: "Because of receiving less than what we

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<sup>73</sup> Interview, Nuwamanya Banex, Chief Finance Officer, Ntungamo District, 11 October 2013.

<sup>74</sup> Interview, Adong Roselyn, Chief Administrative Officer, Ntungamo District, 8 November 2013.

expect, a number of planned field activities have had to be cancelled due to budget shortages.”<sup>75</sup> It was also stated that the budget releases are always late resulting into planned activities being delayed. The late release of funds suggests that monitoring activities have negatively been affected. It implies that by the time the funds are received, it is too late to execute all the planned activities. The CAO for Ntungamo supports this view: “We were supposed to get releases for this quarter at the beginning of October. Now we are entering the middle of November but there is no sign of the releases. Shall we be able to carry all our activities for this quarter?”<sup>76</sup>

#### **6.3.3.5 Revenue equity**

The principle of equity means that funds for the LGs should vary positively with the need factors and inversely with their own capacity to tax. This implies that the central government must carefully consider revenue allocations in relation to the unique needs of LGs. Documentary analysis of records of funds released to the LGs proved that the central government annually provides equalisation grants based on the unique needs of the LGs. These funds, according to the records, are allocated to specific LGs as a special provision for the least developed districts. The funds are based on the degree to which a specific LG is lagging behind in the national standards for particular services. However, senior central government officials interviewed, reported that, while the grants have made some contribution to improve service delivery in such districts, the service delivery levels in the districts are still below the level of others. The districts have continued to lag behind the national standards in many services especially transport, education and health services.<sup>77</sup> This implies that the grants have not enabled LGs in the respective districts to effectively implement and monitor decentralised programmes.

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<sup>75</sup> Interview, Kimuli Paul, Senior Town Agent, Entebbe Municipal Division A, 17 October 2013.

<sup>76</sup> Interview, Adong Roselyn, Chief Administrative Officer, Ntungamo District, 8 November 2013.

<sup>77</sup> Interview, Gumunye Isa, Asst. Commissioner. Urban Administration, Min. of L G, 17 December 2013; Ssendawula Yasin, Asst. Commissioner, Urban Inspection, Min. of LG., 6 January 2014.

## 6.4 CAPACITY BUILDING IN LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

The capacity building framework in LGs under decentralisation as discussed in the previous chapter (see *supra* para 5.6.4) aims at identification and development of management skills necessary to enhance the capacity of LGs to effectively carry out their mandate including monitoring and evaluating programme outcomes to guide future activities. The nature and effectiveness of the capacity building programmes impact on the LGs' execution of their monitoring role. *Objective Number Three* of this study was to assess the capacity building in LGs in respect of its impact on LGs' performance in execution of their monitoring role in the implementation of decentralisation programmes. Areas that were used as analytical constructs in assessing the capacity building included capacity building needs assessment procedures; capabilities of the providers; comprehensiveness of capacity building; frequency, duration and attendance of the capacity building training programmes; accessibility and utilisation of capacity building guides; and mechanisms for evaluation.

### 6.4.1 Capacity building needs assessment procedures

Capacity needs assessment as a structured analytical process designed to assess the various dimensions of capacity within an institution focuses on the ability and capability of individuals and systems to perform required tasks. It is intended to establish existing capacity gaps before an appropriate capacity building programme is implemented. A successful capacity assessment exercise as UNDP (1997:2) observes, requires the full involvement of the stakeholders in a consultative process. The key stakeholders with regard to capacity building in LGs include the political office bearers, civil servants and nongovernmental sector members who are involved in monitoring the implementation of decentralisation at various levels.

According to the findings, deliberate efforts are made to carry out capacity needs assessment in LGs. All three (100%) LG officials in charge of capacity building stated that questionnaires/forms are usually distributed to stakeholders. However, among the problems the study noted were the delay and or failure to submit the training needs forms by the stakeholders which leads to stakeholders needs miss out in the capacity building plans. This problem mostly affects the lower LGs which have to send their training needs to the district.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Interview, Kiiza Flora, Sub County Chief, Kakiri Sub County, 12 September 2013.



In the same vein, the study revealed that the delay or failure to submit the forms was mainly associated with the attitude towards the assessment exercise. An overwhelming majority (35 of 37[95%]) of the interviewed LG officials and all 18 (100%) LG political office bearers indicated that there is a negative attitude among the majority of stakeholders who complain that they submit their training needs, but they are not considered for training. The exercise has come to be seen as waste of time. One of the political office bearers captured the situation “People [employees] lose interest after submitting their training needs several times and they are not invited for training...”<sup>79</sup> In other cases, it was revealed, employees are invited to attend courses which are different from what they identified in the needs assessment forms. With such problems, the capacity needs assessment appears not to have achieved the purpose of effectively identifying the capacity gaps in LGs. Consequently, the capacity building has not enhanced LGs’ capacity to effectively execute their monitoring role. The CAO for Ntungamo supported this position when she observed that: “In the absence of proper needs assessment, we have ended up having training in non-priority areas which have not helped us to improve our monitoring skills...”<sup>80</sup> This implies that the capacity building planning in LGs is not in conformity with the envisioned sound capacity building planning discussed in Chapter Five (see *supra* para 5.6.4). The envisioned capacity should be based on an effective capacity needs assessment mechanism that focuses, *inter alia*, on effective identification of the relevant existing human resource knowledge and skills gaps.

#### **6.4.2 Capabilities of the capacity building providers**

The capabilities of capacity building service providers influence the effectiveness of the capacity building programme in every organisation including local governments. The capability of the providers means the knowledge, skills and attitudes of the individuals, separately or as a group and their competence to undertake the responsibilities assigned to them (Stephen & Triraganon 2009:2). The implementation of the capacity building programme involves the identification and selection of capable capacity building service providers to effectively deliver the capacity building programme. The identification of the providers and assessment of their capability and quality need to be done through competitive

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<sup>79</sup> Interview, Ssentongo Helen, Secretary for Production, Wakiso District, 30 August 2013.

<sup>80</sup> Interview, Adong Roselyn, Chief Administrative Officer, Ntungamo District, 8 November 2013.

tendering. Tendering creates competition among service provider organisations, thereby improving the quality of service (Rohdewohld & Poppe 2005:66&71).

The findings of the study showed that, the Ministry of Local Government, through competitive bidding, prequalifies capacity building providers and sends the list to all the LGs. The LGs are then required to request proposals from the prequalified capacity building firms upon which the best evaluated firm/bidder is awarded the contract to provide the capacity building service. However, the research findings revealed that there have been frustrations among the LGs about the capability of these firms to effectively deliver the capacity building training. The firms are accused of employing a theoretical approach in their training that is out of touch with the practical needs in the LGs. The majority (28 of 37[75%]) of the interviewed LG officials, reported that the capacity building trainers did not understand the practical realities of LG issues and operations. Because of this, there have been calls to the Ministry of Local Government to allow LGs develop their own training resource pool, which have been rejected. There is a perception that the rejection could be because some of the firms belong to some of the ministry officials. While some LGs have tried to provide some personnel to be part of the training consultants, other LGs do not have such personnel available to assist the consultants on practical issues. Besides, there are questions of who should meet the allowances or payment for such employees. The following statements captured from some of the LG officials reflect the frustration of LGs with the training providers:

*Regarding the capability of training firms, in many cases, their personnel who conduct training lack practical experience on local government issues. They have good theory but they are not conversant with local government realities. We have proposed to develop district training resource pool but the Ministry has rejected this idea. They are interested in continuing to select training firms for us. And I think one of the reasons for this is because some of these firms belong to them.<sup>81</sup>*

*For the capabilities of the trainers, because of their approach to local government issues, in making terms of reference for hiring the consultants, I make sure that there is a resource person from the department because these consultants tend to lack the practical experience of what they are teaching. But again the challenge we have with attaching*

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<sup>81</sup> Interview, Adong Roselyn, Chief Administrative Officer, Ntungamo District, 8 November 2013

*staff to the consulting team is whether such staff should be paid by ourselves or the consultants.*<sup>82</sup>

The research findings proved that whereas for consultancy firms to be prequalified, their capabilities in terms of experience, skills and competencies are evaluated at the ministry level, according to all three (100%) LG officials in charge of capacity building, the reality is that those firms provide names of experienced and competent individuals as trainers for competition purposes. When it comes to the training, the trainers that provide the service are different from those that were evaluated. This, according to the officials compromises the training quality. This was corroborated by a focus group discussion composed of higher and lower LG politicians and officials where it was noted that the quality of training was in many cases unsatisfactory.<sup>83</sup>

According to all 18 (100%) LLG officials interviewed, the trainers tend to use technical English that is not easily understandable especially among those with limited levels of education—mostly councillors (whose positions do not require minimum academic qualifications as earlier noted (see *supra* para 6.2.2.1). Lack of understanding English among the councillors was corroborated by the proceedings of a sub county LG council meeting attended by the researcher as a non-participant observer where councillors could not express themselves in English and one of the sectoral heads read, with difficulty, a report written in English.<sup>84</sup> According to all three (100%) LG officials in charge of capacity building, no effort has been made to translate or conduct the training in the local languages. This affects the attendance of the councillors who cannot follow the proceedings of the training sessions. An observation by one of the LLG officials aptly describes the situation: “Given the low levels of education among the councillors, the language that is used is too technical to be understood. Because of this, many councillors sign the attendance register but they do not attend. They just wait for their allowances and go home...”<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Interview, Kansibante Erinah, Senior HR Officer, Entebbe Municipality, 26 September 2013

<sup>83</sup> 1½ hour focus group discussion composed of HLG and LLG personnel (7members) held at Wakiso District H/quarters, 12 September 2013.

<sup>84</sup> Proceedings of a sub county LG council meeting for Kibatsi Sub County held at the sub county H/quarters on 23 October 2013.

<sup>85</sup> Interview, Mugabe Joseph, Ag. Sub County Chief, Kibatsi Sub County, 23 October 2013.

With consultancy firms that do not effectively deliver the capacity building training, it implies that even where training has been conducted, it has not enhanced the capacity of local governments to effectively execute their monitoring mandate in the implementation of decentralisation programmes. A senior district official supported this position: “Yes, we have had some capacity building training but it has not made any notable impact. Grasping issues like project log frame, project schedules and monitoring indicators, remains a big problem...”<sup>86</sup>

#### **6.4.3 Comprehensiveness of the capacity building programmes**

Comprehensive capacity building for an institution, does not only address the technical capacity in the context of specific functional areas, but also covers the organisational culture and values with the ultimate goal to improve the organisation’s overall performance and its ability to adapt itself to a changing environment (Simister & Smith 2010:5). Capacity building for enhancing the LGs’ capacity to effectively monitor decentralised programmes, would cover, in detail, individual knowledge, skills, competencies and abilities in areas such as project planning and management; policy implementation and monitoring; research or data collection methodologies; and financial management. A comprehensive approach for the LGs as public entities would also address ethical values such as public accountability, professionalism and integrity.

The study findings revealed that the capacity building training in LGs has been limited in both depth and training area coverage. All three (100%) LG officials in charge of capacity building in the LGs investigated revealed that most of the identified skills gaps in their capacity building plans have not been addressed. Even those areas that have been covered, the trainers, according to the officials, have not addressed the areas in detail to enable participants grasp the topics covered. This was corroborated in a focus group discussion consisting of HLG and LLG personnel.<sup>87</sup> It was revealed in the focus group discussion that the main reason for not discussing topics in detail is because of the limited time allocated to the training. Usually the training takes one or two days. Because of this, the trainers endeavour to cover all the topics in the given time table. One of the focus group members

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<sup>86</sup> Interview, Mwesiga Dedus, District Planner, Ntungamo District, 21 October 2013.

<sup>87</sup> 1½ hour focus group discussion composed of HLG and LLG personnel (7members) held at Wakiso District H/quarters, 12 September 2 013.

captured the situation well: “When you look at the course content, it would take weeks or a month to cover but the trainers have to cover it in two days. Because they are rushing to meet the deadline, the topics are not discussed at length...”<sup>88</sup>

It was found that the capacity building does not address integrity issues. Several LG officials<sup>89</sup> interviewed revealed that during training, delegates arrive in the morning, sign the attendance register and go about their other business only to reappear for lunch and for allowances as if they have attended the training. It was revealed that LG officials, in a number of cases, sign for monitoring allowance to carry out monitoring activities but they do not carry out the activities. One respondent deplored the lack of integrity: “I think, we need training on issues of integrity. People [employees] here have no integrity. They will sign for field monitoring allowance and they don’t go to the field. Then they come up with forged reports...”<sup>90</sup> The issue of lack of integrity extends to central government officials. This was confirmed by a senior central government official who observed that. “Some members [employees] will request for money to conduct a five day monitoring exercise but after two days, they are back and they tell the driver to hide the vehicle. Sometimes they do not even go but just hide at home and then submit forged reports...”<sup>91</sup> It could therefore be argued that lack of integrity which can be partly linked to the lack of training programmes on integrity issues, affects the quality of monitoring especially where the personnel work for fewer days than allocated and where monitoring reports are forged. This in turn negatively impacts on LGs’ efforts to effectively execute their monitoring role.

Due to the lack of a comprehensive approach, the capacity building in LGs (accepting the integrity issues which seems to be a common problem with many public servants in Uganda), appears not to have effectively equipped participants with knowledge and skills to monitor programmes. This position was echoed by a senior central government official who observed that:

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<sup>88</sup> Kiiza Flora, Sub County Chief, Kakiri Sub County (one of the 7 members) of a focus group discussion composed of HLGs and LLGs personnel held at Ntungamo District H/quarters, 12 September 2012

<sup>89</sup> Interview, Mayanja William, Principal Procurement Officer, Wakiso district, 23 August 2013; Kaisibante Erinah, Senior Humana Resource Officer, Entebbe Municipality, 26 September 2013; and Mugabe Joseph, Ag Sub County Chief, Kibatsi Sub County, 23 October 2013.

<sup>90</sup> Interview, Mpagi Godfrey, Deputy Chairperson, Wakiso Town Council LG, 5 September 2013.

<sup>91</sup> Interview, Mwebesa Henry, Comm. Quality Assurance, Ministry of Health, 7 January 2014.

*Recently, we had workshops in a number of local governments on monitoring, but what came out clearly was that there is complete lack of knowledge and skills in monitoring. People have been receiving capacity building but they get lost when you mention even simple monitoring concepts. We have come up with our own training programme to equip these people with monitoring skills.<sup>92</sup>*

The research findings regarding the failure of capacity building to equip participants with technical knowledge and skills concur with Bashasha, Mangheni and Nkonya (2011:5-6). These authors observe that local government officials continue to exhibit shortages of skills and experience; and a lack of professional and technical expertise to effectively deliver public services. This could as well apply to their monitoring responsibilities which are not executed effectively.

#### **6.4.4 Frequency and attendance of the capacity building programmes**

Frequency and attendance constitute important aspects of capacity building that influences the effectiveness of any capacity building programme. Assessing these aspects involves considering the number of participants and engagement duration; and how often the capacity building training is provided. Issues to address include the number and categories of participants that are targeted and how many of the targeted participants attend and complete the training programmes successfully (Connolly & York 2002:35).

In the case of capacity building in the LGs, in regard to the categories of the participants, training records indicate that capacity building training targets LG civil servants and political office bearers. For frequency, the capacity building training is usually received once in each financial year while the engagement duration usually takes two days in which there is teaching, participants' group presentations and the participants' recommendations. Both the frequency and the participants' engagement duration are inadequate and unrealistic according to an overwhelming majority (17 of 18 [94%]) of the interviewed LG political office bearers. In regard to the participants' attendance and completion of training, it was found to be unsatisfactory as it was reported that a number of participants especially councillors, are unable to follow the training proceedings mainly due to the language barrier. They usually

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<sup>92</sup> Interview, Kabagambe Richard, Senior Economist M&E, Office of the Prime Minister, 13 December 2013.

attend for half day or one out of two days.<sup>93</sup> However, the research further noted that one big challenge was the overwhelming number of personnel that need training, and yet the capacity building fund has been progressively cut, limiting the LGs' efforts to effectively conduct the capacity building training. Although councillors claim they have benefited less from the capacity building fund compared to other stakeholders,<sup>94</sup> the fact is that even the other stakeholders are not in a better situation. The majority (10 of 13[78%]) of departments which the researcher interacted with at the district LG level reported that they have not had more than two members of staff attending some capacity building training, while the rest (22%) reported zero attendance. An observation by a senior district official captured the situation: "Those departments which have been lucky have had one or two of their staff trained but for our department, we have not had any staff trained."<sup>95</sup>

Other key stakeholders such as project management committees (PMCs) and CSOs have not been covered by the capacity building training programme. The CSO members are not invited for the training. For PMCs, which are drawn from community volunteers (despite their importance for purposes of project ownership by the community and monitoring of the projects at their end points), have not accessed the capacity building training. According to sub county community development officers<sup>96</sup> interviewed, the only form of capacity building which the PCMs have had is some mentoring provided by community development officers and other field staff such as extension workers. The findings are in support of Kauzya (2003:5) who observes that in addressing capacity building issues for local governments in Africa, the tendency has been to focus on local government structures such as LG councils, civil servants and local government executive committees; and leave out many other key role players. This, Kauzya argues, renders the capacity building efforts ineffective.

For career development which is part of the capacity building programme in LGs, according to all three (100%) LG officials in charge of capacity building, has been most adversely

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<sup>93</sup> Interview, Mayanja William, Principal Procurement Officer, Wakiso District, 23 August 2013.

<sup>94</sup> Interview, Kanyike Justine, Vice Chairperson, Wakiso Sub County LG, 2 September 2013.

<sup>95</sup> Interview, Mukasa Male, Ag District Engineer Wakiso District, 21 August 2013.

<sup>96</sup> Interviews, Nnakyaze Olivia, Community Development Officer, Wakiso Sub County, 3 September 2013; and Nakimera Racheal, Community Development Officer, Kakiri Sub County, 19 September 2013.



affected by the funding constraints. The dilemma is that both the necessary areas of training and the number of people that need to be trained cannot be accommodated within the available capacity building fund. Because of this, the majority of the LGs have ended up sponsoring only one or two people for formal training under the programme. An observation by one of the officials reflected the situation: “All those who fill forms for training, do qualify and this gives us a challenge on how to select the few that we can afford to sponsor.”<sup>97</sup> Another official noted that “even those employees who are sponsored to take courses at various institutions, sometimes, LGs have failed to sustain their funding for the whole study period.”<sup>98</sup>

The research findings demonstrated that there has been limited accessibility to the capacity building training by those who need it and limited benefits in terms of additional skills and competencies for those who have attended the training. This implies that the capacity building programme has not been effective in bridging the knowledge and skills gaps in LGs. Consequently it has not enhanced LGs’ capacity to effectively execute their monitoring role in the implementation of the decentralised programmes.

#### **6.4.5 Availability and utilisation of capacity building guides/tool kits**

Capacity building guides or toolkits are necessary to provide practical, easy to read information and resources that guide users in execution of their assignments. The toolkits with particular regard to LGs would provide reference for the stakeholders involved in the monitoring process. This, however, would depend not only on the availability of the guides and accessibility to them but also on the interest to read them. According to all (37 of 37[100%]) LG officials interviewed, there are no specific toolkits developed to assist individuals read and interpret the information on their own. They revealed that whereas the Ministry of Local Government has developed manuals based on various training modules, these manuals are used by trainers. They are not available for LG employees. However, it was found that in many cases, the trainers have distributed to participants prepared reading materials (as handouts) although in some cases they do not provide them. One of the officials commented: “In a number of cases, trainers have promised to organise the materials and

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<sup>97</sup> Interview, Ssebi Haruna, Principal Personnel Officer, Wakiso District, 22 August 2013.

<sup>98</sup> Interview, Kaisibante Erinah, Senior Human Resource Officer, Entebbe Municipality, 26 September 2013.



send them later after training but have not delivered them.”<sup>99</sup> However, according to the respondents, there were two major problems associated with the reading materials. The first is that the reading materials are prepared in a language that is not easily understood. The second is that due to the poor reading culture, those who have the materials do not read them for reference. One of the officials described the second problem: “Although we complain of lack of reading materials, the truth is that even those who have handouts do not read them. Most people don’t read. They just get the handouts and keep them...”<sup>100</sup>

The research findings prove that LGs have had limited access to and utilisation of capacity building guides that can provide easy to read information whether in the form of manuals, prepared text or handouts. This implies that they have not effectively used any reference material to guide them in executing their monitoring activities. The reference material would enhance local governments’ monitoring capacity by assisting the employees for example to understand a number of monitoring concepts that seem be difficult for them to interpret.

#### **6.4.6 Mechanisms for capacity building evaluation and follow up**

Capacity building evaluation can usually be conducted on many levels from usage to short-term outcomes; and to long-term impact. At a basic level, one can simply count the number, the duration and the satisfaction, that is, how many individuals and groups accessed the capacity building services for what duration and their level of satisfaction. One can assess the quality of the capacity building services especially through participant ratings. Beyond this, one can attempt to determine what participants learned, how they applied the knowledge and the resultant change of their behaviour. Ultimately, one can determine the long-term impact of capacity building on the organisation and the community (Connolly & York 2002:34 &36).

In regard to the capacity building evaluation mechanisms, all three (100%) LG officials in charge of capacity building investigated, reported that at the basic level, the individuals and groups that have attended the capacity building programmes are recorded together with the number of times and courses they have attended. Assessing their satisfaction is done

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<sup>99</sup> Interview, Natukunda Juliet, Ag Sub County Chief, Itojo, Sub County, 21 October 2013

<sup>100</sup> Interview, Nakimera Racheal, Community Development Officer, Kakiri Sub County, 19 September 2013.

together with participants' rating of the quality of the training received. This is done at the closure of each training programme when participants fill in evaluation score sheets. However, according to the majority (14 of 19 [74%]) of the interviewed HLG officials, participants have a tendency to award scores without critical consideration of the quality of training they have received. Other than aspects like the duration of the training, the quality of the hotel where the training is held and the facilitation, the participants do not provide a critical assessment of important aspects such as topics that they have been taught, the participants' involvement, meeting of the participants' expectations and the training methods used. The following statement obtained from one of the HLG officials highlighted the situation:

*The participants do not take time to make a critical assessment of all the aspects of the training before awarding scores. The only areas where you will find they have made critical assessment are those to do with the duration of the course, meals and refreshments or facilitation but when it comes to aspects like what topics should be removed or added, whether the training has met their expectations, you wonder whether these people were actually following the training.<sup>101</sup>*

The findings on the impact of capacity building indicated that, other than the regular staff performance appraisal which may provide some indications about the impact of training on those who have attended, and the individual departmental efforts to follow up on the performance of employees who have attended career development courses, no other established mechanisms has been used to evaluate the impact of capacity building programme. An overwhelming majority (34 of 37 [92%]) of the interviewed LG officials, revealed that there are no formal effective mechanisms for capacity building impact assessment in local governments. One of the officials described the situation: "Apart from staff performance appraisals and some informal observation of individuals who have had career development training, we have no effective mechanisms to evaluate the impact of the training on the performance of beneficiaries."<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Interview, Mayanja William, Principal Procurement Officer, Wakiso District, 23 August 2013.

<sup>102</sup> Interview, Tumushabe Jacqueline, Senior Human Resource Officer, Ntungamo, 11 October 2013.

In the absence of effective capacity building evaluation mechanisms, it implies that it has not been possible to ascertain the level of participants' satisfaction, the quality of capacity building training and the impact of the capacity building on the performance of beneficiaries. Without establishing the impact of the capacity building where local governments would know how the beneficiaries have applied the acquired knowledge, whether it has enhanced their skills, increased their competences and changed their behaviour, it appears that, it is not even possible to effectively establish the existing knowledge and skills gaps in local governments to guide the design of an appropriate capacity building approach to bridge the gaps. It also implies that the capacity building approach in local governments has not been properly guided to achieve its purpose. Consequently the capacity of local governments to execute their monitoring function has not been effectively enhanced.

## **6.5 WORKING RELATIONSHIP AMONG INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANS**

*Objective Four* of this study was to analyse the extent to which working relationships among the intergovernmental organs involved in the decentralisation monitoring process influence LGs' performance of their monitoring role. Effective working relationship among intergovernmental organs is a crucial ingredient for successful implementation of decentralisation policy. The nature and effectiveness of the working relationship among intergovernmental organs influence the performance of LGs in executing their monitoring role. Promoting effective working relationships among intergovernmental organs as pointed out under the international perspective chapter (see *supra* para 4.3.2.3), requires a deliberate effort to address a number of issues such as roles and responsibilities among levels of government; harmonisation of goals; co-ordination mechanisms; conflict resolutions mechanisms; superiority attitudes associated with central government organs; and power relations that define reporting and supervision systems. In analysing the existing working relationship among the LG political organs, LG civil service organs, central government agencies, the higher and lower organs of LGs and its impact on LG performance, the critical analytical themes included definition and clarification of roles and responsibilities; harmonisation of goals; existence of essential ingredients for an effective working relationship; existing co-ordination mechanisms; the power relations among the organs; and existing conflict resolution mechanisms. Thus the presentation, analysis and interpretation of findings under the objective are based on these analytical themes.

### 6.5.1 Definition and clarification of roles and responsibilities

Defining and clarifying the roles and responsibilities of intergovernmental organs are essential for effective working relationship. Lack of clarification of roles and responsibilities among intergovernmental organs affects local governments' performance in monitoring decentralisation programmes. Particularly, it creates problems of duplication, lack of synergy, redundancy, conflict and waste in the utilisation of resources. The focus of the study on this area was to establish, in practice, the extent to which the roles and responsibilities of the LG political organs, LG civil service organs, central government agencies and the higher and lower LGs in the monitoring process are effectively defined.

According to the research findings, there are no specified roles and responsibilities assigned to LG technical officials and the political office bearers involved in the monitoring process. All 18 (100%) LG political office bearers and all 37 (100%) LG officials interviewed, cited lack of definition and clarification of roles and responsibilities between LG technical officials and the political office bearers in execution of their monitoring activities as a problem. Regularly the technical officials and the political office bearers carry out parallel monitoring activities. But there is no clarification of roles and responsibilities of the two parties which result in duplication, wastage of resources, lack of unity of purpose and adoption of conflicting approaches. Even in cases of joint monitoring between the civil servants and the politicians, it was revealed, there are issues of who is responsible for writing the reports and which party is responsible for ensuring that the joint recommendations are implemented. One of the officials observed: "Nobody is specifically assigned the responsibility to follow up and ensure that our recommendations are effectively implemented. The whole affair is *To Whom It May Concern*."<sup>103</sup>

The research revealed that at the lower LG level where political officials have low levels of education, a lack of defined monitoring roles and responsibilities between the political and civil service organs has caused more serious problems, with politicians attempting to usurp the powers of civil servants, often leading to conflict.<sup>104</sup> This was corroborated in a focus group discussion consisting of lower LG political office bearers and officials where the two

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<sup>103</sup> Interview, Lubulwa Michael, District Fisheries Officer, Wakiso District, 19 August 2013.

<sup>104</sup> Interview, Oyine Joseph, District Production Officer, Wakiso District, 20 August 2013.

parties accused each other of usurping each other's powers. Based on the discussion, it is the politicians who are actually trying to usurp the powers of the officials. For example, they insisted that as representatives of the electorate (the project beneficiaries) they need to be part of project supervisory teams and yet project supervision is the work of the officials.<sup>105</sup> This results in monitoring activities not necessarily determined by objective measures but rather influenced by political considerations.

Similarly, all 26 (100%) HLG respondents and all 29 (100%) LLG respondents interviewed, reported there is lack of definition, clarification and demarcation of the monitoring roles between higher and lower LGs in the monitoring of programmes. It was revealed that though the LLGs are in many cases invited by the district to attend project inauguration, there are no specific guidelines availed to them regarding their expected monitoring roles and responsibilities. What makes the situation more difficult is that in most cases where the project is executed by a contractor, the LLGs have no access to the contract between LGs and the contractor to establish the accountabilities expected of the contractor. Without this the LGs cannot determine the specific monitoring tasks they should do. One of the LLGs officials captured the existing situation:

*When the district procures project contractors, it does not communicate to us the contractual terms and conditions to enable us know what is expected from the contractor. This makes it difficult for us to know the kind of monitoring responsibilities we are supposed to perform and yet we are expected to monitor those projects.*<sup>106</sup>

Additionally, the research discovered that there is a lack of definition and clarification of monitoring roles for LGs and central government personnel involved in the monitoring process. The central government personnel including those who are resident in LGs (resident district commissioner's office personnel and district security office personnel) regularly carry out monitoring of programmes in LGs. Similarly, the LGs conduct regular monitoring of the same programmes. According to the overwhelming majority (8 of 9 [89%]) of the interviewed central government personnel and all the 55 (100%) LGs' personnel, the lack of clarification

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<sup>105</sup> 1¼ hour focus group discussion composed of LLG politicians & officials (5members) held at Nansana Town Council LG H/quarters, 5 September 2013.

<sup>106</sup> Interview, Kiiza Flora, Sub County Chief, Kakiri Sub County, 12 September 2013.

of roles between the central government personnel and LGs employees presents a big problem in the monitoring process. It has resulted in duplication, wastage of resources, and adoption of conflicting approaches to monitoring, and a lack of unity of purpose.

The lack of defined and clarified monitoring roles and responsibilities for the intergovernmental organs and the resultant duplication, lack of unity of purpose, employing of different approaches and the *To Whom It May Concern* attitude (implying that *if it is everybody's job, then it is nobody's job*) has had negative implications on monitoring the implementation of decentralised programmes. For example, the study revealed that employing different monitoring approaches results in getting different monitoring findings from the same monitored projects. The study also found that as a result of a lack of defined roles and responsibilities, the LLGs usually consider projects that are initiated by the higher local governments (HLGs) as projects belonging to the district. A sub county LG official described the obtaining situation: "With district initiated projects, since our specific monitoring role is not defined, we no longer target them in our monitoring schedule."<sup>107</sup> The study further revealed that due to lack of assigning the responsibility for the implementation of monitoring recommendation made by joint monitoring teams, the teams cannot establish the status of their recommendations and this, as pointed out earlier on feedback mechanisms (see *supra* para 6.2.2.4), makes it difficult for the teams to make the necessary adjustments to the recommendations.

### 6.5.2 Harmonisation of monitoring goals

Harmonisation of goals and objectives are intended to ensure that the intergovernmental organs involved in the monitoring process share common goals and objectives. This is important for avoiding a clash of interests as well as conflict situations. The research established cases where civil servants and political office bearers do not share common goals. The majority (30 of 37 [81%]) of the interviewed LG officials indicated that in many cases, the civil servants and the politicians do not have shared monitoring goals which usually results in conflict. One of the politicians' monitoring goals in which they experience conflict with the technical officials is their apparent focus on appeasing their constituents as they target the next elections. Actually they appear to treat monitoring exercises as political

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<sup>107</sup> Interview, NNakintu Prosy, Sub County Chief, Wakiso Sub County, 2 September 2013.

tours in their constituencies in which they impress upon the electorate that they are the ones who are behind the initiation of the projects being monitored. The majority (14 of 18 [78%]) of the interviewed LG political office bearers stated that they have their political manifestos which they want to ensure are implemented. One of the respondents captured the politicians' interest to impress upon the electorate in monitoring of programmes: "Yes, as politicians, we have manifestos and we always want the people to know that we are fulfilling them..."<sup>108</sup> The study results in this case are in support of Kakumba (2003:93) who contends that in many instances, the LG politicians would seek to please their constituents at all costs to keep political support while on the contrary; the civil servants are concerned about the efficiency of resource utilisation and the adequacy of process.

The study established that access to monitoring allowances is a goal of politicians which they do not share with civil servants. An overwhelming majority (36 of 37 [97%]) of the interviewed LG officials reported that politicians consider monitoring as an opportunity to access allowances and will usually not carry out monitoring activities until they receive their allowances. They tend to be more concerned about how much in terms of allowances is available than the nature of the monitoring they are going to carry out. Sometimes they prefer to cover a few projects so that they can get more allowances to go back and cover the remaining projects. The statements that follow which are captured from some of the officials reflect how access to allowances is an important monitoring goal for politicians:

*The politicians will pressurise for monitoring allowance, but when they reach in the field, they cover a few areas and retire. You may start with five members but at the close of the day you may have two, or sometimes none. From the field, we are supposed to hold meetings to harmonise our positions on the findings but the politicians will not come unless you provide allowances.*<sup>109</sup>

*Allowances seem to be an overriding goal of the politicians. Even when we go for field monitoring exercises, they prefer to monitor certain categories of project instead of*

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<sup>108</sup> Interview, Ssemwanga Norman, Secretary for Health & Education, Wakiso District LG, 22 August 2013.

<sup>109</sup> Interview, Nnakyaze Olivia, Community Development Officer, Wakiso Sub County, 3 September 2013.

*combining all the projects. Their aim is to go back to the field as many times as possible for purpose of allowances.*<sup>110</sup>

An overwhelming majority (16 of 18 [89%]) of the interviewed LG political office bearers acknowledged that monitoring allowances were of major interest to politicians. They indicated that other than the chairperson, other politicians/councillors are not paid a salary and many of them have insufficient sources of income for sustenance. So they consider conducting monitoring exercises as a source of income. One of the politicians captured the importance of monitoring allowances to the politicians thus: "Many of the politicians have no other jobs. They expect to earn a living from their political offices and monitoring is one way through which they can earn something."<sup>111</sup> This was corroborated by a focus group discussion composed of both LLG politicians and civil servants.<sup>112</sup> It was further corroborated by proceedings of a sub county LG council meeting attended by the researcher as a non participant observer.<sup>113</sup> In the meeting, councillors complained that they had not been paid their previous monitoring allowances which had been passed by the council and they were not ready to carry out any monitoring activity or provide reports until they are paid.

According to the majority (13 of 18 [72%]) of the interviewed LG political office bearers, another area where the technical officials and the politicians do not have shared monitoring goals is in cases when politicians want to scrutinise the quality of particular projects being executed in order to ensure that there is value for money before payment is done while the technical officials are interested in paying the contractor once the work is declared complete. In such cases, the technical officials argue that the politicians are unnecessarily inconveniencing the contractor. An observation by one of the political office bearers well captures the situation:

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<sup>110</sup> Interview, Byaruhanga David, Sub County Chief, Ntungamo Sub County, 22 October 2013.

<sup>111</sup> Interview, Masereka Robert, Chairperson, Nabweru Sub County LG, 18 September 2013.

<sup>112</sup> 1¼ hour focus group discussion composed of politicians & officials (5members) held at Nansana Town Council LG H/quarters, 12 September 2013.

<sup>113</sup> Proceedings of a sub county LG council meeting for Kibatsi Sub County held at the sub county H/quarters on 23 October 2013.



*We do not have the same goals with the technocrats in monitoring projects. For example, recently we had a case of a bridge that was poorly done and we wanted certain things to be put right but the technocrats were not concerned. The finance officer went ahead and paid the contractor. He argued that the engineer had certified the work.*<sup>114</sup>

The study revealed that the central government resident personnel particularly the RDC's office personnel in a number of cases have conflicting monitoring goals with LGs. The overwhelming majority (35 of 37 [95%]) of the interviewed LG officials stated that central government officials who represent the president's office in the LGs tend to create an impression that government is doing its part by initiating projects and allocating resources, but it is the technical officials who are not doing their job to ensure effective service delivery. "In an effort to promote good image of government, they usually prefer to carry out monitoring alone so that they can exonerate government before the public and push the blame for any problems to us,"<sup>115</sup> one of the officials observed. Emphasising the need for the RDCs office personnel to harmonise their goals with those of the LGs, a senior district official observed: "The resident district commissioner's staff need to harmonise their monitoring goals with ours. For them they seem to be interested in promoting a good image for the central government and spying on us to find faults and blame us instead of working as partners to improve monitoring in the district..."<sup>116</sup>

The findings suggest that the existing lack of harmonised monitoring goals among the intergovernmental organs involved in the monitoring process has negative effects on the input (in terms of time and effort) into the monitoring exercises especially by the joint monitoring teams; results in a clash of interests; leads to disagreement over monitoring recommendations; and creates conflict and disharmony. Consequently, these negatively impact on local governments' efforts to effectively monitor the implementation of decentralisation programmes.

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<sup>114</sup> Interview, Mataniro, Emos, Chairperson, Ntungamo Sub County LG, 22 October 2013.

<sup>115</sup> Interview, Kagwire Robert, Deputy District Health Officer, Wakiso District, 28 August 2013.

<sup>116</sup> Interview, Adong Roselyn, Chief Administrative Officer, Ntungamo District, 8 November 2013.

### 6.5.3 Co-ordination mechanisms

When multiple actors pursue goals that a single actor would not achieve alone, they need to establish mechanisms to ensure effective management of the interdependence among their activities. The process of managing the interdependences is what constitutes co-ordination (Malone 1988:5). The methods used to manage the interdependence are the co-ordination mechanisms. Co-ordination mechanisms provide tools for effectively managing interactions among people, processes and entities that interact in order to execute common goals (Kaipia 2007:8-9). For co-ordination to be effective, it requires effective information sharing structures, consultative decision making processes and task consensus. For the intergovernmental organs involved in the monitoring process, the focus of the study was on the existing information sharing mechanisms; consultative decision processes and consensus particularly regarding monitoring findings.

The research attested to the fact that there is a lack of co-ordination between the technical officials and politicians in the execution of their monitoring activities. Technical officials from the office of the respective accounting officers together with other technical staff from sectoral departments regularly carry out monitoring activities. The political office bearers also carry regular monitoring activities. However, there are no mechanisms to co-ordinate the two parties' monitoring activities. The majority (14 of 18 [78%]) of the interviewed LG political office bearers and an overwhelming majority (35 of 37[95%]) of LG officials, indicated that there is lack of consultations and information sharing when the two parties are carrying out their field monitoring activities. Information, for example, regarding when, where and which projects the two parties are going to monitor is not shared. This causes 'unco-ordinated troop movement'. Such unco-ordinated movement seems to confuse the project beneficiaries who see different teams doing the same work. It also makes it difficult to share resources. One of the officials describes the problem regarding the sharing of resources between the two parties: "In cases where the technocrats and the politicians carry out separate monitoring, we miss the chance to use the same facilities like vehicles which would save on fuel and other expenses..."<sup>117</sup> This implies that the lack of co-ordination negatively affects the efficiency of resource utilisation in the monitoring process. The lack of co-ordination between the two parties was corroborated by the sub county council meeting attended by the

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<sup>117</sup> Interview, Muksa Male, Ag District Engineer, Wakiso District, 21 August 2013.

researcher as a non-participant observer.<sup>118</sup> The meeting stressed that there was need for co-ordination between councillors monitoring activities and those of the technical officials. It was noted in the meeting that politicians' reports and those of the technical officials tend to be contradictory. In this case, it implies that it is difficult to implement the recommendations of the contradictory reports.

The research findings regarding the lack of co-ordination between technical officials and politicians are in agreement with Kebba and Ntanda's findings (Kebba & Ntanda 2005:19) which concluded that there is poor co-ordination and co-operation between LG civil servants and elected councillors as key players in the decentralisation process. Their findings show that the lack of co-ordination is characterised by lack of information sharing including poor accessibility even to available information.

The study ascertained that there is lack of effective co-ordination between central government personnel and the LG monitoring organs. According to an overwhelming majority (34 of 37 [92%]) of the interviewed LG officials, the central government personnel carry out parallel monitoring activities and often they do not consult or share information with LG monitoring teams. One of the officials described the situation: "Many times the line ministry officials come for monitoring and you hear that they have gone back. It is as if we are running parallel programmes. There is actually some level of detachment. They do not mind to ask about our own monitoring findings or reports..."<sup>119</sup> The officials revealed that even for the resident central government personnel particularly from the RDCs and district internal security officers' offices, there is no co-ordination of their monitoring activities with those of LGs. It was indicated that because of lack of consultation and information sharing there are cases where the RDC will stop a contractor from continuing with project works on issues such as work quality, when those issues have already been worked out between the contractor and the relevant LG organs. A deputy RDC acknowledged the lack of information sharing between LGs and the central government resident officials by observing that: "From the field, we compile monitoring reports summarising our findings. The findings form part of the monthly reports we submit to the minister for the presidency. But we do not copy these

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<sup>118</sup> Proceedings of a sub county LG council meeting for Kibatsi Sub County held at the sub county H/quarters on 23 October 2013.

<sup>119</sup> Interview, Lubulwa Michael, District Fisheries Officer, Wakiso District, 19 August 2013.

reports to the district local government authorities.”<sup>120</sup> This results in a lack of a harmonised position on the monitoring recommendations and their implementation.

In regard to co-ordination between the higher and lower LGs, the study found that there is lack of effective co-ordination between the two levels of government in the execution of their respective monitoring activities. All (26 of 26 [100%]) interviewed HLG personnel and the overwhelming majority (27 of 29 [93%]) of LLG personnel, cited lack of co-ordination of monitoring activities between the higher and lower LGs as a problem. It was observed that although in some cases, when the district (HLG) monitoring teams come to the LLGs, request for an officer to act as a focal person, in the majority of cases, the teams do not communicate when and which projects will be monitored in the LLGs. Additionally, it was stated that the district teams do not share their monitoring findings with the LLGs. While the LLGs usually submit copies of their monitoring reports to the HLGs, which are seldom acted upon, the HLGs monitoring teams do not provide copies of their reports to the LLGs. The same situation according to the respondents exists between a municipal council LG (which is at a higher level) and municipal division council LG (at a lower level) in urban areas. Even when the HLGs are monitoring projects financed by the LLGs, they do not consult or share their monitoring findings with the LLGs. The following statements obtained from some of the LLG personnel illustrate the existing situation:

*Regarding our working relationship with the district local government, we tend to carry out parallel monitoring activities. There is no co-ordination in our monitoring approach. The district does its own monitoring without our involvement. There is no information sharing and no sharing of their findings. Even when they are monitoring our own funded projects, they do not consult us.*<sup>121</sup>

*In many cases, when the municipal council does monitoring in our division, we are not consulted. After finishing their monitoring, they do not discuss their findings with us. They*

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<sup>120</sup> Interview, Mbabazi Justine, Deputy RDC, Ntungamo District, 7 November 2013.

<sup>121</sup> Interview, Mugabe Joseph, Ag Sub County Chief Kibatsi Sub County, 23 October 2013.

*do not give us copies of their reports. We just come to hear about the findings in meetings.*<sup>122</sup>

The findings imply that the lack of co-ordination among the intergovernmental organs involved in the monitoring process has led to fragmented monitoring efforts. This has resulted in failure to bring out monitoring findings that adequately measure variables such as impact. It has created different monitoring practices, resulted in conflicting monitoring recommendations, created gaps in the acquisition and distribution of monitoring information and created redundancy where efforts and resources are spent twice to produce a monitoring report on the same project. This has consequently negatively impacted on the LGs' efforts to effectively and efficiently monitor the implementation of decentralisation programmes.

#### **6.5.4 Existence of essential ingredients for effective working relationships**

There are essential ingredients for an effective working relationship. Tallia, Lanham, McDaniel and Crabtree (2006:48-50) discuss a number of them among which are trust and openness; respect; and effective communication. Trust is the foundation for any successful collaboration. Where there is a trusting relationship, people require input from one another (and actually use it). People in a trusting relationship openly discuss their challenges, successes and failures to learn from them. In regard to respect, people, who respect one another in a working relationship value each other's opinions and are willing to change their minds in response to what others say. Finally, effective communication practices call for the use of rich and lean channels of communication. Rich channels, such as face to face are preferred in the case of messages that are sensitive, while lean channels such as memos or e-mails are preferred for more routine messages. Such ingredients are instrumental in promoting effective working relationship among the intergovernmental organs involved in the monitoring process. The study assessed the extent to which such essential ingredients exist in the working relationships among the organs.

The research established that there is mistrust between the LG technical officials and the political office bearers. All 18 (100%) LG political office bearers interviewed, stated that the technical officials tend to be dishonest and are not transparent. Lack of transparency

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<sup>122</sup> Interview, Ampaire Alex, Asst. Town Clerk, Central Division, Ntungamo Municipality, 6 November, 2013.

according to interviewees, is mostly exhibited on finance issues such as budget details. In this respect, it was indicated that the technical officials will make efforts to avoid specific procedures if they know that some of their ulterior motives will be discovered or questioned or blocked. An observation by one of the politicians reflects the situation:

*Those technical officials are never open especially on financial matters. Recently they wanted me to read the budget but I said I needed to study the details first. The next thing I heard was that the councillors had been compromised and had approved the budget. This is out of procedure because the law requires the secretary for finance to read the budget before it is passed.*<sup>123</sup>

Similarly, the research proved that the technical officials do not trust the political office bearers. According to the majority (29 of 37[78%]) of the interviewed LG officials, the politicians are apparently not genuine in executing their monitoring activities. The officials consider the politicians to always be looking for faults so that they can blame the technical officials. It was stated that it is believed among the LG officials that the politicians do not act as partners who can work together to improve the monitoring process. One of the officials captured the views of technical officials about politicians as follows: “When they find out some problem, they are quick to apportion blame. It is as if they are not part of us. They behave as if they are external auditors.”<sup>124</sup> A senior town council political office bearer acknowledged this mistrust: “There is a problem of mistrust. We work with people who think we are not partners. They believe we are only interested in finding out wrongs...”<sup>125</sup>

The study found that there is lack of mutual trust between LGs and central government personnel particularly the RDC’s office personnel. The RDC’s office personnel do not trust the LG monitoring personnel. All the seven (100%) interviewed HLG political office bearers and an overwhelming majority (18 of 19 [95%]) of HLG technical officials, stated that, the RDC’s office personnel do not believe that LGs’ monitoring personnel have good intentions and are objectively executing their duties. According to the interviewees, the RDC’s office

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<sup>123</sup> Interview, Mpagi Godfrey, Vice Chairperson and Secretary for Finance, Wakiso Town Council, 5 September 2013.

<sup>124</sup> Interview, Ndagire Lillian Comm. Development Officer, Nansana Town Council, 5 September 2013

<sup>125</sup> Interview, Musoke Wakayima, Chairperson, Nansana Town Council, 3 September 2013.

personnel tend to treat monitoring as a fault finding mission to pin the LGs' employees who they consider not to have public interest at heart in the execution of their duties. An observation made by one of the officials aptly describes the situation: "These people [*officials*] from the resident commissioner's office do not trust us. They tend to imagine that they are *more government* than us. They seem to believe that our activities are driven by personal interest instead of public interest ..."<sup>126</sup> This was corroborated by a focus group discussion held at town council LG where participants acknowledged that the level of mistrust between politicians and officials was high.<sup>127</sup>

Regarding respect as an ingredient of effective working relationship, the research has revealed that the question of lack of respect was mainly between HLGs and LLGs. All 29 (100%) LLG personnel interviewed indicated that HLGs' personnel did not respect the LLG employees. The interviewees revealed that the LLGs' reports submitted to the district LGs are not respected. It was argued that the HLGs question the capacity of LLGs to make sound reports. Thus they do not consider the LLG employees views and recommendations as significant. This kind of attitude towards LLG employees intimidates the LLGs' personnel. One of the LLG employees presented the obtaining situation:

*There is a tendency among the district staff to think that they are superior to the lower local government staff. They even tend to disregard our views when they come for monitoring activities. Because of this superiority attitude, some staff members at LLG level who are not confident enough fear even to enter their offices.*<sup>128</sup>

The study results regarding the higher local governments' disrespect for lower local governments are in support of Steiner (2006:16) who found that the HLGs were not incorporating plans of the LLGs into the overall district plans. This was mainly because, according to Steiner's findings, the HLGs, did not respect the priorities identified by the LLGs.

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<sup>126</sup> Interview, Kagwire Robert, Deputy District Health Officer, Wakiso District, 28 August 2013.

<sup>127</sup> 1¼ hour focus group discussion composed of LLGs politicians & officials (5members) held at Nansana Town Council LG H/quarters, 5 September 2013.

<sup>128</sup> Interview, Nnakyaze Olivia, Community Development Officer, Wakiso Sub County, 3 September 2013.

The politicians at the LLGs are the least respected by the HLGs according to the research findings. The HLGs' personnel rarely interact with the political office bearers at the LLG level. When the HLGs' personnel are carrying out field monitoring activities and they have any matter to do with the LLG authorities, they prefer to deal with the technical officials. All the 11(100%) LLG political office bearers interviewed, stated that politicians at the LLG level were the most disrespected by the HLGs. They revealed that the HLGs' personnel did not value the input of the LLGs political office bearers in the monitoring process as significant. One of the politicians described the level of disrespect thus: "The higher local government people [employees] can at least talk with the technocrats. But for us when we raise certain issues, they ignore us. They think we are either playing our politics or targeting allowances..."<sup>129</sup>

For communication, as another important ingredient for effective working relationship, the study established that there is lack of open and regular communication among the intergovernmental organs in the monitoring process. According to the majority (6 of 9 [67%]) of the interviewed central government personnel and an overwhelming majority (52 of 55 [95%]) of the LGs' personnel lack of effective communication among the central government personnel, the LGs' personnel, the higher LGs' personnel, the lower LGs' personnel, the LG political office bearers and the LG technical officials is a big problem. Both rich channels such as face-to-face and lean channels such as memos have not been effectively utilised to communicate among the organs. Basically, it was noted that there has been a lack of effective exchange of opinions and information that would help resolve differences and create mutual trust and understanding.

The existence of mistrust and lack of openness, the lack of respect and lack of effective communication, which according to the study findings have characterised the working relationship among the intergovernmental organs, have had negative implications for an effective working relationship that is necessary to achieve monitoring goals and objectives in LGs. With poor working relationship, it implies that monitoring information, findings and recommendations have not been effectively shared. Consequently, this implies that the poor working relationship among the intergovernmental organs has created lack of clear focus and unity of purpose and affected efficient resource allocation and accountability in

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<sup>129</sup> Interview, Musoke Wakayima, Chairperson, Nansana Town Council, 3 September, 2013



monitoring of programmes. This in turn has had negative implications on LGs' performance in executing their monitoring role.

#### **6.5.5 Power relations**

Power relations in an organisational setting impact on the organisation's ability to achieve its objectives and the stability of power relations will determine the stability and effectiveness of working relationships (Piccione & Razin 2009:1; Ancher 2007:16). In analysing power relations, it is imperative to assess the effectiveness of exercising of power in terms of its intended objectives among which are obedience; improved employee conduct and performance; and stable and harmonious relations. Issues to consider include defining the existing power hierarchy; the mechanisms by which power is enforced and obedience achieved; and the methods of supervision and control exercised (Sadan 2004:63-66). The study in assessing the effectiveness of power relations among the LG intergovernmental organs, focused on hierarchy and reporting mechanisms; supervision and control; and power enforcement mechanisms. It is in this regard that the findings are presented.

In regard to the hierarchy and reporting, the research found that the head of LG civil servants in every LG, who are the accounting officers, report to the respective political head or chairpersons of the LGs. The accounting officers submit performance reports on a monthly basis to the chairpersons in addition to regular briefings on performance progress and challenges. The research also discovered that every technical official heading a department (departmental head) reports to the respective political head (member of the executive) appointed by the chairperson as an executive head/secretary of the department or sector. It was further discovered that in both situations, the reports were either delayed or not submitted, while in some cases the reports indicate that they had been copied to the political heads when the heads had not received such copies. According to the majority (13 of 18 [72%]) of the interviewed LG political office bearers, the reports are deliberately delayed or not submitted especially in cases where the technical officials are of the opinion that the politicians will question certain issues in the reports. One of the interviewees presented the situation: "Reports especially regarding expenditure are intentionally not submitted to dodge [avoid] accountability issues..."<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Interview, Nsereko Wakayima, Chairperson, Nansana Town Council LG, 3 September 2013.

For the reporting between the lower and higher LGs, the research established that all the accounting officers in LLGs report to the chief administrative officer (accounting officer) at the district LG in rural areas. In urban areas the accounting officers in the LLGs report to the municipal town clerk. Similarly, the political heads of the LLGs report to the respective political heads of the HLGs. The research has also established that while the accounting officers of the respective LLGs usually submit monthly reports to the accounting officers at the HLGs, their counterparts, the chairpersons, rarely submit any reports to the political heads at the HLGs. However, according to all four (100%) senior officials in the accounting officers' offices at district and municipal LG levels interviewed, the reports by the LLG accounting officers are not submitted in time. An observation by one of the officials highlighted the problem associated with the reports: "Their reports are always late and this makes it difficult to act on them in time ..."<sup>131</sup> This implies that due to the late submission of the reports, there is no timely feedback regarding the issues raised in the reports.

In terms of supervision, the findings show that the political office bearers play some supervisory role over the technical officials at the respective levels of LGs. The political office bearers, through the council, approve budgets and development plans prepared by the technical officials. The politicians also attend meetings of the officials to give political direction. The politicians further discuss progress submitted by the technical officials and provide recommendations or action instructions. However, according to the majority (29 of 37 [78%]) of the interviewed LG officials, the politicians often prefer to give instructions without any consultation with those who are instructed. They even insist on giving instructions on technical issues where they do not have competence. One of the officials described the situation: "Because the politicians come in office knowing that they are supposed to supervise the technocrats, they often want to give instructions even on technical issues without any discussion with those who are supposed to implement the instructions..."<sup>132</sup> The research established that the politicians complain about limited powers in supervising the technical officials as they do not appraise them on performance. The officials are instead appraised by their respective accounting officers. This, according to all 18 (100%) LG political office bearers interviewed, means that the politicians cannot determine the officials' reward or disciplinary action on the basis of the officials' performance. One of the politicians deplored

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<sup>131</sup> Interview, Deputy, Chief Administrative Officer, Wakiso District, 28 August 2013.

<sup>132</sup> Interview, Kagwire Robert, Deputy District Health Officer, Wakiso District, 28 August 2013.

the limited powers: “As politicians, we are supposed to supervise the technocrats, but we do not appraise them. Even when they are not performing according to our expectations, we cannot take decision to either demote them or stop their promotion.”<sup>133</sup>

Concerning the supervision of LLGs by HLGs, the assistant to the accounting officer (Assistant Chief Administrative Officer) usually attends the planning committee meetings at the LLGs in which instructions from the Chief Administrative Officer’s office are communicated to the LLG officials. Regarding the political office bearers at the HLGs supervising those of the LLGs, the study found that Instructions are mainly communicated through writing. There are no regular meetings attended by the two parties. According to all (11 of 11 [100%]) LLG political office bearers interviewed, the HLGs have a tendency of giving instructions to LLGs without consultation. This negatively affects compliance with such instructions. One of the political office bearers highlights the complaints: “The higher local governments are fond of giving directives. They do not even consult us. For example they recently directed us to charge fees on passport forms but we had not been consulted...”<sup>134</sup> The question of HLGs’ failure to consult LLGs was confirmed by the sub county council meeting<sup>135</sup> attended by the researcher. The councillors complained that the district was giving instructions without consulting the sub county leaders. This was further corroborated by one of the focus group discussions held at LLG level. The members of the group composed of both politicians and officials complained that HLGs were not consulting LLGs but only giving orders/instructions. They argued that they were not ready implement such instructions<sup>136</sup>

With respect to the case of power enforcement in LGs, the study findings indicate that it is usually practiced through efforts to enforce disciplinary measures. The political executive usually recommends cases for disciplinary action to the CAO who in turn submits them to the DSC. However, the enforcement of disciplinary measures according to an overwhelming majority (18 of 19 [95%]) of HLLG officials interviewed, is associated with numerous challenges. It was reported that due to lack of legal guidance on rules and regulations

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<sup>133</sup> Interview, Kayanja Vincent, Mayor, Entebbe Municipality LG, 27 September 2013.

<sup>134</sup> Interview, Masereka Robert, Chairperson Nabweru Sub County LG, 18 September 2013

<sup>135</sup> Proceedings of a sub county LG council meeting for Kibatsi Sub County LG held at the sub county Headquarters, 23 October 2013.

<sup>136</sup> Proceedings of 6 member 1½ hour focus group discussion held at Nabweru Sub County LG 18 September 2013.

concerning employees, a number of disciplinary actions have been taken without following the prescribed procedure. This has resulted in a number of court litigations which the LG councils have lost. One of the official's observation illustrated the problems associated with the enforcement of disciplinary measures: "Recently we had a case where CAO was misled to suspend an officer. The CAO has now been advised to apologise to the officer to prevent the matter from being taken to court..."<sup>137</sup>

The findings imply that power has not been effectively exercised and its purpose of achieving obedience and improved staff conduct and performance has been limited. While the reporting hierarchy is defined in terms of who reports to whom, in many cases those who are supposed to report to the higher authority have either not reported or consistently reported late and in most cases no disciplinary action has been taken. In other cases, the supervision has been characterised by instructions without consultation which has affected compliance or obedience to such instructions. The exercising of the supervisory role has also been affected by limited powers particularly where the politicians have no powers to appraise technical officials on performance. Matters have not been improved by lack of legal guidance on exercising disciplinary powers. Such power relations have had negative implications on the LGs' efforts to effectively execute their monitoring role more especially where the relations have affected employee performance including performance of monitoring activities.

#### **6.5.6 Mechanisms for conflict resolution**

Mutual working relationships may be established, but are difficult to sustain due to conflicts. Even where one has the best intentions, conflicts inevitably arise. In an organisational setting, conflicts mainly occur among different function related departments. Employees from different function related areas are likely to have different backgrounds and perhaps values and working styles. Differences in goals, priorities, access to resources and approaches create more barriers for establishing mutual working relationships. Whether these conflicts are resolved effectively or instead lead to constant clashes and impaired working relationships depends on the conflict resolution mechanisms that are adopted (Hill 1996:3-4). With particular reference to intergovernmental organs, the focus of the study was on the nature of existing conflict and the mechanisms available to resolve such conflict.

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<sup>137</sup> Interview, Kariyo Apollo, Senior Asst. Engineering Officer, Ntungamo District, 10 October 2013.

The study has established that a major area of conflict between the technical officials and the political office bearers is over allocation of resources. In LGs, the internal allocation of funds to various departments is done by a budget committee—popularly known as the budget ‘desk’. The political office bearers are not represented on this committee. All (7 of 7[100%]) HLG political office bearers interviewed indicated that the budget committee was marginalising politicians in allocating resources. An observation made by one of the political office bearers reflects the situation: “These people [officials] on the budget desk do not think that we also need resources to do our work...We have now forcefully nominated one politician to be an ex-official on that budget desk to check them...”<sup>138</sup> Other common areas of conflict between the two parties include pay differences; monitoring goals and approaches; interpretation of the law; and procurement of service providers. The politicians are paid little compared to the technical officials. A sub county political office bearer deplored the pay differences thus: “I am getting 250.000 Uganda shillings. The sub county chief gets 600.000 Uganda shillings and yet I am the head of this local government.”<sup>139</sup> For monitoring goals and approaches, as earlier noted (see *supra* para 6.5.2), the two parties have conflicting monitoring goals and differing approaches to monitoring issues. For the interpretation of the law, their disagreements centre on the powers and roles of the two organs. Regarding procurement matters, although politicians have been accused of influence peddling on one hand, the politicians on the other hand believe that that the technical officials are exaggerating the cost of projects. All the 18 (100%) LG political office bearers interviewed stated that the officials were overvaluing projects. One of them observed that: “We play no role in the award of contracts. But our concern is that the technical officers are not transparent. They inflate the cost price of projects...”<sup>140</sup>

It was established that notwithstanding other areas of conflict such as goals, perceptions and approaches, access to resources was a major area of conflict between LGs and central government resident officials particularly RDC’s office personnel. The RDC’s office personnel argue that they should have unlimited access to LG resources. The majority (14 of 19[74%])

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<sup>138</sup> Interview, Ssentengo Helen, Secretary for Production, Wakiso District, 30 August 2013.

<sup>139</sup> Interview, Mukasa Kalisa, Chairperson, Kakiri Sub County LG, Wakiso District 12 September 2013.

<sup>140</sup> Interview, Kabandize Seperiano, Chairperson, Itojo Sub County, Ntungamo District, 21 October, 2013.

of the interviewed HLG officials, indicated that conflict between LGs personnel and RDC's office personnel mainly concern resources. One of the officials, illustrated the situation:

*Recently the RDC had a full tank of fuel but he insisted that he should be given fuel for a monitoring exercise since others had also got fuel. When I finally told him to take his vehicle to the pump for filling, he said he wanted cash. I said the law does not allow us to give cash for fuel, but my action was taken as insubordination.<sup>141</sup>*

The study ascertained that the higher and lower LGs come in conflict with one another over control of resources. The specific conflict concerns the sharing of revenue between the two levels of government. The overwhelming majority (10 of 11 [91%]) of the interviewed LLG political officer bearers and the majority (14 of 18[78%]) of LLG officials reported that the district LG allocates, to itself, a major part of their revenue. The interviewees revealed that this was creating misunderstandings between LLGs and the community over service delivery because community members were not aware that a major part of their revenue was being assigned to the district. An observation by one of the political office bearers illustrates the situation: "The district is taking much of our revenue. Last year for example, we collected 40million [UGX] but we ended up remaining with 9million [UGX]... and this creates problems between us and our people who do not know that we are giving out this money..."<sup>142</sup>

Concerning the existing conflict resolution mechanisms, the study proved that there are no established effective mechanisms to resolve conflict among the intergovernmental organs. According to all (26 of 26[100%]) HLG personnel interviewed, there are no regular meetings/ mediation/arbitration mechanisms to resolve conflict among the organs. The research confirmed that the available mechanisms were the annual retreats for the politicians, the technical officials and the RDC's office personnel where issues impacting on their working relationships are addressed. However, the study considered such retreats to be inadequate for resolving conflict among employees who interact often in the execution of their work. One of the respondents supported this position by observing that: "While such retreats provide avenue for us to openly discuss our differences, a year in the absence of regular conflict

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<sup>141</sup> Interview, Kagwire Robert, Deputy District Health Officer, Wakiso District, 28 August 2013.

<sup>142</sup> Interview, Masereka Robert, Chairperson, Nabweru Sub County LG, 18 September 2013.

resolution meetings in between, is too long to wait and yet conflicts emerge in our daily operations.”<sup>143</sup>

The absence of effective conflict resolution mechanisms among the intergovernmental organs has resulted in situations where unresolved conflict has grown to create a lack of co-operation, poor communication, loss of focus on tasks and goals, wastage of time and delay of operations and activities in the monitoring process. This consequently has had negative implications on LGs’ monitoring activities. One district official supports this view: “Conflicts waste our time and delay our work. For example the budget allocation to the departments was delayed because of politicians’ disagreements about the departmental representation on the budget desk and this has delayed many activities including monitoring you are talking about.”<sup>144</sup>

## **6.6 COLLABORATION BETWEEN LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS**

Collaboration between public sector and non-public sector, it was indicated in Chapter Three has come to play a critical role in delivering public goods and services. Development and service delivery projects have come to be seen as co-operative ventures whose success depends on effective collaboration among a wide range of stakeholders. Under decentralisation, through collaboration with civil society organisations (CSOs), LGs endeavour to gain from CSOs’ creativity, skills and knowledge to achieve enhanced effectiveness. Realising the expected benefits, however, depends on the effectiveness of the collaboration. The existing collaboration has implications for the success of LGs in monitoring of programmes. *Objective Five* of this study was to evaluate the existing collaboration between LGs and CSOs in view of its impact on LGs’ performance of their monitoring role in implementing decentralisation. The analytical themes that are critical in evaluating the existing collaboration are clarity of roles and responsibilities of the collaborating partners; existing co-ordination mechanisms; the existing managerial and technical capacities of LGs and CSOs to execute their obligations; the existing level of openness and mutual trust between the partners; and mechanisms for resolving conflict between the partners.

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<sup>143</sup> Interview, Kausumba Paddy, District Planner, Wakiso District, 15 August 2013.

<sup>144</sup> Interview, Tugaineyo Charles, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Wakiso District, 28 August 2013.



### 6.6.1 Clarity of roles and responsibilities of the collaborating parties

Effective collaborative relationship between LGs and CSOs require operating guidelines to establish the parameters within which LGs and CSOs should operate in the implementation and monitoring of programmes. This includes clarification of the roles and responsibilities of the collaborating partners to avoid duplication of effort and resources, conflict and lack of synergy. According to an overwhelming majority (35 of 37[95%]) of the interviewed LG officials and all (5 of 5 [100%]) CSO officials, there is a lack of clarified monitoring roles and responsibilities for CSOs and LGs as collaborative partners in the monitoring process. This has resulted in the adoption of non standardised and conflicting monitoring practices, procedures and approaches. For example, CSOs monitoring activities tend not cover the project outcome and impact to establish whether the projects have made changes in the welfare or standard of living of the beneficiaries. One of the officials described the CSO monitoring approach: “The civil society organisations are not bothered about project sustainability issues. Their monitoring stops at project outputs. They are not interested to know whether projects have made any long term improvement in peoples’ lives.”<sup>145</sup> With such an approach to monitoring, it is likely to make it difficult for LGs to establish the impact of such projects. A district official supported this position: “In cases where we receive their monitoring reports, they do not show the impact of the projects on beneficiaries and in such cases we cannot tell whether the projects have been successful...”<sup>146</sup>

Civil society organisations and LGs carry out their independent monitoring activities. However, according to all five (100%) CSO officials interviewed, because CSOs’ monitoring roles are not specified, there is a tendency for CSOs’ monitoring personnel to omit the LGs’ projects in their monitoring. Similarly, according to the majority (28 of 37[75%]) of the interviewed LG officials, the LGs’ monitoring teams also tend to omit CSOs’ projects in their monitoring activities. In such cases, their monitoring reports will omit the results of such projects as one of the LG officials observes: “Definitely where we leave out civil society organizations’ projects, we cannot tell what kind of results they have had. We only have to rely on their reports which rarely come our way.”<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> Interview, Lubulwa Michael, District Fisheries Officer, Wakiso District, 19 August 2013.

<sup>146</sup> Interview, Oyine Joseph, District Production Officer, Wakiso District, 20 August 2013.

<sup>147</sup> Interview, Oyine Joseph, District Production Officer, Wakiso District, 20 August 2013.



The findings of the study indicate that the resultant problems of lack of clarified roles and responsibilities between the CSOs and LGs have had negative effects on the effective monitoring of programmes in LGs. As the study revealed, the CSOs' monitoring reports do not specify project outcome and impact, while both partners tend to leave out each other's initiated projects outside their monitoring schedule. This implies that the monitoring efforts of the partners have not been effective and this in turn has not improved LGs' performance of their monitoring role in implementing decentralisation programmes.

### **6.6.2 Existing co-ordination mechanisms**

For co-ordination to be effective as indicated earlier, it requires an effective information sharing structure, consultative decision-making processes and task consensus. As for the co-ordination between LGs and CSOs in monitoring programmes, LGs at all levels are expected to have mechanisms to facilitate communication and consultation with the CSOs. They need to utilise the latter's accumulated experience and expertise in areas such as programme planning, implementation and monitoring. LGs are also expected to ensure that CSOs integrate their plans and budgets with the LGs' plans and budgets to ensure joint planning, monitoring and evaluation (OPM 2008:28-31).

The research has established that there is a lack of consultative planning of monitoring programmes. At the planning level, LGs are supposed to integrate the work plans of CSOs. However, according to all 19 (100%) HLG officials and five (100%) CSO officials interviewed, the existing practice is that each party plans its activities independent of the other which means that there is lack of joint planning. This was corroborated by the proceedings of the bi-annual district management committee meeting<sup>148</sup> attended by the researcher as a non participant observer. The meeting acknowledged that the integration of CSOs' work plans to LGs' work plans have remained a distant reality. The findings imply that it is difficult for the collaborating partners to ascertain each partner's planned activities, the targeted results and impact without joint planning.

The study findings show that there is lack of information sharing between LGs and CSOs. All five (100%) CSO officials and all 55 (100%) LG personnel interviewed, reported that lack of

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<sup>148</sup> Proceedings of Bi-Annual District Management Committee meeting held at Ntungamo District, 7 November 2013.

effective mechanisms for sharing monitoring findings between LGs and CSOs was a problem affecting their collaboration. It was revealed that there is no regular forum for discussing their respective findings and the two parties do not regularly exchange monitoring reports. The respondents reported that while the LGs expect the CSOs to provide them with copies of their monitoring reports, the LGs did not reciprocate. This discourages the CSOs. The second problem reported was that in cases where the CSOs submit their reports to the LGs, the LGs neither provide feedback, nor do they address the problems raised in the reports. This further discourages the CSOs. The following statements obtained from some of the CSO officials highlight the problem:

*Local governments want us to give them copies of our monitoring reports but for them they do not give us theirs. Even then, in some cases when we give them the monitoring reports, they do not give us feedback and they do not act on our recommendations.<sup>149</sup>*

*In a number of cases when we report to LGs, they do not respond. For example currently there is a maternal health project under implementation. There have been 21 pregnant mothers attending antenatal at Rukoni sub county health centre but they have stopped going there because there is no midwife and they do not want to be examined by a man. We have reported this matter but nothing has been done.<sup>150</sup>*

It could be deduced that there have been two major co-ordination problems—lack of consultative planning and lack of information sharing. The findings relate to Walera, Wamai and Wamais' findings (Walera, Wamai & Wamai 1997) which proved that there was lack of co-ordination between LGs and nongovernmental organisations characterised by reluctance to share information, absence of consultation processes and lack of defined reporting mechanisms. It is also evident that the study findings do not conform to the requirements of a focused collaborative relationship which as discussed in Chapter Five (see *supra* para 5.6.5) include, *inter alia*, joint planning and review of activities; consultation and open exchange of information and ideas; and mechanisms to facilitate the performance of shared tasks. With lack of consultative planning, lack of a forum for discussing the partners'

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<sup>149</sup> Interview, Ganshanga Anxious, Director Kyamate Child Development, Ntungamo District, 8 November 2013.

<sup>150</sup> Interview, Baherezibwa Edson, Manager, Red Cross Society, Ntungamo District branch, 8 November 2013.

monitoring findings, irregular and one sided provision of monitoring reports and lack of response from LGs to CSOs' reports, the monitoring findings of the collaborating partners seem not to have effectively informed the project implementation process in LGs. This in effect implies that the collaborative partnership's monitoring efforts have not improved LGs' performance of their monitoring role in implementing decentralisation programmes.

### **6.6.3 Existing capacity of LGs and CSOs to execute their obligations**

Effective implementation of collaborative partnerships requires availability of human resources with the requisite knowledge, technical skills and competence to plan and implement collaborative activities. Partnership outcomes depend on how the governments provide funds, enabling legal framework and training opportunities to CSOs. Training has an important role to play in assisting partnership actors to build capacity and become conversant with their obligations (Chandler 2004:5). Government recognises the existing inadequacies in the human resource base both in LGs and the CSOs to undertake partnership roles and responsibilities effectively. Accordingly, government is expected to strengthen the performance of LGs through adequate staffing and training, and is also expected to provide facilitation, training and support to the CSOs (OPM 2008:21).

Regarding training of LGs and CSOs as collaborating partners to enhance their capacity to understand their obligations and execute their roles and responsibilities effectively, the study established that the capacity building extended to LGs' personnel has been limited and less effective. But even then, according to all three (100%) LG officials in charge of capacity building in the LGs, while some LGs' personnel have had some training in a number of areas such as revenue mobilisation; finance and human resource management; and decentralisation especially its meaning, purpose and objectives, there has been no training on collaborative relationships. The study noted that even the generic training modules developed by the Ministry of Local Government do not include a module on collaborative relationship. For the CSOs, the situation is more complicated because, they have not accessed the training that has been extended to LGs' personnel. This seems to explain why even when it comes to issues such as reporting of findings, CSOs are unaware of what should be included in their reports. All the five (100%) CSO officials interviewed, stated that they were not conversant with the format for reporting monitoring information. One of the officials observed that:

*There is need for educating CSOs on the required form of reporting. We do not know exactly how we are supposed to write the monitoring reports for submission to local governments. It seems local governments want us to use what they call OBT reporting framework but we do not understand that kind of format.<sup>151</sup>*

The findings imply that both LGs and SCOs have not been equipped with the knowledge and skills to enhance their capacity to understand and fulfil their partnership obligations. That is the reason why LGs are not aware that they are obliged to submit copies of their monitoring reports to CSOs.<sup>152</sup> The CSO also seem not to consider providing work plans or monitoring reports to LGs to be an obligation. That is why in the majority of cases they do not submit reports. It is also the reason they are uncertain whether they should continue providing reports to LGs when the LGs are neither reciprocating nor responding to their reports. Besides, according to the majority (14 of 19 [74%]) of the interviewed HLG officials, CSOs tend to employ less qualified personnel. The officials revealed that whereas efforts are made by the district NGO board to assess the managerial capacity of CSO staff based on their CVs at registration, those who are listed as managers do not manage the organisations. Instead they employ less qualified officials who accept relatively low salaries and relatives who may not necessarily have managerial skills. In the absence an effective capacity building to enhance their skills, their competences to manage the CSOs and network with LGs effectively remain limited.

It was found that other than registration services, there is limited facilitation and support extended to CSOs by LGs. For example, according to all five (100%) CSO officials interviewed, councillors do not provide adequate support to CSOs in mobilising the community. One of the CSO manager's observation illustrated the lack of support from LGs: "Sometimes we request councillors to move with us in communities for mobilisation but they start asking about allowances, how long it will take and start creating excuses of having busy schedules ..."<sup>153</sup> However, according to the majority (13 of 18 [72%]) of the interviewed LG politicians, the problem is that instead of CSOs engaging the councillors in their activities in

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<sup>151</sup> Interview, Baherezibwa Edson, Manager, Red Cross Society, Ntungamo District branch, 8 November 2013.

<sup>152</sup> Interview, Oyine Joseph, District Production Officer, Wakiso District, 20 August 2013.

<sup>153</sup> Interview, Nabukalu Harriet, Supervisor, REACH-U Aids Programme, Wakiso District 20 January 2013.

time, they only engage them when they face difficulties. One of the politicians observed: “The civil society organisations do not involve the politicians in their projects early enough. They just run to them when they get problems with the communities or when there are accountability issues with funders...”<sup>154</sup> The findings in this case disagree with Kwagala (1998:122) who found that LGs councillors had an effective working relationship with CSOs and that they were very supportive of the SCOs in community mobilisation efforts.

In a situation where LGs and CSOs have not been effectively equipped with the requisite knowledge, skills and competence and where CSOs more especially have had ineffective support from LGs, it implies that both parties’ capacity to execute their roles is limited. As a result, their respective efforts in monitoring the decentralisation programmes have been less effective. This, in turn, implies that the partnership has not enhanced LGs’ performance in monitoring the implementation of the decentralisation policy programmes.

#### **6.6.4 Openness and mutual trust between the collaborating partners**

Trusting relationships are often considered as the foundation of collaboration. Paradoxically, they constitute both the lubricant and the glue that hold the collaboration together (Bryson, Crosby & Stone 2006:47-48). The effectiveness of collaborative partnership between government and CSOs *inter alia*, depends on the openness and mutual trust between LG officials and CSOs. In cases where the government has a trusting and positive attitude towards CSOs, there is potential for strong collaborative relationship (Lekorwe & Mpabanga 2007:6). According to the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM 2008:28), there is a need to promote effective collaborative relations between LGs and CSOs based on mutual trust and openness.

The results of the study indicate that the levels of trust and openness between LGs and CSOs are low. An overwhelming majority (52 of 55 [95%]) of the interviewed LGs’ personnel and all the five (100%) CSO officials stated that there are low levels of trust and openness between LGs and CSOs. It was revealed for example that CSOs suspect LGs as to why they are always interested in the CSOs’ detail of finances. Because of this suspicion, it was indicated, the CSOs are reluctant to provide such information. Yet, according to the LGs officials, they need the information for planning purposes. These findings support Kwagala’s

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<sup>154</sup> Interview, Ssentongo Helen, Secretary for Production, Wakiso District LG, 30 August 2013.

findings (Kwagala 1998:117) which reveal that CSOs were secretive about their budgets. Local governments in other cases suspect the CSOs' motives and openness about their operations. According to the proceedings of all the three focus groups discussions,<sup>155</sup> LGs suspect that, in their reporting, CSOs cover up their weakness and portray a positive picture of their activities. The CSO informants reported that there is also suspicion by LGs that the motive of some CSOs is political especially to support the opposition. An observation by one of the CSO officials illustrates this kind of suspicion and mistrust:

*We have tried to improve our relationship, but suspicion and mistrust still exist. LGs suspect CSOs of so many things. They even think that some CSOs are involved in underground politics. In many other incidents, they think we are always hiding the truth. For example we have been giving some financial contribution in form of monitoring allowances. We were giving them about Uganda shillings 150.000 each. This has reduced to Uganda Shillings 30.000 due to financial constraints. But they think we are not telling the truth, that our staff are enjoying the difference.<sup>156</sup>*

The existing suspicion and mistrust between local governments and civil society organisations as collaborating partners in monitoring programmes suggest that there has been a lack of open and sincere interchange of opinions and information between the two parties that would assist them to forge a common purpose in their activities. This has had negative implications on their efforts to effectively monitor programmes. Consequently, local governments' performance in executing their monitoring role in the decentralisation policy has not been improved by the collaboration.

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<sup>155</sup> 1½ hour focus group discussion composed of HLG and LLG personnel (7members) held at Wakiso District H/quarters, 12 September 2013; 1½ hour focus group discussion composed of LLG politicians & officials (6 members) held at Nabweru Sub County, 18 September 2013; 1¼ hour focus group discussion composed of LLG politicians & officials (5members) held at Nansana Town Council, 5 September 2013.

<sup>156</sup> Interview, Nabukalu Harriet, Supervisor, REACH-U Aids Programme, Wakiso District, 20 January 2014.

### 6.6.5 Mechanisms for resolving conflict between the collaborating partners

Conflict in collaboration emerges from differing aims and expectations that partners bring to collaboration, from different strategies, tactics, methods of work and from power struggle to control the collaboration's work or outcomes. In implementing a collaborative partnership, there are power issues that revolve around influence and action authorisation (Bryson, Crosby & Stone 2006:48). When the partners occupy different role and power positions, it can create an unequal power balance that may lead the more powerful to dictate to the less powerful (Burt 1992: 67). Other conflicts occur regarding resource contribution, time devoted to the collaboration and threats of withdrawal (Agranoff 2006:61). Because conflict is common in collaborative partnerships, there is a need to resolve it effectively (Bryson, Crosby & Stone 2006:49). The focus of the study was on the nature of conflict between LGs and CSOs and the existing mechanisms to resolve it.

The study reveals that one source of conflict between CSOs and LGs is that some CSOs consider themselves more powerful than the LGs. The majority (14 of 19 [74%]) of the interviewed HLG officials reported that civil society organisations tend to argue that they are treated as less powerful partners and yet they make a major contribution to service delivery. It was argued that they complain that they are not given the attention and respect they deserve. All five (100%) CSO officials interviewed reported that LGs tend to dictate matters over them. One of the civil society organisation officials captured the situation thus: "local governments are fond of giving us instructions as if we are their employees not partners..."<sup>157</sup>

An area of conflict between LGs and CSOs has been over contribution of resources for monitoring programmes. When the SCOs involve LGs in monitoring activities, they provide them with field monitoring allowances in the form of cash. This however creates problems. According to all (5 of 5[100%]) CSO officials interviewed, in cases when the CSOs reduce the allowance rates mainly due to budget constraints, the LG personnel complain and sometimes reject the new rates. It was also stated that different CSOs pay different allowance rates. Because of this, those CSOs which pay lower rates are required to explain why their rates are lower than others. This has created persistent conflict between the two parties.

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<sup>157</sup> Interview, Baherezibwa Edson, Manager Red Cross Society, Ntungamo branch, 8 November 2013.



It was found that different methods of work have been an area of conflict between the collaborating partners. There are many aspects of differing work methods employed by the partners. All the five (100%) CSO officials interviewed complained of the long processes in the LGs' hierarchy for decision-making. The officials also complained that LGs personnel, because of their style of time management, were not effective in conducting joint field monitoring exercises with members of CSOs. For example, one of the CSO officials observed that: "When we have joint monitoring activities, the local governments' representatives [employees] do not come in time and will always want to leave before the completion of the exercises..."<sup>158</sup> On the part of LGs, all 19 (100%) HLG officials interviewed indicated that the problem was that CSOs want the civil servants to work outside the official timeframe within which they are supposed to dispense public duties. Another problem noted was that CSOs activities are based on calendar year while LGs' activities are based on a financial year. This, according to the respondents, makes the two partners' timeframes for monitoring different. It was stated that when LGs demand quarterly monitoring reports, the CSOs argue that their quarter has not started. The study also established that the question of reporting procedure on the part of CSOs was a problem. All seven (100%) HLG politicians interviewed reported that they expect CSOs to report to them directly. One of the politicians commented: "I never see them at my office. I never see their reports on my desk..."<sup>159</sup> However, according to an overwhelming majority (4 of 5 [80%]) of the interviewed CSOs, the CSOs imagine that if the CSO co-ordinator at the district and the sub county personnel are aware of their operations, they should report to their LG leaders at the district. One of the SCO officials illustrated the existing situation by observing that:

*We usually give information about our activities to the LG focal person at the district. We also involve staff at sub county level in our activities. We expect these people to inform their bosses but the bosses are always complaining. When you meet the chairperson, she or he will tell you the district is not aware what your organisation is doing.*<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> Interview, Nabukalu Harriet, Supervisor, REACH-U Aids Programme, Wakiso District, 20 January 2014.

<sup>159</sup> Interview, Atuhaire Edison, Secretary for Works, Ntungamo District LG, 11 October 2013

<sup>160</sup> Interview, Ganshanga Anxious, Director, Kyamate Child Development, Ntungamo District, 8 November 2013.



Regarding the existing mechanisms to resolve conflict, the study found that there are no effective mechanisms to resolve conflict between the collaborating partners. However, according to all (7 of 7[100%] HLG political office bearers and all the 19 (100%) HLG officials, there have been efforts by the office of the RDC to resolve conflict between local governments and civil society organisations. It was also reported that sometimes the district NGO Board has intervened. However, in both situations according to the interviewees, the efforts made have not been effective in resolving the conflicts which continue to affect service delivery. Acknowledging the need for effective conflict resolution mechanisms in order to improve services, one senior district official observed that: "In order to resolve most of these misunderstandings with civil society organisations, on our part, as local government, we need to work hand-in-hand with politicians and engage the civil society organisations in regular dialogue if our efforts are to improve service delivery."<sup>161</sup>

What the study findings establish is that in the absence of effective mechanisms to resolve conflict between local governments and civil society organisations as collaborative partners in implementing and monitoring programmes, the persistent conflict weakens or destroys the spirit of partnership. It increases tension between the partners, disrupts normal channels of co-operation, blocks lines of communication and prevents the partners from focusing on tasks and goals in their monitoring efforts. This consequently does not improve local governments' performance in execution of their monitoring role in implementing decentralisation programmes.

## **6.7 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has demonstrated the extent to which local governments have executed their monitoring role in implementing the decentralisation policy. The chapter provides empirical evidence of how local governments perform their monitoring role. It has argued that while LGs have made considerable efforts to design a monitoring system and prepare and execute monitoring/work plans to guide the monitoring process, their effectiveness and efficiency have been limited. The findings presented and discussed in the chapter reveal that a number of institutional factors have greatly influenced the effectiveness and efficiency of LGs'

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<sup>161</sup> Comments made by Adong Roselyn, Chief Administrative Officer, Ntungamo District in a Bi-Annual District Management Committee Meeting held at Ntungamo District, 7 November 2013.

performance of their monitoring role in the implementation of the decentralisation policy. These include LGs' degree of autonomy in exercising the decentralised powers; the nature of the capacity building extended to LGs; the working relationship among the intergovernmental organs involved in the monitoring process; and the nature of the existing collaboration between LGs and CSOs.

The research reveals that while theoretically, the decentralisation policy assigns political, administrative and fiscal powers to local governments, in practice, the degree of autonomy in exercising these powers has been limited. This has negatively impacted on the effectiveness and efficiency of LGs in the performance of their monitoring role. The capacity building in LGs which was found to be ineffective in enhancing the monitoring knowledge, skills and competences of LGs has limited the effectiveness and efficiency of LGs' execution of their monitoring role. The working relationship among the intergovernmental organs which has been characterised by lack of clarified roles and responsibilities lack of harmonised goals, absence of effective co-ordination mechanisms, ineffective power relations, lack of mutual trust and respect and lack of effective mechanisms for conflict resolution has had negative effects on LGs' performance of the monitoring function. Similarly, in the collaborative partnership between LGs and CSOs, there was a lack of specified roles and responsibilities; lack of co-ordination mechanisms; inadequate managerial and technical capacities for both partners; low levels of openness and mutual trust; and lack of effective mechanisms to resolve conflict between the partners. These have affected the partnership's effectiveness to improve LGs' monitoring of programmes in the implementation of decentralisation policy.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 7.1 INTRODUCTION

The research problem of this study was that whereas the decentralisation policy framework in Uganda mandates LGs to monitor the implementation of the policy programmes to ensure that they are efficiently and effectively implemented, various reports, including press reports continue to indicate that the programmes were not being implemented efficiently and effectively. The reports castigated local governments for failing to execute their monitoring role. This, according to the reports was responsible for the poor implementation of the decentralisation programmes. While the reports consistently condemned local governments' inefficiency and ineffectiveness in performing their monitoring role, there was hardly any examination of local governments' performance of their role in view of the institutional factors that have a bearing on local governments' performance. The study was based on the argument that local governments cannot be simply criticised for poor performance in executing their monitoring role without assessing their performance in light of the institutional factors that have an influence on their performance.

The purpose of the study was to examine the monitoring role of local governments in view of the institutional factors that impact on LGs' performance of this role. The study focused on:

- the local governments' performance in execution of their monitoring role;
- the degree of local governments' autonomy in exercising decentralised powers;
- the capacity building extended to local governments;
- the working relationship among the intergovernmental organs involved in monitoring the decentralisation programmes; and
- the collaborative partnership between local governments and civil society organisations.

These five aspects constituted the **specific objectives** of the study and also formed the **analytical themes** upon which the study was carried out.

## 7.2. CHAPTER SUMMARIES

Each chapter in this thesis has contributed to the achievement of the purpose and objectives of the study. Chapter One introduces the study; Chapter Two provides the methodology for the study, Chapter Three provides the theoretical exposition of policy monitoring in public administration; Chapter Four constitutes the international perspectives of the study; Chapter Five contains the existing LG structural system in Uganda in which monitoring of the decentralisation programmes is executed; and Chapter Six presents the analysis and interpretation of findings. The summaries of each chapter are provided below

**Chapter One** presents the background to the study and provides the rationale for the study in the field of public administration. It then articulated the motivation of the study, the research problem and the objectives of the study. It discusses the significance of the study as well as the theoretical and conceptual framework upon which the study has been based. Lastly the chapter clarifies key concepts that were used in the study.

**Chapter Two** focuses on discussing and justifying the selection of the most appropriate methodological approach, research paradigm, conceptual model and research design for the study. Furthermore, the chapter presents the justification for the selection of the area of study, the study population, the sample and the unit of analysis. This is followed by a discussion of the methods of data collection; data collection plan; data collection themes; and data analysis and interpretation procedures.

The methodological approaches discussed include qualitative and quantitative approaches. The mixed methods approach is also identified. The research paradigms that were examined include positivism and interpretivism. The conceptual models discussed are the descriptive conceptual model; explanatory model; predictive model; and exploratory conceptual model. Based on their strengths and appropriateness, the study adopted the qualitative approach, the interpretivist research paradigm and the exploratory conceptual model.

Regarding the research design, there is a discussion of various designs. These include survey research design; experimental research design; action research design; historical design; ethnographical design; and case study design. On the basis of its strengths and applicability to the study, the study adopted a case study research design.

Concerning the area of study, based on their unique characteristics, Wakiso and Ntungamo districts were selected as the study area. The study population includes LGs political and civil service organs involved in monitoring of programmes and CSO officials. With respect to the study sample, the sample selection was made using both purposive and random sampling methods. In total, 69 respondents were interviewed. As for the unit of analysis, local government entities were used for the study as the unit of analysis.

The appropriate data collection methods that were used for the research include a qualitative interview method, direct observation and documentary analysis. The study employed the qualitative interview method both at individual and collective level. At individual level, in-depth individual interviews were employed, while at collective level, a number of focus group interviews were conducted.

The data collection plan involved first obtaining information on the structure and functioning of the selected LG entities and categorising the population elements within the LGs, those from central government and then the nongovernmental sector players involved in the monitoring process. The data was categorised and coded under the key data collection themes in line with the study objectives to facilitate the analysis and interpretation of the data and findings.

**Chapter Three** reviews the theoretical foundations of public administration both as an activity (public administration) and discipline (Public Administration) and explains how it relates to policy making process. It examines the evolution of (P) public (A) administration and its orientation over the years and discusses the critical aspects of the evolution and transformation which have had implications/impact on the public policy making process in general and policy implementation monitoring in particular.

In examining the evolution, the chapter notes that administration as an activity is as old as humankind. It reveals that there is evidence that orderly communities existed thousands of years before Christ. It shows that Public Administration (as a discipline) originated as a result of a need for people who had the capabilities to carry out the activity of public administration efficiently and effectively. It is argued that while initially much was not expected from government in terms of service delivery, the functions of government gradually increased as

society expected more services. This created the need for devising policies that could effectively deliver services.

The chapter explains that (P) public (A) administration as a discipline and activity has passed through a number of stages with numerous developments and transformations. The main notable stages include the politics/administration dichotomy; the principles of administrative approach or the scientific management school, the human relations movement; the behavioural science movement; the new public administration, the new public management movement and the post new public management where the new public service model and the current digital era governance approaches were identified. The chapter provides a discussion of the critical aspects of each stage which have had impact/implications on the public policy making process in general and monitoring policy implementation in particular.

Moving from the evolution, the chapter defines the concept of public administration both as an activity (public administration) and a discipline (Public Administration). The chapter then comments on the differences of opinion about public administration and public management without engaging in the debate as to which concept is more important than the other or whether the two should be separate disciplines. It only acknowledges that management cannot take place if the outputs (results) of public administration do not enable those in managerial positions (officials) to manage. Before public managers can accomplish their managerial functions, they must have a policy spelling out the objectives of the institution concerned.

The chapter invokes the generic administrative functions. It articulates the generic administrative activities (policy making, financing, organising, personnel provision and utilisation, the determination of work procedure and methods of control). The emphasis however, has been on the *policy making* function under which policy implementation and monitoring phase as a major focus of the study is embodied. The chapter discusses the approaches and challenges of policy implementation; and the role of monitoring in policy implementation. It points out the importance of a policy monitoring system, the approaches for designing a monitoring system, the design of indicators, the tools and methods for monitoring and the establishment of mechanisms for reporting data as critical issues that need to be addressed in order to ensure effective monitoring of policy implementation. In

addition, the chapter discusses features of a good monitoring system; how to institutionalise the monitoring function; and a number of monitoring challenges.

The chapter concludes by locating the study themes of decentralised power; working relationships; capacity building; and collaboration in the field of public administration. It notes that in public administration, government institutions act on more than one level with territorially tiers at national, sub national and local level. In order to attain higher levels of efficiency in public service delivery, governments decentralise their powers by transferring some of their functions downwards along the geographical scale. The chapter explains the concept of working relationship and the need for healthy working relationship. It defines capacity building and underscores its importance in public administration. For collaboration, it was explained that collaboration in public sector has come to play a critical role in delivering public goods.

**Chapter Four** discusses the role of LGs in implementing decentralisation policy reforms from an international perspective. The chapter posits that LGs in several countries have come to play an important role in the implementation of decentralisation policy. One such role is monitoring the implementation of the decentralisation process. It is noted that many national constitutions and other national laws on sub national or regional and LGs' autonomy have mandated LGs to implement and monitor the implementation of decentralisation programmes to ensure that they are efficiently and effectively implemented. The chapter broadly contextualises the role of LGs in decentralisation by examining the rationale of the LGs' role in decentralisation reforms and the scope of this role with a focus on the monitoring role. It then, examines the efforts made by LGs to monitor the implementation of the programmes and the factors that influence the performance of their monitoring role. The research drew experiences mainly from Asian, African and Latin American developing countries. The essence of drawing the experiences from the developing countries was that, though there are varying contextual factors specific to particular countries and their experiences, the foundations of the political and social-economic paradigms of developing countries are fundamentally alike. Experiences were also drawn from some developed countries to provide a picture of the best practices.

Regarding the rationale for LGs' role in decentralisation reforms, the chapter notes that the prime reasons for assigning of LGs a crucial role in decentralisation vary. Some countries

emerging from dictatorships are seeking to disperse power. Others are reducing the size of the central government as part of a transition to a market economy. Many others seek to increase public involvement in decision-making. Where some are responding to donor pressures, others are hoping that the poor performance of the national government can be overcome by allowing LGs to provide fundamental local public services.

For the scope of LGs' monitoring role, the chapter posits that national constitutions and legislation on decentralisation and LGs in developing and developed countries, define the structures, the powers and the scope of LGs' roles and responsibilities in the implementation of decentralisation reforms. The numerous areas of responsibilities assigned to LGs under decentralisation in the developing and developed economies provide the parameters for the scope of LGs' monitoring role in implementing the decentralisation policy. It was noted that it is in these sector areas of responsibility that LGs are supposed to monitor the designed policy development and service delivery programmes to ensure that they are efficiently and effectively implemented. The chapter argues that the challenge is whether local governments have the resources required to effectively and efficiently execute such extensive role.

As for LGs' efforts to monitor the implementation of decentralisation, the chapter notes that LGs in various nations have made numerous efforts to execute their monitoring role in implementing decentralisation policy. Such efforts include designing monitoring systems, developing capacity for monitoring programmes, collaborating with the nongovernmental sector and engaging the community in monitoring programmes. In discussing these efforts, the chapter drew examples from various countries to buttress the discussion. The study established that while considerable efforts have been made by LGs in various countries to execute their monitoring roles in implementing decentralisation programmes, in practice, more especially in developing countries, not much has been achieved in terms of efficiency and effectiveness. Relating the discussion to the Ugandan context, it was deduced that while there are varying contextual factors peculiar to particular countries and their experiences, the efforts made by LGs in Uganda to monitor the implementation of decentralisation programmes reflect those made by other LGs especially in the developing countries. It was also established that LGs in the developed countries have made comparatively more effort and progress in executing their roles in monitoring the implementation of the decentralisation programmes. The chapter argues that the main secret that can provide lessons for the developing countries in general and Uganda in particular seems to lie in greater commitment and political will of national governments to deploy the decentralisation policy; relatively more availability of financial and



human resources; application of advanced technology and information management facilities; existence of relatively more enlightened and educated citizens; and a relatively stable and better organised nongovernmental sector in the developed countries.

Concerning the factors influencing LGs' performance in monitoring decentralisation programmes, the chapter indicates that experience based on LGs' efforts to monitor the programmes across countries, shows that a number of factors influence the performance of LGs. While their scope and magnitude differ from country to country in the developed and developing countries, such factors tend to include the autonomy of LGs in exercising decentralised powers, the levels of capacity development in LGs, the working relations among intergovernmental organs, the degree of community participation in the monitoring process and the effectiveness of collaboration between LGs and CSOs. In discussing these factors, the chapter uses examples from various countries to support the discussion. Referring to the Ugandan situation, it is argued that while their scope, magnitude and impact vary from country to country, the factors that influence the performance of LGs in monitoring decentralisation programmes in Uganda appear to be more or less the same as those affecting LGs in other countries more especially the developing countries.

In conclusion, the chapter notes that while the rationale behind assigning LGs a crucial role in the implementation of decentralisation policy reforms is based on expected benefits such as greater efficiency, effectiveness and accountability, experience shows that, notwithstanding some progress made, the realisation of these benefits have largely remained a distant reality especially in developing countries. It is noted that LGs have made numerous efforts to execute their roles. However, it is argued that while there are a number of cases where tangible progress has been made in developed countries, and fewer in developing countries, much more needs to be done, especially in the developing countries. It is observed that whereas LGs in developed countries have made more progress in monitoring decentralisation policy which provides some lessons for developing countries, more attention is needed in all countries to address the factors that negatively impact on the performance of LGs if LGs are to effectively execute their role. The chapter argues, however, that for the developing countries, an extra effort will need to be made to address issues of governance; resource allocation; the commitment of national leaders to relinquish power to LGs; and the empowerment and participation of citizen in policy matters.

**Chapter Five** focuses on local government system and decentralisation policy reforms in Uganda. The chapter notes that as local governments continue to play a major role in the implementation of decentralisation reforms across nations, the local government system in Uganda through which LGs operate has been designed to enable the LGs to implement the decentralisation policy programmes. The chapter provides a historical overview of the LG system; describes the current LG system and structures; explains the objectives and principles of decentralisation in Uganda; and analyses the purpose of monitoring the implementation of decentralisation. The chapter further reviews the institutional and policy framework for the implementation of decentralisation.

The chapter posits that, during colonialism, the local government system that evolved was meant to serve the interests of colonialists. It was a control mechanism to facilitate exploitation of resources. Local governments were responsible for maintaining public order and could only provide a few services. It is argued that while there had been some attempts to decentralise in the post-colonial period, it was the National Resistance Movement which took over power in 1986 that began the current decentralisation policy reforms that gave various powers to local governments. These powers, were later enshrined in the Uganda Constitution, 1995, and were operationalised by the Local Governments Act, 1997. The chapter presents the current structure of the LG system in Uganda as provided by the Constitution and the Act.

A number of decentralisation objectives which focus on transferring political, administrative and fiscal powers to local governments to promote, *inter alia*, effectiveness, efficiency, ownership of programmes and provision of local conditions tailored services are presented. As to what extent the objectives have been realised, it is noted that this could be ascertained through the empirical findings which the study provides in the subsequent chapter. A review of decentralisation principles is presented, followed by a discussion of a number of decentralisation assumptions such as existing capacity of LGs to manage devolved functions; greater citizen participation; improved decision making processes and enhanced local financing. It is observed that whereas the assumptions may sound impressive, the decentralisation process appears to have been dominated by issues such as inadequate capacities, less citizen participation in decision-making and LGs' lack of flexibility in decision making which together have implications for LGs' execution of their monitoring role. The

chapter indicates that gaining a deeper understanding of such issues and their implications requires an empirical assessment undertaken by the study.

It is noted that the prime purpose of monitoring the decentralisation programmes is to ensure effective and efficient implementation of the programmes. However, it is argued that reports continue to indicate that there are inefficiency and ineffectiveness issues in the implementation of the programmes. It is observed that in order to gain greater insight and understanding of such issues and the factors contributing to their occurrence, it was necessary to carry out an intensive investigation which provides empirical findings on such issues.

The chapter examines the decentralisation policy framework that defines the powers and scope of LGs responsibilities, the LGs and central government organs involved in the decentralisation process and their responsibilities, the role of the nongovernmental sector, the envisaged monitoring system and planning in LGs and the capacity building for LGs. It is illustrated that whereas the policy framework defines the powers of LGs, the degree of autonomy in exercising these powers has been an issue of debate and this has implications for LGs' performance of their monitoring role. For the organs involved in the monitoring process, the chapter argues that there are gaps in empirical research and literature regarding the extent to which the various organs have effectively and efficiently executed their responsibilities; the kind of working relationship between the political and civil service organs on one hand and between the higher and the lower LGs on the other hand. There are also gaps regarding the impact of such relationship on LGs' performance of their monitoring function. For the envisaged monitoring system and monitoring planning, the chapter indicates that there are concerns about levels of efficiency and effectiveness of the LG monitoring system and the monitoring planning process. The chapter discusses the essence of the institutional capacity building in local governments. It is then argued that while capacity building has been going on over a period of time, no effort has been made to assess its effectiveness in enhancing the capacities of LGs to effectively execute their monitoring role. It is noted that while CSOs have been widely involved in monitoring of programmes in line with the decentralisation framework, there has not been a detailed assessment of their partnership and its implications on LGs' performance of their monitoring role.

The review of the existing literature on the LG system and structures where the monitoring of decentralisation programmes is executed provides the entry point for the study. It is indicated that the review brought to the fore the existing gaps in empirical research on the LGs efficiency and effectiveness in executing their monitoring role and the factors influencing their performance. The chapter observes that most of the available literature about the monitoring role of local governments is theoretical especially regarding issues of local governments' powers; the expected roles and responsibilities of the various players in the monitoring process; the monitoring system and monitoring planning process in local governments; and the capacity building for local governments. It is argued that, the study, therefore, was intended to provide empirical findings on these issues. Where the review revealed reported issues of inefficiency and ineffectiveness particularly regarding local governments' realisation of the monitoring purpose, the study aimed at providing greater insight and understanding of the issues through an intensive-in-depth assessment.

**Chapter Six** contains the analysis and interpretation of study findings. The purpose of this study has been to examine the monitoring role of local governments in implementing the decentralisation policy in Uganda in view of the institutional factors that influence the local governments' performance of this function. The study has focused on assessing the performance of local governments; and the impact of the degree of local governments' autonomy, the capacity building extended to local governments, the working relationships among intergovernmental organs and the collaboration between local governments and civil society organisations on local governments' performance. Data collection and analysis were based on arrangement of key themes in line with the five specific objectives. The key themes are local governments' performance in their monitoring role; the local governments' degree of autonomy in exercising decentralised powers; the capacity building extended to local governments; the working relationships among intergovernmental organs; and the collaboration between local governments and civil society organisations in the monitoring process. The analysis and interpretation of study findings in this chapter were in line with these key themes.

### **7.3 MAJOR FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

As emphasised in the introduction of this chapter, the research problem addressed was that because LGs are mandated to monitor the implementation of decentralisation to ensure that the policy is effectively and efficiently implemented, the inefficiencies and ineffectiveness in the implementation process were being attributed to LGs failure to execute their role effectively. However, while LGs were being criticised for failing to execute their role, there was hardly any examination of LGs' performance of their role in view of the institutional factors that influence their performance. Given the situation, the monitoring role of LGs was examined in view of the institutional factors that impact on LGs' performance of this role. The findings which are summarised below provide evidence of the extent to which LGs have performed their role and the extent to which the institutional factors have influenced the performance of LGs. The major findings and conclusions follow the findings obtained in line with the specific objectives of the study under five key areas: LGs' performance in the execution of their monitoring role; the degree of LGs' autonomy in exercising decentralised powers; the capacity building extended to LG; the working relationship among the intergovernmental organs involved in monitoring the decentralisation programmes; and the collaborative partnership between LGs and CSOs. What follows is a discussion of the major findings and conclusions drawn from the study.

#### **7.3.1 Local governments' performance in execution of their monitoring role**

It was established that despite the LGs' efforts to design a monitoring system and prepare and implement monitoring plans to guide the monitoring process, their efficiency and effectiveness have been limited. The deficiencies and or weaknesses of their monitoring system are found to be related to the existing data management mechanisms in terms of organs for data collection, tools for recording monitoring data, organs for data analysis, information dissemination mechanisms, data storage mechanisms and the linkage of the monitoring system to the national integrated monitoring system. Despite the contribution made, the organs for collecting monitoring data were found to be ineffective as they faced challenges ranging from limited competence in understanding monitoring issues and in how to use data collection methods, exacerbated by a lack of integrated approach, a lack of information and experience sharing, inadequate facilitation and a failure to conduct comprehensive monitoring activities. Lack of standard monitoring tools to guide the monitors in collecting monitoring data leads to a lack of common position on which monitoring issues

should be their concern. It was found that there are no organs to carry out monitoring data analysis which makes it difficult for LGs to establish the project results and the overall performance levels of implemented projects. Despite the efforts made to disseminate findings to stakeholders in a number of ways, these ways have not been effective. The data storage mechanisms were also found to be unsatisfactory, with poor filing system and lack of central data storage. Notwithstanding some efforts made, the monitoring system is not yet effectively linked to the central government.

With regard to the preparation and execution of the monitoring plans, the focus has been on the key elements of defining project areas to be monitored; selection of performance indicators; definition of monitoring data collection methods; reporting and feedback mechanisms; and the allocation of required resources. The study established that despite the LGs' efforts to address the elements, their efficiency and effectiveness have been limited. The study proved that LGs have endeavored to define and monitor a number of key project aspects including project schedule monitoring; cost/budget performance monitoring; input-output performance monitoring; project quality monitoring; process monitoring; and outcome and impact monitoring. It was found that LGs monitoring/work plans indicate planned activities, tasks and the time frame for the completion of activities. However, the reporting on the progress is not in tandem with the specific planned activities. Despite the efforts to track project expenditures under budget monitoring, funds have been spent when the work done does not justify the expenditure. Budget performance monitoring is also affected by absence of pre-payment audits to detect anomalies before payments are made. While in the majority of cases, LGs' work plans show the planned project inputs and expected outputs, the monitors are not guided by the plans in conducting monitoring. For project quality, it was found that although monitoring teams use the bill of quantities (BOQs) to guide them on quality issues, the teams have limited competence in understanding issues in the BOQs. Although attempts have been made to monitor LGs' compliance with rules and regulations governing financial management, procurement and contract managements under process monitoring, there are numerous challenges. The procurement function has been affected by political interference. Whereas under contract management, LGs withhold 10% retention payment for contractors who produce poor quality work, the 10% is less than that which is required to complete the uncompleted works or to compensate for the losses resulting from poorly executed projects.

Concerning monitoring indicators, it was found in the overwhelming majority of LG work plans the indicators for the key aspects of the projects such as input, output and outcome or impact are not defined. Where attempts have been made, the indicators are not clear and cannot be used to assess the progress of projects. It was learnt that whereas in the majority of LGs monitoring/work plans the methods for the collection of data are not specified, in practice, methods such as observation, interviews and questionnaires have been used. However, the monitors lack the necessary competence to effectively use these methods. It was also found that, despite the efforts made to report monitoring findings and provide feedback to the project implementers, the recommendations do not have recommendation implementation tracking plans. While for allocation of monitoring resources, all LGs' work plans had earmarked funds for monitoring, in all cases, the allocated funds are deemed inappropriate.

One major conclusion that can be drawn from the findings on LGs' efforts to execute their monitoring role is that with limited technical knowledge and competence in understanding project monitoring issues especially key issues such as monitoring indicators, data collection methods, project log frames, project results and impact among the LG political office bearers and technical officials, LGs cannot effectively execute their monitoring role in implementing decentralisation. Another conclusion is that, without an effective monitoring system and a well designed and effectively executed monitoring plan, no programme can be successfully monitored. An additional related conclusion is that establishment of an effective monitoring system and the design and implementation of an effective monitoring plan require technically competent human and financial resources.

### **7.3.2 The degree of local governments' autonomy**

In assessing the degree of autonomy, the study has focused on the political, administrative and fiscal powers. Regarding political autonomy, areas of relevancy which were employed as analytical constructs were decision-making on matters of local political governance including LGs' autonomy to elect their local leaders, avenues for citizens to hold LGs to account; and LGs' determination of their own development priorities. The study established that LGs regularly elect their local political leaders and that political parties are allowed to sponsor candidates to compete for elective positions. However, it was noted that there is a tendency for the ruling party to frustrate LGs whose leaders belong to the opposition parties. This impacts negatively on the performance of such LGs in monitoring programmes. For

citizens demanding accountability, it was confirmed that efforts have been made to provide some platforms such as community review meetings and *barazas* (public accountability forums) for citizens to demand accountability. These avenues, however, have been evidently less effective. For LGs' determination of their development priorities, LGs' autonomy is limited as they have to set priorities within the central government guidelines. The monitoring of projects which are not in line with the guidelines has, as is evident been negatively affected.

For administrative autonomy, powers to recruit and manage human resources including remuneration matters and powers to appoint LG statutory bodies were used as the analytical constructs to assess the administrative autonomy of LGs. It was established that the top civil servants who are appointed by the central government tend to pay allegiance to the centre. As for other civil servants, although the DSC is responsible for recruitment, LGs have to first obtain permission from the central government to fill any human resource gaps. Because of this, there were many vacant positions especially in planning units which cannot be filled due to lack of approval. It was discovered that the determination of salary scales and control of the payroll are under the central government. With problems ranging from late payments to the omitting of staff names on the payroll, the central government-controlled pay role has had negative implications on LGs' monitoring activities. It was evident that, though members of the statutory bodies such as District Service Commission (DSC) are appointed by LGs, they have to be approved by the central government which may reject some nominated members. On many occasions, LGs have not recruited because of the absence of an approved district service commission.

The areas of focus concerning the fiscal autonomy were based on a number of fiscal autonomy principles. These include LGs' autonomy in determining expenditure areas; autonomy in mobilisation of LGs' own revenue; fairness in revenue sharing between central and LGs; revenue simplicity; and revenue equity. It was established that even for projects which are within in the central government priority guidelines, LGs have no autonomy to determine areas of expenditure. The central government determines how much should spent on particular items. Even for locally generated revenue, central government influences LGs on how to spend it. All this has negatively impacted on LGs monitoring activities. For the mobilisation of their own revenue, LGs' efforts are constrained by limited powers assigned to them. Because of this limitation, LGs have not benefited from big investors who would have



paid tax as attempts to tax them are usually rejected by the central government. It was noted that there is also interference from the central government that prohibits LGs from collecting particular revenues. The situation is thwarted by the limited powers of enforcement which affects tax compliance. These limitations have adversely affected the amount of locally generated revenue which, in turn, has had negative effects on LGs' monitoring activities.

The study revealed that there is unfair sharing of national resources between central and local governments. The current LGs percentage share (17%) of the national budget was found to be unrealistic and not based on fair costing of service delivery responsibilities that have been assigned to LGs. Without additional funding, the central government has continued to decentralise a number of services. It was learnt that the unfair revenue sharing has crippled and continues to cripple service delivery programmes in LGs. For transparency in revenue sharing, attempts are made to communicate the expected budget figures to stakeholders. However, unexpected budget cuts and late release of the funds have been major challenges which have had negative consequences on planning and implementation of monitoring activities. In line with the principle of revenue equity, it was established that central government provides equalisation grants based on the degree to which a specific LG is lagging behind the national standards for particular services. However, the grants have not been sufficient to improve services in such districts to the level of others.

A number of conclusions can be drawn from the findings on the degree of local governments' autonomy. A major conclusion is that the theoretical decentralisation of political, administrative and fiscal powers to LGs when, in practice, the LGs do not have substantial authority to make key decisions on recruitment and management of human resources, taxation, expenditure and investment based on their needs, problems and priorities, cannot enable LGs to effectively execute their assigned roles and responsibilities under the decentralisation policy. Another conclusion is that decentralising roles and responsibilities to LGs without establishing viable sources of locally generated revenue makes it difficult for LGs to effectively and efficiently execute their decentralised roles and responsibilities. A related conclusion is that in the absence of a fair sharing of national revenue between central government and LGs (where the central government unrealistically takes the majority share) to compensate for the lack of locally generated revenue, the achievement of decentralisation goals and objectives remains a distant reality.

### 7.3.3 Capacity building extended to local governments

Areas that were used as analytical constructs in assessing the capacity building include capacity building needs assessment procedures, capabilities of the providers, comprehensiveness of capacity building, attendance and frequency of the capacity building training programmes, accessibility and utilisation of capacity building guides, and mechanisms for capacity building evaluation.

LGs have endeavoured to carry out capacity needs assessment. Needs assessment forms are distributed to stakeholders. However, among the problems noted were the delay and failure to submit the forms by the stakeholders which has led to the stakeholders needs to be missed out in the capacity building plans. The delay or failure to submit the forms is associated with the negative attitude towards the assessment exercise among the stakeholders who submit their training needs, but are not considered for training. In other cases, it was established that employees are offered courses which are different from those that they have requested.

The findings indicate that there have been frustrations among LGs about the capability of the capacity building providing firms. The firms are accused of employing a theoretical approach in their training that is out of touch with the practical needs in LGs. Because of this, there have been calls on the Ministry of Local Government to allow LGs to develop their own training resource pool which have been rejected. While some LGs have tried to provide personnel to assist the training consultants and to guide them on LG practical issues, other LGs do not have such personnel available to assist the consultants. Besides, there are questions of who should meet the payment for such employees. It was revealed that consultancy firms at the time of evaluation provide names of competent individuals as trainers but when the training is offered, the firms use different trainers. This compromises the quality of training. It was further revealed that the trainers use a technical language that is not easily understandable among those with limited levels of education.

The research reveals that the capacity building training in LGs has been limited in both depth and training area coverage. Most of the identified skills gaps have not been covered. But even in those areas that have been covered, the trainers have not addressed the areas in detail to enable participants to grasp the topics. This was attributed to the limited time

allocated to training which compels the trainers to cover all the topics in a limited time frame. The research also notes that the capacity building does not address integrity issues.

LG technical officials and political office bearers attend the training which is usually received once every financial year for engagement duration/period of two days. Both the frequency and the participants' engagement duration were found to be inadequate. It was confirmed that a number of participants do not complete the training. These are mostly councillors who are often unable to follow the training proceedings mainly due to language barrier. The main challenge was found to be the overwhelming numbers that need training—yet the capacity building fund is inadequate. Because of this, many employees and key stakeholders such as PMCs and CSOs have not accessed the capacity building training.

The research indicates that there are no specific toolkits that the employees can read for guidance. Whereas the Ministry of Local Government has developed manuals based on various training modules, the manuals are not available for LGs employees. In a number of cases, however, the trainers have distributed reading materials to participants. Two major problems associated with the reading materials were established. The first one is that the reading materials are prepared in a language that is not easily understood. The second one is that owing to poor reading culture, those who have the materials do not read them for reference.

With regard to the capacity building evaluation mechanisms in the LGs, the study shows that, at the basic level, there are attempts to record the individuals and groups that have attended the capacity building programmes, the number of times and which courses they have attended. Assessing their satisfaction is done together with participants' rating of the quality of the training received at the close of each training programme. However, the participants, tend to award scores without critical consideration of the quality of training they have received. Other than the regular staff performance appraisal and informal efforts to follow up on the performance of employees who have attended career development courses, no other effective mechanisms are used to evaluate the impact of capacity building.

A major conclusion to be drawn from the findings on the capacity building in LGs is that any capacity building programme that is characterised by poor needs assessment procedures, lack of comprehensiveness, providers who do not understand the practical realities of their

client, poor attendance and limited participant engagement, lack of easy to read user guides and lack of effective capacity building impact evaluation mechanisms will not enhance the knowledge, skills and competencies of an organisation or institution to effectively execute its roles and responsibilities. It can also be concluded that as in any other institution, without adequate capacity building fund, the capacity building programme in LGs cannot cover the necessary areas of training and stakeholders involved in the implementation and monitoring of decentralisation programmes. Funding impacts on most of the capacity building issues such as comprehensiveness, frequency, duration, participant engagement and development and availability reference guides. Another conclusion that can be drawn is that delivering capacity building in a situation where there are big gaps of academic qualification levels among the participants makes it difficult for the providers to effectively impart knowledge and skills to the participants. The participants with low levels of education, as the case with most politicians in LGs, cannot easily grasp issues during training. An additional conclusion to be drawn is that capacity building training is not a substitute for the need and services of specialised professionals for an institution. No matter how effective the capacity building training is, LGs still need specialised monitoring and evaluation professionals (who are currently lacking in all the LGs) to provide technical guidance in monitoring the implementation of decentralisation programmes.

#### **7.3.4 Working relationships among intergovernmental organs**

In analysing the existing working relationship among the intergovernmental organs and its impact on LG performance, the critical analytical themes include definition and clarification of roles and responsibilities; harmonisation of goals; existence of essential ingredients for an effective working relationship; existing co-ordination mechanisms; the power relations among the organs; and existing conflict resolution mechanisms.

The study established that there are no specified monitoring roles and responsibilities assigned to LG technical officials and the political office bearers; LGs and central government personnel; and the higher and lower LGs employees. Lack of defined and clarified monitoring roles and responsibilities for the intergovernmental organs has resulted in duplication, wastage of resources, lack of unity of purpose and adoption of conflicting monitoring approaches. For harmonisation of goals, there are a number of cases where the intergovernmental organs do not have shared monitoring goals which usually creates

conflict. Such cases were identified between politicians and technical officials (civil servants) and between LGs' personnel and central government personnel. The cases relate mainly to situations where the politicians focus on monitoring facilitating allowances and appeasing the electorate for political support, while the civil servants are concerned about the adequacy of the monitoring process; and situations where, unlike the LGs, the central government personnel focus on promoting a good image of central government. The study has ascertained that the existing lack of harmonised monitoring goals among the organs has impacted negatively on the monitoring activities.

There is a lack of co-ordination among the intergovernmental organs in the execution of their monitoring activities. This has led to fragmented monitoring efforts. It has resulted in a failure to provide monitoring findings that adequately measure variables such as impact. It has also created different monitoring practices, resulted in conflicting monitoring recommendations, created gaps in the acquisition and distribution of monitoring information and created redundancy.

The research found that there is mistrust between the LG technical officials and politicians, and between LGs and central government personnel. It was established that lack of respect exists mainly between HLGs and LLGs where the HLGs did not respect the LLGs. It was also established that the politicians at the LLGs are the least respected by the HLGs. It was revealed that there is lack of open and regular communication among the intergovernmental organs in the monitoring process. Lack of an effective working relationship among the organs has negatively impacted on LGs performance of their monitoring role.

In assessing the power relations among the LG intergovernmental organs, the focus has been on hierarchy and reporting mechanisms; supervision and control; and power enforcement mechanisms. The study found that the accounting officer in every LG reports to the political head of the LG, while every technical head of department reports to the respective departmental political head. It was established that, in both cases, the reports were either delayed or not submitted. For the reporting between the lower and higher LGs, all the accounting officers in LLGs report to the accounting officers at the HLGs. However, the reports by the LLGs are not submitted in time which makes it difficult to provide timely feedback. The politicians play some supervisory role over the technical officials. The politicians, however, often prefer to give instructions without consultation which affects

compliance with such instructions. The politicians, it was indicated, have limited supervisory powers as they do not appraise the performance of technical officials. For the supervision of LLGs by HLGs, the ACAO usually attends the planning committee meetings at the LLGs in which instructions are communicated to the LLG officials. It was revealed that the HLGs also tend to give instructions to LLGs without consultation which affects compliance as the LLGs are reluctant to implement such instructions. The enforcement of disciplinary measures is affected by lack of legal guidance on rules and regulations concerning employee relations. As a result, disciplinary actions have been taken without following the prescribed procedures. This has resulted in a number of successful court litigations against LGs.

For the existing conflict and mechanisms to resolve the conflict, the research shows that the major areas of conflict concern allocation, access and control of resources. Other common areas of conflict include pay differences; divergent monitoring goals and approaches; interpretation of the law; and procurement of providers. The study established that there are no effective mechanisms to resolve conflict among the intergovernmental organs. This has resulted in situations where unresolved conflict has created lack of cooperation, poor communication, loss of focus on tasks and goals, time wastage and delay of operations and activities in the monitoring process.

A number of conclusions can be drawn from the findings on the working relationships among the intergovernmental organs. The first conclusion is that, when multiple actors in an organisational setting are involved in executing a common function without clarification of roles and responsibilities, harmonisation of goals, effective co-ordination mechanisms, stable power relations, and effective conflict resolution mechanisms, it becomes difficult to realise the organisational goals and objectives. Therefore the efforts of the intergovernmental organs involved in the monitoring process have not resulted in effective implementation of the programmes. The second conclusion is that with power relations where a subordinate is more qualified than the supervisor both in academic qualification and technical competence, it becomes difficult to achieve stable and effective power relations. Most of the politicians in LGs as the study revealed, are less qualified in both academic and technical competence compared to the technical officials they supervise. This affects the achievement of obedience as well as improved employee conduct and performance. The third conclusion that can be made is that, in an institutional setting where decision implementers are not part of the decision-making process, successful implementation of such decisions is difficult to achieve.

As the findings indicate, the decisions that are made by both politicians and the HLGs without involving technical officials and LLGs respectively have not been successfully implemented. The fourth conclusion is that, as in any other working relationship, without trust and openness, respect and effective communication, there cannot be a mutual and effective working relationship among intergovernmental organs. This makes it difficult to achieve organisational goals and objectives.

### **7.3.5 Collaboration between local governments and civil society organisations**

The analytical themes that were critical in evaluating the existing collaboration between LGs and CSOs have been clarity of roles and responsibilities of the collaborating partners; existing co-ordination mechanisms; existing managerial and technical capacities of LGs and CSOs to execute their obligations; existing level of openness and mutual trust between the partners; and mechanisms for resolving conflict between the partners. The research found that there is lack of clarification of roles and responsibilities between CSOs and LGs which has resulted in the adoption of non standardised and conflicting monitoring practices, procedures and approaches. This has consequently created duplication of effort and resources, conflict and lack of synergy.

For existing co-ordination mechanisms between the collaborating partners, the findings indicated that there are two major co-ordination problems –lack of consultative planning and lack of information sharing. This makes it difficult for either partner to effectively monitor the projects of the other. On the existing capacity of LGs and CSOs to execute their obligations, the study reveals that both LGs and SCOs have not been equipped with the knowledge and skills to enhance their capacity to fulfil their partnership obligations. It was also noted that other than registration services, there has been limited facilitation and support extended to CSOs by LGs. There are low levels of trust and openness between LGs and CSOs. It was observed that the existing suspicion and mistrust between the two partners in monitoring programmes has led to lack of open and sincere exchange of opinions and information between the two parties.

With respect to the existing conflict and mechanisms to resolve the conflict, the study results indicate that one source of conflict between CSOs and LGs is that some CSOs consider themselves powerful because of their contribution in service delivery. Other areas of conflict

have been about the contribution of monitoring resources and different methods of work employed by the partners. Regarding the existing mechanisms to resolve the conflict, the study found that there are no effective mechanisms to resolve conflict between the collaborating partners. It is noted that the persistent conflict weakens the spirit of partnership. It increases tension between the partners, disrupts normal channels of cooperation, blocks lines of communication and prevents the partners from focusing on tasks and goals in their monitoring efforts.

One major conclusion that can be made from the findings on collaboration between local governments and civil society organisations is that, in a collaborative relationship, the clarity of roles and responsibilities of collaborating partners, existence of managerial and technical capacities among partners to execute their obligations, effective co-ordination mechanisms, existence of openness and mutual trust and effective mechanisms for resolving conflict are crucial ingredients for achieving collaborative goals and objectives. In LGs where such ingredients have been missing between LGs and CSOs as collaborating partners in monitoring the implementation of decentralisation programmes, improved or effective monitoring of the decentralisation programmes as a major goal of the collaboration has remained far from a reality.

## **7.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The study provides five recommendations to address the existing inefficiencies and ineffectiveness in monitoring the implementation of decentralisation. These are in line with the findings under each objective of the study. They include how to design a strong monitoring system and effective monitoring plans; reviewing/increasing the autonomy of local governments; improving capacity building in LGs; improving intergovernmental working relationship; and strengthening the collaboration between LGs and civil society organisations.

### **7.4.1 Designing a strong monitoring system and effective monitoring plans**

#### **(a) *Design of a strong monitoring system***

The thesis notes that the existing monitoring system in LGs is weak, characterised by ineffective data management mechanisms and poor linkage of the monitoring system to the national integrated monitoring system. Thus, there is a need for LGs to strengthen the data



management mechanisms and the linkage of the monitoring system to the national integrated monitoring system. LGs need to make deliberate efforts (for example, through workshops, training and mentoring) to equip the monitoring organs with skills and competencies to understand project monitoring issues and increase the number of days allocated to field monitoring visits so that the monitors can be able to cover more projects. They also need to adopt an integrative monitoring approach among the monitoring organs in order to share experience and have harmonised findings and recommendations. There is a necessity to consider the PMCs and individual councillors for monitoring allowances to facilitate their monitoring activities. LGs will also have to design standard forms for recording monitoring data and establish organs for monitoring data analysis. The current planning units in LGs need to be staffed with monitoring and evaluation professionals.

To improve the linkage of the LG monitoring system to the national integrated monitoring system, the current IFMS, LOGICS and OBIT sub systems need to be strengthened to effectively record programme monitoring information in LGs which is currently not captured. There is also a need for LGs to submit monitoring reports on a regular basis to the Office of the Prime minister which co-ordinates monitoring of government programmes. The reports also need to be copied to the relevant line ministries. Through the Office of the Prime Minister and line ministries, the central government needs to design an effective feedback mechanism to ensure that local governments get timely feedback with regard to their submitted monitoring reports.

***(b) Improving the design and execution of monitoring plans***

The research has established that LGs face numerous challenges in the design and execution of monitoring plans which relate to the key elements of defining project areas to be monitored; selection of performance indicators; definition of monitoring data collection methods; reporting and feedback mechanisms; and the allocation of required monitoring resources. These aspects need to be effectively addressed in order to improve the design and implementation of monitoring plans in LGs. LGs should improve on the project activity monitoring reporting so that the reported progress is in tandem with the specified planned activities; should ensure that monitors use monitoring plans to guide them in establishing planned inputs and expected outputs; and should include quality monitoring indicators in their plans to guide the monitors. For contract management, LGs need to increase the retention

of payment for contractors who produce poor quality work from the current 10% to at least 30%. LGs also need to blacklist contractors who do shoddy work. Improving outcome and impact monitoring will require LGs to effectively define the expected project outcome and impact in their monitoring plans which should guide the monitors in their monitoring activities. With regard to project cost monitoring, central government will need to review its audit policy to allow LGs to carry out pre-payment audits to detect anomalies before payments are made and engage agencies such as an Inspector of Government (IG) and the police to investigate politicians who interfere with in the procurement function and prosecute them.

For monitoring indicators as a key element in a monitoring plan, LGs will need to fill the existing human resource gaps in the planning units to get technical guidance on defining and setting monitoring indicators and seek technical support from the Ministry of Local Government and the Office of the Prime Minister in setting up well defined monitoring indicators in their work plans. LGs should specify in their monitoring plans the methods to be used for collecting monitoring data. The monitors should then be educated on how to use the specified methods. This should be done with technical guidance from the planning units. To improve the reporting and feedback mechanisms concerning recommendations, LGs need to design implementation tracking plans.

#### **7.4.2 Reviewing/increasing the autonomy of local governments**

The study has revealed that LGs' lack of substantial autonomy in exercising decentralised powers has impacted negatively on the LGs' performance of their monitoring role. It is therefore necessary for LGs through bodies such as the Uganda Local Government Association (ULGA), the Uganda Urban Local Governments Association (UULGA) and the Local Government Finance Commission (LGFC) to urge the central government to increase the political, administrative and fiscal autonomy of LGs in key aspects.

For political autonomy, the key areas should be the LGs' determination of their development priorities. LGs should be empowered to set their development priorities that reflect their local needs and problems without undue interference from the central government. Regarding administrative autonomy, the key aspects include recruitment of personnel without having to obtain approval from central government and management of the payroll. The central

government should expedite implementation of the recently announced government policy change to decentralize the public civil service payroll system.

With respect to the fiscal autonomy, the key areas include LGs' autonomy in determining expenditure areas; autonomy in mobilisation of LGs' own revenue; and fairness in revenue sharing between central government and LGs. LGs should be allowed to reallocate funds received from central government based on the needs and problems that pertain. Central government should also allow LGs to allocate locally generated revenue without undue interference. Central government should allow LGs to tap new sources of tax revenue without having to obtain approval. Central government must desist from political announcements that prohibit LGs from collecting tax revenue from existing viable and tested sources.

For revenue sharing, the central government needs to gradually increase the percentage share of LGs. While LGs are demanding a 40% share of the national revenue, the central government could make smaller phased percentage increments until a reasonable percentage is achieved. Central government should release LGs' funds in time and desist from making unexpected budgets cuts after the budget figures have been communicated to local governments

#### **7.4.3 Improving/strengthening capacity building in local governments**

The research indicates that there are numerous weaknesses and or challenges associated with the capacity building programme in LGs which have affected the effectiveness of the capacity building programme to enhance the monitoring capacity of LGs to effectively and efficiently perform their monitoring role. The challenges which need to be addressed in order to improve the capacity building programme relate to capacity building needs assessment procedures; capabilities of the providers; comprehensiveness of capacity building; attendance and frequency of the capacity building training programmes; accessibility and utilisation of capacity building guides; and mechanisms for evaluation and follow up.

To improve the capacity needs assessment, LGs must sensitise their employees to change their negative attitude towards the assessment exercises. It is necessary for LGs to ensure that employees who fill the assessment forms attend the capacity building programmes and that employees attend courses they have requested. In order to improve the quality of

capacity building service provided by the capacity building firms, LGs need to promote the idea of co-opting some LG employees on the firms' training teams; institute stringent measures including termination of contracts for firms which use trainers who have not been evaluated; ensure that the trainers simplify the training language used and translate the English language into local languages where possible.

It has been established that the capacity building training in LGs has not been comprehensive. There is thus a need for LGs to improve on the comprehensiveness of the capacity building programmes by ensuring that the identified skills gaps are covered and allocating more time for the training programmes so that the trainers can lecture in detail to improve on the participants' understanding of the topics covered. To improve frequency and duration, LGs need to conduct the training at least twice a year; increase the duration to at least four days; and make it mandatory for participants to complete the training by taking measures such as withholding the training allowance from those who do not complete and taking disciplinary action against them. LGs also need to pressurise the central government to increase the capacity building fund for LGs.

To improve on the availability and utilisation of capacity building reference material, LGs need to develop simplified guides to provide practical and easy to read information. The Ministry of Local Government should make copies of the existing manuals on the various training modules available to LG employees. LGs will need to address the poor reading culture of employees through sensitisation and instituting a reward system for those who read and apply the knowledge from the reference material.

In order to improve the capacity building evaluation, LGs should sensitise the trainees on how to critically evaluate the quality of training they have received. There is also a need for LGs to establish follow-up mechanisms to confirm whether there is improvement in the performance of those who have attended the training that can be attributed to the knowledge and skills acquired from the training.

#### **7.4.4 Improving intergovernmental working relationships**

The research has confirmed that there is poor working relationship among the intergovernmental organs involved in monitoring the decentralisation programmes. The

relationship is characterised by a number of challenges that include: lack of definition and clarification of roles and responsibilities; lack of harmonisation of goals; nonexistence of essential ingredients for an effective working relationship; lack of effective co-ordination mechanisms; ineffective power relations; and lack of effective conflict resolution mechanisms. In order to improve the intergovernmental working relationship for effective execution of the monitoring function, LGs need to address these challenges.

LGs will need to obtain the support of central government to define and clarify the roles and responsibilities of the intergovernmental organs and to make efforts to harmonise the monitoring goals and objectives of the intergovernmental organs through joint planning. LGs should sensitise the intergovernmental organs about the common goals for monitoring the decentralisation programmes and take initiatives to promote information sharing, consultative decision-making processes and task consensus among the organs. LGs will need to promote trust and openness, respect and effective communication among the organs through sensitisation workshops, regular meetings, information sharing and joint retreats.

It is necessary for LGs to establish effective mechanisms to reduce the occurrence of conflict and to timely resolve conflict among the intergovernmental organs. This should be done through effective communication and information sharing to reduce the emergence of unnecessary conflict through establishing structural long term measures that address the underlying causes of a potential conflict such as lack of harmonised goals and lack of clarification of roles and responsibilities; through encouraging regular meetings to frankly and openly discuss and resolve their differences; and through increasing the frequency of joint retreats to at least a quarterly basis. LGs should establish effective mediation and arbitration mechanisms by identifying a neutral mediator especially for conflicts that do not involve legal issues or an arbitrator where the conflict involves legal issues.

There is a need for the Ministry of Local Government to establish minimum academic qualification requirements for political office bearers. This should be done to improve the competences of politicians to be able to interact and meaningfully exchange ideas with the technical officials.

#### **7.4.5 Strengthening the collaboration between LGs and civil society organisations**

The problems that have been identified in respect of the collaborative partnership between LGs and CSOs include lack of clarity of roles and responsibilities of collaborating partners, inadequate managerial and technical capacities among partners to execute their obligations, lack of effective co-ordination mechanisms, lack of openness and mutual trust between the partners and lack of effective mechanisms for resolving conflict. LGs should take initiatives to improve their collaborative partnership with CSOs. In this regard, LGs should clarify the roles, responsibilities and obligations of the collaborating partners through a formal memorandum of understanding; should put in place acceptable mechanisms to regularly evaluate the performance of the partners; and should establish effective co-ordination mechanisms by ensuring joint or consultative planning and effective information sharing. LGs will also need to extend the capacity building training to CSOs to enhance their ability to execute their collaborative obligations; include training modules on collaborative partnership in the capacity building programmes; and address the existing suspicion and mistrust through open dialogue, consultations and information sharing.

#### **7.5 CONSIDERATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

The study has focused on the monitoring role of LGs in the decentralisation process. Within the LGs, there are administrative units/councils including county, parish or ward and village councils which are nonpolitical entities with no political or legislative powers. The practical relevancy and role of these councils in implementing decentralisation need to be investigated. There have been calls (see *The New Vision*: 5, 28 April 2011) to abolish them. Currently, and for some time, their term of office has expired but government has been reluctant to hold new elections.

The decentralisation policy was introduced and implemented from 1993 to 2006 under the Movement (One Party) system. Since 2006, Uganda has adopted a multiparty political system. The study has revealed that there are situations where the ruling party has influenced the central government to frustrate LG councils which are dominated or led by members belonging to the opposition parties. Therefore, a comparative study of the performance of LGs under the former Movement system and the current multiparty system should be undertaken.

The study assessed the autonomy of LGs in exercising decentralised political, administrative and fiscal powers in executing their assigned responsibilities. However, the study did not attend to an important component of the decentralised powers, that is, legislative powers. There is thus a need to assess the performance of LGs in exercising their legislative powers for enactment of bye-laws and ordinances; and the relevancy or impact of their legislative performance on the implementation of decentralisation.

Finally, according to the research findings, LGs have continually suffered from limited viable sources of local generated revenue which has crippled service delivery programmes under decentralisation. There is need for a study to explore the viable sources of locally generated revenue and how effectively they can be tapped.

## **7.6 CONCLUSION**

The contention of this study is that numerous reports have relentlessly condemned local governments' ineffectiveness and inefficiency in performing their monitoring role without any assessment of their performance in view of the institutional factors that influence their efficiency and effectiveness in the execution of the monitoring role. The assessment of the performance of LGs in view of the institutional factors that have a bearing on their performance has addressed this contention by providing empirical evidence of the extent to which LGs have executed their monitoring role and the extent to which the institutional factors have influenced their performance. It has established that the numerous efforts made by LGs have been less efficient and less effective owing to the institutional factors that have negatively influenced the LGs' performance. Based on the findings, one can now make an objective judgment of local governments' performance in execution of their monitoring role.

The study has argued that both central government and local governments need to make deliberate efforts to address the institutional problems that affect the performance of LGs. These include LGs' lack of substantial autonomy in exercising the decentralised powers; ineffective capacity building extended to LGs; the poor working relationship among the intergovernmental organs involved in the monitoring process; and the weak collaboration between LGs and CSOs if LGs are to efficiently and effectively execute their monitoring role in the implementation of decentralisation policy reform programmes, as already stated.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1: Interview Guide for key respondents in local governments' political organs

*You are kindly requested to assist by participating in the face-to face interview that seeks to examine the monitoring role of local governments in implementing decentralisation programmes in view of the institutional factors that influence local governments' performance of this function. The research is conducted in respect of the need to fulfill partial requirements for a doctoral degree pursued by the researcher at the University of Pretoria, Republic of South Africa.*

**Research title:** Monitoring role of local governments in implementing decentralisation policy: the case of Uganda.

**Researcher:** Stephen Gunura Bwengye, BA (SS), Postgraduate Dip. Business Management, Dip. Purchasing & supply, MA (PAM), PhD (Candidate-University of Pretoria)

#### Topical areas of interview:

#### Local governments' execution of their monitoring role in implementing decentralisation

1. How effective is the existing LG monitoring system through which the monitoring function is executed in terms of
  - Organs for data collection
  - Forms/tools used to record field monitoring data
  - Structures or organs for data analysis
  - Dissemination of monitoring information/findings
  - Data storage mechanisms
  - linkage of the monitoring system to the national integrated monitoring system
2. How effective have been local governments in preparing and executing monitoring plans in terms of:
  - Definition of monitoring data to be collected,
  - Identification of project components /areas to be monitored,
  - Definition of performance indicators
  - Data collections methods used in the monitoring process,
  - Establishment of reporting and feedback mechanisms
  - Allocation of monitoring resources
3. How efficient do you think have been local governments (LGs) in executing their monitoring activities in terms of:
  - Utilisation of available human, financial and material resources in the monitoring process
  - Timeliness in execution and completion of monitoring activities

## **Influence of institutional factors on local governments' performance in their monitoring role**

### ***(a) The degree of local governments' autonomy in exercising decentralised powers***

4. What do you think is the degree of local governments' autonomy in taking political decisions in terms of decisions on:
  - Matters of local political governance ,
  - Determining their own development priorities.
5. What is the degree of local governments' autonomy in taking administrative decisions in terms of:
  - Recruitment and management of human resource,
  - Appointing statutory bodies
  - Managing payroll matters.
6. What is the degree of local governments' fiscal autonomy in terms of
  - Local governments' determination of their areas of expenditure
  - Local governments' mobilisation of their own revenue
  - Revenue sharing between central government and local governments
  - Revenue equity in terms of sharing revenue in relation to the unique needs of LGs
  - Revenue simplicity in terms of transparency in sharing of revenue (particularly, how much is expected, and the timeliness in the release of funds)
  - Revenue equity in terms of mechanisms to consider particular LGs with unique needs
7. How has the degree of local governments' autonomy in the respective areas above affected your monitoring activities?

### ***(b) Capacity building extended to local governments***

8. How do you evaluate the capacity building extended to local governments in terms of?
  - Capacity building needs assessment procedures
  - Capabilities of providers to deliver the capacity building
  - Comprehensiveness of the capacity building programmes
  - Frequency and attendance of the capacity building programmes
  - Availability and utilisation of capacity building guides and tool kits
  - Mechanisms for capacity building evaluation and follow up
9. To what extent has capacity building improved LGs performance of their monitoring activities?

***(C) Working relationships among intergovernmental organs involved in monitoring the implementation of decentralisation***

10. How do you evaluate the working relationship among LG political organs, central government agencies and LG civil service organs involved in monitoring the implementation of decentralisation in terms of?

- Definition and clarification of roles and responsibilities
- Harmonisation of each party's goals and objectives
- Existing coordination mechanisms
- Existence of essential ingredients for a working relationship (trust, openness, respect and effective communication)
- Existence of mechanisms for conflict resolution

11. How do you assess the interplay of power relations among LG political officials, the civil service officials and the central government personnel involved in the monitoring process in terms of:

- Hierarchy and reporting mechanisms
- Supervision and control
- Power enforcement mechanisms

12. How do you evaluate the existing working relationship between the higher and the lower local government political organs involved in the monitoring process in terms of

- Definition and clarification of roles and responsibilities
- Existing coordination mechanisms
- Existence of essential ingredients for a working relationship (trust, respect and effective communication)
- Existence of mechanisms for conflict management

13. How do you assess the interplay of the power relations between the higher and the lower LG political organs involved in the monitoring process in terms of:

- Hierarchy and reporting mechanisms
- Supervision and control
- Power enforcement mechanisms

14. How has the existing intergovernmental working relationship affected your monitoring operations?

***(d) Collaboration between local governments and civil society organisations (CSOs) in the monitoring process***

17. What are the particular roles and responsibilities of LGs as collaborating parties in monitoring process?

18. How do you assess the existing collaboration between LGs and CSOs in terms of?
- Clarity of roles and responsibilities of the collaborating parties
  - Existing coordination mechanisms
  - Existing managerial and technical capacities of LGs as collaborating partners
  - Existing level of openness and mutual trust between the collaborating partners
  - Mechanisms for resolving conflict between the collaborating partners

**Thank you very much**

## APPENDIX 2: Interview Guide for key respondents in local governments' civil service organs

*You are kindly requested to assist by participating in the face-to face interview that seeks to examine the monitoring role of local governments in implementing decentralisation programmes in view of the institutional factors that influence local governments' performance of this function. The research is conducted in respect of the need to fulfill partial requirements for a doctoral degree pursued by the researcher at the University of Pretoria, Republic of South Africa.*

**Research title:** Monitoring role of local governments in implementing decentralisation policy: the case of Uganda.

**Researcher:** Stephen Gunura Bwengye, BA (SS), Postgraduate Dip. Business Management, Dip. Purchasing & supply, MA (PAM), PhD (Candidate-University of Pretoria)

### Topical areas of interview:

#### Local governments' execution of their monitoring role in implementing decentralisation

1. How effective is the existing LG monitoring system through which the monitoring function is executed in terms of
  - Organs for data collection
  - Forms/tools used to record field monitoring data
  - Structures or organs for data analysis
  - Dissemination of monitoring information/findings
  - Data storage mechanisms
  - linkage of the monitoring system to the national integrated monitoring system
2. How effective have been local governments in preparing and executing monitoring plans in terms of:
  - Definition of monitoring data to be collected,
  - Identification of project components /areas to be monitored,
  - Definition of performance indicators
  - Data collections methods used in the monitoring process,
  - Establishment of reporting and feedback mechanisms
  - Allocation of monitoring resources
3. How efficient do you think have been local governments (LGs) in executing their monitoring activities in terms of:
  - Utilisation of available human, financial and material resources in the monitoring process
  - Timeliness in execution and completion of monitoring activities

## **Influence of institutional factors on local governments' performance in their monitoring role**

### ***(b) The degree of local governments' autonomy in exercising decentralised powers***

4. What do you think is the degree of local governments' autonomy in taking political decisions in terms of decisions on:
  - Matters of local political governance ,
  - Determining their own development priorities.
5. What is the degree of local governments' autonomy in taking administrative decisions in terms of:
  - Recruitment and management of human resource,
  - Appointing statutory bodies
  - Managing payroll matters.
6. What is the degree of local governments' fiscal autonomy in terms of
  - Local governments' determination of their areas of expenditure
  - Local governments' mobilisation of their own revenue
  - Revenue sharing between central government and local governments
  - Revenue equity in terms of sharing revenue in relation to the unique needs of LGs
  - Revenue simplicity in terms of transparency in sharing of revenue (particularly, how much is expected, and the timeliness in the release of funds)
  - Revenue equity in terms of mechanisms to consider particular LGs with unique needs
7. How has the degree of local governments' autonomy in the respective areas above affected your monitoring activities?

### ***(b) Capacity building extended to local governments***

8. How do you evaluate the capacity building extended to local governments in terms of?
  - Capacity building needs assessment procedures
  - Capabilities of providers to deliver the capacity building
  - Comprehensiveness of the capacity building programmes
  - Frequency and attendance of the capacity building programmes
  - Availability and utilisation of capacity building guides and tool kits
  - Mechanisms for capacity building evaluation and follow up
9. To what extent has capacity building improved LGs performance of their monitoring activities?

***(c) Working relationships among intergovernmental organs involved in monitoring the implementation of decentralisation***

12. How do you evaluate LG civil service organs' working relationship with central government agencies and LG political office bearers involved in monitoring the implementation of decentralisation in terms of?

- Definition and clarification of roles and responsibilities
- Harmonisation of each party's goals and objectives
- Existing coordination mechanisms
- Existence of essential ingredients for a working relationship (trust, openness, respect and effective communication)
- Existence of mechanisms for conflict resolution

13. How do you assess the interplay of power relations among civil service organs, LG political office bearers and the central government personnel involved in the monitoring process in terms of:

- Hierarchy and reporting mechanisms
- Supervision and control
- Power enforcement mechanism

14. How do you evaluate the existing working relationship between the higher and the lower local government civil service organs involved in the monitoring process in terms of

- Definition and clarification of roles and responsibilities
- Harmonisation of each party's goals and objectives
- Existing coordination mechanisms
- Existence of essential ingredients for a working relationship (trust, openness, respect and effective communication)
- Existence of mechanisms for conflict management

15. How do you assess the interplay of the power relations between the higher and the lower LG civil service organs involved in the monitoring process in terms of:

- Hierarchy and reporting mechanisms
- Supervision and control
- Power enforcement mechanism

16. How has the existing intergovernmental working relationship affected your monitoring operations?

***(d) Collaboration between local governments and civil society organisations (CSOs) in the monitoring process***

17. What are the particular roles and responsibilities of LGs as collaborating parties in monitoring process?

18. How do you assess the existing collaboration between LGs and CSOs in terms of?

- Clarity of roles and responsibilities of the collaborating parties



- Existing coordination mechanisms
- Existing managerial and technical capacities of LGs as collaborating partners
- Existing level of openness and mutual trust between the collaborating partners
- Mechanisms for resolving conflict between the collaborating partners

**Thank you very much**

## APPENDIX 3: Interview Guide for key respondents from central government agencies

*You are kindly requested to assist by participating in the face-to face interview that seeks to examine the monitoring role of local governments in implementing decentralisation programmes in view of the institutional factors that influence local governments' performance of this function. The research is conducted in respect of the need to fulfill partial requirements for a doctoral degree pursued by the researcher at the University of Pretoria, Republic of South Africa.*

**Research title:** Monitoring role of local governments in implementing decentralisation policy: the case of Uganda.

**Researcher:** Stephen Gunura Bwengye, BA (SS), Postgraduate Dip. Business Management, Dip. Purchasing & supply, MA (PAM), PhD (Candidate-University of Pretoria).

### Topical areas of interview:

#### Monitoring of decentralisation programmes in local governments

1. What particular roles does your agency play in monitoring the implementation of decentralisation programmes in LGs?
2. How effective have your agency been in executing its monitoring role?

#### Influence of institutional factors on local governments' performance of their monitoring role

##### ***(a) Working relationships among intergovernmental organs involved in monitoring the implementation of decentralisation***

3. How do you evaluate your agency's working relationship with LG civil service officials and political office bearers involved in monitoring the implementation of decentralisation programmes in terms of?
  - Definition and clarification of roles and responsibilities
  - Harmonisation of each party's goals and objectives
  - Existing coordination mechanisms
  - Existence of essential ingredients for a working relationship (trust, openness, respect and effective communication)
  - Existence of mechanisms for conflict resolution
4. How do you assess the interplay of power relations among your agency, the LG civil service officials and the political office bearers involved in the monitoring process in terms of:
  - Hierarchy and reporting mechanisms
  - Supervision and reporting

- Power enforcement mechanism

***(c) Capacity building extended to local governments***

8. How do you evaluate the capacity building extended to local governments in terms of?

- Capacity building needs assessment procedures
- Capabilities of providers to deliver the capacity building
- Comprehensiveness of the capacity building programmes
- Frequency and attendance of the capacity building programmes
- Availability and utilisation of capacity building guides and tool kits
- Mechanisms for capacity building evaluation and follow up

9. To what extent has capacity building improved LGs performance of their monitoring activities

***(d) Collaboration between local governments and civil society organisations (CSOs) in the monitoring process***

9. As a player in the monitoring process, how do you assess the existing collaboration between LGs and CSOs in terms of:

- Clarity of roles and responsibilities of the collaborating parties
- Existing coordination mechanisms
- Existing managerial and technical capacities of LGs as collaborating partners
- Existing level of openness and mutual trust between the collaborating partners
- Mechanisms for resolving conflict between the collaborating partners

**Thank you very much**

## APPENDIX 4: Interview Guide for key respondents from civil society organisations

*You are kindly requested to assist by participating in the face-to face interview that seeks to examine the monitoring role of local governments in implementing decentralisation programmes in view of the institutional factors that influence local governments' performance of this function. The research is conducted in respect of the need to fulfill partial requirements for a doctoral degree pursued by the researcher at the University of Pretoria, Republic of South Africa.*

**Research title:** Monitoring role of local governments in implementing decentralisation policy: the case of Uganda.

**Researcher:** Stephen Gunura Bwengye, BA (SS), Postgraduate Dip. Business Management, Dip. Purchasing & supply, MA (PAM), PhD (Candidate-University of Pretoria).

1. What are particular roles and responsibilities of your organisation as a collaborating partner in monitoring programmes under decentralisation?
2. How do you assess the existing collaboration between your organisation and LGs in terms of:
  - Clarity of roles and responsibilities of the collaborating parties
  - Existing coordination mechanisms
  - Existing managerial and technical capacities of your organisation as a collaborating partner
  - Existing level of openness and mutual trust between the collaborating partners
  - Mechanisms for resolving conflict between the collaborating partners

**Thank you very much**

## APPENDIX 5: Interview Guide for Focus Group discussion in local governments

*You are kindly requested to assist by participating in this focus group discussion that seeks to examine the monitoring role of local governments in implementing decentralisation programmes in view of the institutional factors that influence local governments' performance of this function. The research is conducted in respect of the need to fulfill partial requirements for a doctoral degree pursued by the researcher at the University of Pretoria, Republic of South Africa.*

**Research title:** Monitoring role of local governments in implementing decentralisation policy: the case of Uganda.

**Researcher:** Stephen Gunura Bwengye, BA (SS), Postgraduate Dip. Business Management, Dip. Purchasing & supply, MA (PAM), PhD (Candidate-University of Pretoria).

### Topical areas of interview/discussion:

#### Local governments' execution of their monitoring role in implementing decentralisation

1. How effective is the existing LG monitoring system through which the monitoring function is executed in terms of
  - Organs for data collection
  - Forms/tools used to record field monitoring data
  - Structures or organs for data analysis
  - Dissemination of monitoring information/findings
  - Data storage mechanisms
  - linkage of the monitoring system to the national integrated monitoring system
2. How effective have been local governments in preparing and executing monitoring plans in terms of:
  - Definition of monitoring data to be collected,
  - Identification of project components /areas to be monitored,
  - Definition of performance indicators
  - Data collections methods used in the monitoring process,
  - Establishment of reporting and feedback mechanisms
  - Allocation of monitoring resources
3. How efficient do you think have been local governments (LGs) in executing their monitoring activities in terms of:
  - Utilisation of available human, financial and material resources in the monitoring process
  - Timeliness in execution and completion of monitoring activities

## **Influence of institutional factors on local governments' performance in their monitoring role**

### ***(e) The degree of local governments' autonomy in exercising decentralised powers***

4. What do you think is the degree of local governments' autonomy in taking political decisions in terms of decisions on:
  - Matters of local political governance ,
  - Determining their own development priorities.
5. What is the degree of local governments' autonomy in taking administrative decisions in terms of:
  - Recruitment and management of human resource,
  - Appointing statutory bodies
  - Managing payroll matters.
6. What is the degree of local governments' fiscal autonomy in terms of
  - Local governments' determination of their areas of expenditure
  - Local governments' mobilisation of their own revenue
  - Revenue sharing between central government and local governments
  - Revenue equity in terms of sharing revenue in relation to the unique needs of LGs
  - Revenue simplicity in terms of transparency in sharing of revenue (particularly, how much is expected, and the timeliness in the release of funds)
  - Revenue equity in terms of mechanisms to consider particular LGs with unique needs
7. How has the degree of local governments' autonomy in the respective areas above affected your monitoring activities?

### ***(b) Capacity building extended to local governments***

8. How do you evaluate the capacity building extended to local governments in terms of?
  - Capacity building needs assessment procedures
  - Capabilities of providers to deliver the capacity building
  - Comprehensiveness of the capacity building programmes
  - Frequency and attendance of the capacity building programmes
  - Availability and utilisation of capacity building guides and tool kits
  - Mechanisms for capacity building evaluation and follow up
9. To what extent has capacity building improved LGs performance of their monitoring activities?

***(C) Working relationships among intergovernmental organs involved in monitoring the implementation of decentralisation***

10. How do you evaluate the working relationship among LG political organs, central government agencies and LG civil service organs involved in monitoring the implementation of decentralisation in terms of?

- Definition and clarification of roles and responsibilities
- Harmonisation of each party's goals and objectives
- Existing coordination mechanisms
- Existence of essential ingredients for a working relationship (trust, openness, respect and effective communication)
- Existence of mechanisms for conflict resolution

11. How do you assess the interplay of power relations among LG political officials, the civil service officials and the central government personnel involved in the monitoring process in terms of:

- Hierarchy and reporting mechanisms
- Supervision and control
- Power enforcement mechanisms

12. How do you evaluate the existing working relationship between the higher and the lower local government political organs involved in the monitoring process in terms of

- Definition and clarification of roles and responsibilities
- Existing coordination mechanisms
- Existence of essential ingredients for a working relationship (trust, respect and effective communication)
- Existence of mechanisms for conflict management

13. How do you assess the interplay of the power relations between the higher and the lower LG political organs involved in the monitoring process in terms of:

- Hierarchy and reporting mechanisms
- Supervision and control
- Power enforcement mechanisms

14. How has the existing intergovernmental working relationship affected your monitoring operations?

***(d) Collaboration between local governments and civil society organisations (CSOs) in the monitoring process***

17. What are the particular roles and responsibilities of LGs as collaborating parties in monitoring process?

18. How do you assess the existing collaboration between LGs and CSOs in terms of?

- Clarity of roles and responsibilities of the collaborating parties
- Existing coordination mechanisms
- Existing managerial and technical capacities of LGs as collaborating partners
- Existing level of openness and mutual trust between the collaborating partners
- Mechanisms for resolving conflict between the collaborating partners

**Thank you very much**



## APPENDIX 6: Research Consent Form

Faculty of Economic and  
Management Sciences  
School of Public Management  
and Administration  
Tel: (012) 420-4141

**Re: “Monitoring role of local governments in implementing decentralisation policy:  
the case of Uganda”**

Dear Respondent

You are invited to participate in an academic research study conducted by Stephen Gunura Bwengye -Doctoral student (10600877) from the School of Public Management and Administration at the University of Pretoria.

The purpose of the study is to examine the monitoring role of local governments in implementation of the decentralisation policy in Uganda in view of the institutional factors that influence the local governments’ performance in execution of this function. The study aims at assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of local governments in monitoring the implementation of development and service delivery programmes under decentralisation.

This is an anonymous study survey as your name will not appear on the interview Guide. The answers you give will be treated as strictly confidential as you cannot be identified in person based on the answers you give.

Your participation in this study is very important to us. You may, however, choose not to participate and you may also stop participating at any time without any negative consequences.

Please answer a number of questions on a face to face interview basis as completely and honestly as possible. This should not take more than 40 minutes of your time.

The results of the study will be used for academic purposes only and may be published in an academic journal. We will provide you with a summary of our findings on request.

Please contact my study leader, Professor, Dr. Thornhill on +27124203606 and or [Christhornhill@up.ac.za](mailto:Christhornhill@up.ac.za) if you have any questions or comments regarding the study.

Please sign the form to indicate that:

- You have read and understand the information provided above.
- You give your consent to participate in the study on a voluntary basis.

.....  
**Respondent’s signature**

.....  
**Date**



