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## Decentralisation and African Developmental States: Experiences from Uganda and Botswana

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Decentralisation is defined as the transfer of legal, administrative and political authority to plan, make decisions and manage public functions and services from central government to local government units (Nsibambi 1998). At some level, it has been conceived as ‘a natural, indispensable counterpart to pluralistic democracy: it extends the work of local democracy and fulfils democratic aspirations’ (Reddy 1999). In the post-colonial era, the state in both Botswana and Uganda took on the responsibility of development intervention—local government institutions were transformed from general administrative structures to become development institutions as well (besides roles pertaining to general law and order functions). Their portfolio of responsibilities was thus broadened quite considerably after independence—and the management of this has obviously varied within the two countries. In recent years, decentralisation strategies have been advanced as one way of providing solutions to some of the problems experienced in delivery processes.

Decentralisation therefore is significant in development planning in the sense that it facilitates the formulation and implementation of development plans, securing people’s participation so that greater attention can be given to the needs and priorities of the local population. In short, decentralisation is any act through which a central government formally transfers powers to actors and institutions at lower levels in a political administration and territorial hierarchy. This means the local level acts on behalf of the central government; strengthening state capacity in service delivery to the people.

Rondnelli (1984) identifies four distinct forms of decentralisation, depending on the degree of autonomy, amount of power sanctioned and resources and functions delivered to local government to manage their affairs:

- a) De-concentration – a transfer of power to local administrative offices of central government (Power at districts).
- b) Devolution – a transfer of power to sub national political power entities (power at regional level).
- c) Delegation – a transfer of power to statutory or corporate bodies for example councils, boards or commissions.
- d) Privatisation – a transfer of power and responsibility to private entities, for example companies, NGOs, and individuals.

Whether marginally or in totality, the above are evident in planning for development, provision and management of public or social services such as education, roads, water and sanitation facilities, construction of health centres and employment distribution. In an attempt to achieve this, Uganda and Botswana have applied several strategies (to differing degrees). Decentralisation has been part of this. The chapter starts with the case of Uganda and it is this that we now turn to.

### **The case of Uganda**

The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda provides for decentralisation as a system of local government. Article 176(1b) of the Local Government Act, 1997, stipulates that decentralisation shall be the principle applying to all levels of local government and in particular from higher to lower government units, to ensure peoples' participation and democratic control in decision-making.

The decentralisation policy currently under implementation was launched in a major presidential policy statement on 2 October 1992 (Tukahebwa 1998). In 1995, a new constitution provided for the sovereignty of the people, the devolution of powers to popularly elected local governments and for basic freedoms and liberties underpinned by the commitment to the rule of law and the protection of human rights.

Accordingly, the long-term aim of the decentralisation programme in Uganda has been to build a more democratic government that is responsive and accountable to the people. It focuses on promoting capacity building at the local level and to introduce local ownership of resources, power, plans and decision-making (Lengseth 1996; Cheema and Rondnelli 1983).

The essence of decentralisation in Uganda is captured in the underlying objectives of the programme namely:

1. To transfer real power to the district and thus reduce the load on the 'remote' and under-resourced central government officials, who are often remote in

terms of geographical distance and frequently unknown to the local people in terms of language, culture, interests and values.

2. To bring political and administrative control of services to the point where they are actually delivered and thus reduce competition for power at the centre and improve accountability and effectiveness in service delivery.
3. To free local managers and administrators from central constraints and thus allow them to develop organisational structures tailored to suit local circumstances.
4. To improve financial accountability by establishing a clear link between payment of taxes and the provision of services they finance, such as infrastructure development.
5. To restructure government machinery in order to make the administration of the country more efficient and effective, thus reducing bureaucratic procedures that sometimes complicate and delay decision making.
6. To create a democracy that will bring about more efficiency and productivity in the state machinery through involvement of the people at all levels (Decentralization Secretariat 1993).

In all, decentralisation is officially aimed at creating a local government system that is democratic, participatory, and development-oriented. This indicates that the system empowers communities 'to take charge of their own destiny through local institutions of self governance and resource mobilization' (Nielson 1996:2).

### Historical development of decentralisation in Uganda

Decentralisation is not strange to Uganda; it has its roots in the historical development of the country. Before the arrival of the colonialists, the local area had kingdoms and settlements. Among the kingdoms, there was Buganda which was a highly centralised monarchy but with semi-decentralised structures of '*Ssaꞗá*' (county) '*Gombolola*', (sub-county) '*Muluka*' (parish) and '*Byalo*' (village). This structure was headed by chiefs who were determined by the Kabaka, whom he changed as he so wished.

When the colonialists assumed authority over Uganda in 1894, they used Buganda as a model and replicated its administrative structure to other areas in the country. The whole country was transformed into villages, parishes, sub-counties, counties—all of which formed kingdoms. These units had powers to collect revenue, manage their communities and implement government policies on behalf of the British. This was known as 'indirect rule'. But this was not decentralisation per se as it practised politics of patronage with no empowerment of the local people to make autonomous decisions.

The 1962 independence constitution virtually maintained the system of local government inherited from the colonial period. Buganda enjoyed devolved powers with a federal status and other semi federal kingdoms, such as the Ankore and

Busoga kingdoms, enjoyed decentralised powers only in that these kingdoms maintained a patronage relationship with the central government. For example, these kingdoms had powers to raise revenue through taxes, draw and implement budgets to provide services. Central government funded these kingdoms to provide services, but continued to interfere in matters of the district councils, such as administration and accountability. This situation remained in place until 1966 when the constitution was abrogated and replaced by the 1967 republican constitution that centralised all the powers and halted the decentralisation dream.

Under the infamous Idi Amin regime, the constitution was suspended, parliament abolished and district councils dissolved. Centralisation was the norm, continuing throughout the post-Amin, pre-Museveni period. The NRM government (post-1986) however brought a difference in the system of administration. Local Administrations were called Resistance Councils, a hierarchical structure of councils and committees that stretched from the village up to the District. This was a total break from the past and the hitherto authoritarian tendencies of local chiefs were significantly undermined. It is to these councils that powers, functions and responsibilities of the local government have been decentralised. Resistance councils were later named Local Councils.

In Uganda, decentralisation was cemented by the 1995 constitution that stipulated that Uganda was to be governed in a decentralised form of local government. In the 1997 Act it was provided that administrative units would be based on, in rural areas, the county, parish and village; and in urban areas, on parishes or wards and divisions. A council at each level of the administrative unit was envisioned. At the village level all persons of eighteen years of age or above residing in that village are council members. An executive committee of nine people is elected. The village elects a chairman who then nominates six executive members as vice-chair, general-secretary, secretary for finance, secretary for security, secretary for production and environmental protection, and secretary for information, education and mobilisation.

Each parish elects two councillors one of whom must be a woman elected by all the people in the parish who are above 18 years. The second councillor can either be a man or a woman. Both councillors can be women but not men. The election is done by secret ballot. The District Council is a powerful local government unit. All sub-counties in the district elect councillors. Youths and people with disabilities meet and elect two councillors each. As provided in the Local Government Act, the district is powerful as district councils have powers to make laws not inconsistent with the constitution or any other laws made by the legislature. This strengthens the state capacity to be effective in solving local people's problems.

### **Financial management of local governments**

The 1997 Local Government Act defines the procedures and explains the means of revenue collections, distribution and accountability of expenses. District councils prepare development plans incorporating the plans of lower levels of Local Government for submission to the National Planning Authority. This is supposed to ensure that the needs of the people are planned for right from the national level. The district is the intermediary unit for effective co-ordination of services to the people.

The 1995 constitution gave local government powers to levy and collect tax. Indeed, local government have powers to levy, charge collect and appropriate fees and taxes in accordance with any law enacted by parliament, although no tax shall be imposed except under authority of parliament. I argue that implementation of these articles gives Uganda aspects of a developmental state in the sense that it has in place an effective and competent bureaucracy that is able to monitor and even evaluate the taxation policies and procedures. And these resources are used, albeit unevenly, to promote development within the country. Of course, local government revenue collections are a mere 8 percent of total income: 92 percent comes from the central government as grants. But it should be pointed out that this financial support from the central government to the district is not meant to patronise them, but to give them the required support in order to competently deliver services to the people.

District local revenue is collected at the sub-county level and as earlier mentioned, this is only 8 percent of the total district revenue. This 8 percent is interpreted as 100 percent of locally generated revenue; 65 percent of this revenue is retained at the sub-county and 35 percent is transferred to the district. The remaining 65 percent at the sub-county is made 100 percent and distributed as follows; 5 percent is transferred to the county, 5 percent to the parish and 25 percent to village councils. This means that the sub-county retains 65 percent.

### **Strengths of decentralisation in Uganda**

Decentralisation can be seen as one of the cornerstones of Uganda's governance and demystifies central power by bringing it closer to people at the grassroots (Makara 2000; Oyugi 2000; Fofana 1997; Tukahebwa 1998; Chikulo 2000). This is what Uganda has experienced since 1986 and it can be argued that decentralisation has helped Uganda to overcome its authoritarian and dictatorial legacy (Manor 1999: 85). In Uganda, it is important to note that the exploitation of the appointed local chiefs, which had lingered on since colonialism, was broken by decentralisation through the introduction of elected local councils, which has also provided an opportunity for marginalised groups such as people with disabilities, women and youths to present their views and participate in public affairs. Seats are reserved for these groups in local councils. In regard to this,

Makara (2000: 89) contends that decentralisation has gender sensitive aspects and empowers women, while Manor (1999: 84) points out that decentralisation facilitates fairness to women. In other words, decentralisation is all-inclusive and from this perspective can be seen to be developmental.

Decentralisation has also given opportunities to citizens to access channels of decision-making. These channel includes local councils where citizens can therefore articulate their interests and demands to public officials. The issues of local communities can easily be addressed on the political agenda and considered in the decision-making process. Obviously, the system is not perfect, but such access can be seen to indicators of good governance, a characteristic of development. This is further bolstered by the improved resource mobilisation that decentralisation has brought; most districts have realized sharp increments (as big as 350 percent of original funds) in a very short while. For example, Iganga district's income rocketed from 300 million Uganda shillings in 1994 (out of taxations, signing of agreements, trade permits, tenders licences and court fees etc) to 1 billion shillings in 1995 (Jubilee Plus-Uganda 1999: 7). Because people have seen that their money is put to good use, through provision of education, security, the development of infrastructure and employment opportunities, Ugandans are today more willing to pay taxes than before due to evident returns.

Furthermore, decentralisation has led to improved service delivery, mainly in areas such as road maintenance and infrastructure development. Local leaders are mandated to locate services and the system has effectively integrated isolated communities into regional economies. There is effective monitoring and evaluation in implementing development projects. Narrowing down gaps in accessibility to social amenities and bringing social services nearer to the people is also a feature of decentralisation. It has improved accountability of the public services—for instance, incomes and expenditure at sub-county level are displayed on notice boards for the taxpayers to view and comment. This is one of the key features of a 'developmental state'—having an effective and competent system which is able to deliver services, and even evaluating system that is accountable to the people.

Decentralisation has also improved performance through building local government's capacity to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate their own development projects basing on their respective unique circumstances. Because of decentralisation, citizens participate in planning and management of their own affairs. They are enabled to locate priority areas and design appropriate strategies to implement them. As local needs are channelled to the central government, there is closer contact between government officials and the local population, hence facilitation to the formulation of more realistic and effective plans.

As a development policy, therefore, decentralisation has turned into a blessing in managing development and projects efficiently and effectively from the centre to lower levels in terms of planning and control of development activities. Administrative performance, transparency, accountability and legitimacy have all been arguably realized in Uganda. Locally elected leaders are generally more responsible and accountable to the electorate because it has powers to recall their representative or leaders. Local councils act as 'watch-dogs' over civil servants working in their areas. This minimises abuse of office, corruption and embezzlement of public fund.

This of course is not to overlook problems. There is currently a lack of consciousness and understanding of the roles and responsibilities of executive members at the different levels introduced by decentralisation. Elected local chairpersons are often in dispute with appointed civil servants over roles. At the same time, citizens frequently do not know that it is their role or do not have the capacity to demand and put pressure on their leaders to deliver. Furthermore, local councils have the challenge of preparing their own budget, yet they frequently do not have the skills. The required qualification to be the chairman or on the council is only form four and no academic qualification is asked for at the lower councils, as long as one is a citizen of Uganda, illiterate or not!

### **Threats to decentralisation**

It is clear from experience that with resources, power and prestige there must be struggles and competition. This affects the benefits of decentralisation. In Uganda, decentralisation under the NRM may partly be explained as a check and measure against the demands of federalism. It is however pertinent to add that it has taken a new turn in being used for political campaigns and election purposes, hence the mushrooming of districts like Kanungu, Kyenjojo, Yumbe, Nakapiripirit, Sironko and Kamwenge. The viability of some of these districts is still in doubt but they are there in the name of decentralisation. The people of Ibanda and Kikagati sub-district are pressing for the further 'slicing' of Mbarara district in the name of bringing services nearer to the people. But there is scarcity of resources at the local level. Inadequate physical infrastructure, transport and communication linkages all have hindered development. Some areas are remote and the local authorities may be unable to overcome such problems, making those areas more prone to being under-served. Unless the central government intervenes such areas will remain lagging behind.

Furthermore, despite the argument that NRM was to give people power to govern themselves through grass-root participation, the local councils have basically become grounds for rewarding supporters of the government. Mamdani (1992: 112) has characterised decentralisation in Uganda as decentralisation without

democratisation whilst Tukahebwa (2000) argues that it has endangered some elements of democracy.

Certainly, recruitment of personnel at the district is based on know-who rather than know-how. The problem of tribalising staff through selective recruitment cuts across all districts. The district service commission reward supporters of district elected officials and their relatives. The district service commission has failed to uphold the merit principle that is vital in the public administration, which threatens to undermine the developmental potential of decentralisation in Uganda. Patronage and clientele politics is more evident at the local level. But, decentralisation, however imperfect, has contributed to Uganda's development and demonstrates the potential rewards that can be achieved if implemented properly.

### **The case of Botswana**

Having discussed the case of Uganda, we now turn to the case of Botswana. It has already been noted elsewhere, the Botswana state actively engages in planning through a number of institutions, with the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning as the key institution that energises the planning process. This section discusses the role of local authorities in Botswana's planning process through decentralisation.

National Development Planning is a deliberate effort by the government to coordinate economic decision making to achieve development objectives (Todaro 1994). The Botswana case of development planning has defied views that National Development Planning has retarded rates of economic growth and discouraged the evolution of institutions and procedures that could lead to more effective decision-making. National Development Planning has occupied centre stage in Botswana's development trajectory and the success of development planning in Botswana has been linked to the decentralised nature of the planning process as well as to the commitment of the country's political leadership.

The existence of local government dates as far back as the colonial period and beyond, where the chiefs were the major players in the administration of the country. It was not until after independence that democratically elected local government institutions came into being. As a unitary state, parliament has powers to legislate for all districts of the country without exception. Local authorities in Botswana such as city councils, town and district councils etc do not derive their existence directly from the constitution but are a creation of an ordinary act of parliament. The implication of this is that local authorities exist at the mercy of parliament, that is, they can be established and dissolved by parliament. Although local government in Botswana covers Tribal Administration, District Administration, District Councils and Land Boards, this chapter focuses on District Councils and District Administration as the two institutions which are of particular

importance in district development planning. The two institutions are discussed below.

### ***i) District Administration***

There has been some controversy surrounding the issue of whether district administration is a form of decentralisation. District administration has been associated with a 'deconcentrated' form of decentralisation. And this deconcentration has been seen by some as merely a method by central government to increase its powers by more effectively curbing liberties (Mawhood 1983). In fact, the District Commissioner is the senior representative of the President in the district but he/she is administratively responsible to the Ministry of Local Government. This has been seen by some as proving the existence of the central government's hand at the local level.

This particular local authority is headed by a District Commissioner (DC) who is the most senior central government representative at local or district level. He/she coordinates the overall implementation of developmental projects at district level. In doing so, he is assisted by the District Officers (these are trained professionals, an important aspect of development planning). Additionally, the District Commissioner is the chair of the District Development Committee (DDC) and the District Officer (Development) is the executive secretary of the DDC.

### ***ii) District Councils***

District Councils represent a form of decentralisation often referred to as devolution. They are semi or wholly autonomous institutions at the district or local level. It should be noted that the term autonomous (referring to these local authorities) has been used loosely. The political cadre of the District Council is comprised of the Council Chairperson as the head and councillors who are democratically elected. At the same time, the administrative cadre is made up of the Council Secretary as the head and permanent staff who are professionals. The Council Secretary jointly manages the District Development Committee with the District Commissioner. The key person in the district planning process is the Council Planning Officer (CPO). The CPO is responsible for all council planning matters and plays a major role in the formulation and implementation of the district development plan. And in so doing, he closely works with the DO(D).

District Councils have the statutory responsibilities of providing basic social amenities in the form of primary education, primary health, potable water, construction and maintenance of ungazetted roads, sanitation and recreational facilities, social and community services, fire services. In addition, they work as an approving body for the district plans.

## **Development planning and decentralisation in Botswana**

### ***i) National Development Planning***

As stated in the Eighth National Development Plan, planning in Botswana is done in the context of a free market economy and it is intended to ensure that maximum benefits are derived from the limited financial resources by prioritising policies, programmes and projects. The National Development Plan is the most important aspect of Botswana's development process.

The preparations of national plans involve various government departments, heads and planners. Each ministry is tasked with the responsibility of drawing up a development plan. These plans are then submitted to the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning for consideration and inclusion in the National Development Plan. The Ministry of Finance and Development Planning has an important coordinating role in the development process. The Economic Committee of Cabinet, which comprises ministers, permanent secretaries, heads of defence and police services and the governor of Bank of Botswana, makes the final decision about resource allocation between various ministries and organisations, to settle any outstanding policy issues. This will then result in the Draft National Development Plan. The plan will then be placed before the national assembly for approval.

### ***ii) District Development Planning***

Botswana's commitment to decentralised planning is echoed in the District Planning Handbook of Botswana. The district planning handbook suggests that the district planning process must take into cognisance the fact that people are involved in rural development. It further states that district planning process aims at providing a decentralised planning and implementation capacity which is sensitive and responsible to the needs, problems and priorities of local communities (District Planning Handbook, 1999:79). The assumption here is that at the heart of district planning there is people.

The two most important institutions in the district development planning are the district council and district administration. The hub of district planning is the District Development Committee. This committee is responsible for coordinating activities at the district level and it is chaired by the District Commissioner as noted earlier. Since district development planning is a joint endeavour, it brings together contributions from central government ministries, council, non-governmental organisations and community based organisations. This mixed bag of representatives ensures diversity in viewpoints and experiences.

Although the District Commissioner plays a pivotal role in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of the district development plans, approval powers rest with the district council. After the CPO has prepared and presented

the district plans before the village development committee, he presents them to the DDC for approval and thereafter they are presented before council for approval. Councillors are supposed to be a crucial ingredient during the approval of the plans as they are the people's representatives. Unfortunately, this is not the case however. The calibre of councillors has been an area of concern for sometime. Most councillors lack even the minimum education making it difficult for them to comprehend issues of planning and development. Botswana hence suffers from similar problems as Uganda on this score.

Following the approval of the district plans by council, they are then compiled into one plan by the DO(D) and submitted to the Ministry of Local Government for presentation to the district plans committee. This committee is made up of officials from the Ministries of Local Government and Finance and Development Planning.

The very idea that the DC is central in the district development planning has led critics to suggest that district planning is the domain of the DC, hence central government. It leaves one to wonder whether the felt needs and aspirations of the grassroots are represented as their participation is minimal if not non-existent. Makgatlhe (1995) in a rebuttal posits that the making of district plans is based on extensive consultation with the district community and hence the overall plan is the reflection of the aspirations of district residents regarding their future needs in their respective district. In essence, the argument is that district planning is characterised by bottom-up planning. This bottom-up planning, it is assumed, is achieved through district and village development bodies like Village Development Committees, village extension teams, district extension teams, farmers association and the *Kgotla* (often times seen as the Tswana democratic institution). However, Noppen (1982) dismisses this claim arguing that the *Kgotla* neither allows young men, women, poor people to influence the decision making process. One possible explanation for this is that the *Kgotla* is a formal institution and this to some extent hinders participation. In addition to Noppen's claim, the *Kgotla* has been used as a forum to legitimise the (BDP) government's policies. It must be said that too much of lip service has been paid to the so-called bottom-up planning approach in Botswana.

### **The relationship between National Planning and District Development Planning**

The district development planning system is supposed to link together all district level agents (blending deconcentration and devolution) and linking them to national planning (Gasper 1990). According to Gasper, this is for the reasons of participation at grassroots (from below district level) and coordination (from district and sub-district level upwards). District development plans should be prepared before the National Development Plan so that the final copy of the

National Development Plan should ideally incorporate input from the District (Hobona 1995). In fact district development plans form the basis for the preparation of the National Development Plan, at least in theory. However, the National Development Plan takes precedence over district planning and this is quite problematic.

It is quite difficult to establish the link between National Development Planning and district development planning. Nevertheless, there are various institutions where the two processes merge. The National Development Plan and the district plan in Botswana relate through the rural development unit in the Ministry of Local Government. District planners can obtain some information on the government policies, projects, proposals, methods and procedures to be followed from this unit. It is often argued that this allows regular contact between the centre and the district. One commentator is of the view that if exercised effectively this could give the districts a chance to prepare development plans consistent with the National Development Plans but in practice the rural development unit has very little contact with the district (Ngwato 1990). Another linkage between the centre and district is the National District Development Conference (NDDC) which has been recognised as the most effective form for information exchange between the centre and the district. Sharma (1999) posits that the NDDC is the avenue where all district level development offices meet with the relevant officers of the central government and serves as an instrument of horizontal and vertical communication. Contrary to the view that there is a relationship between the National Development Planning and district planning, it is contended that maintaining a close relationship between the two is one of the most difficult aspects of DDP preparation and implementation.

### **Limitations and constraints of District Development Planning**

District planning in Botswana is encumbered by a lack of control and financial resources such that at the end of the day district development plans are reduced to mere shopping lists. Makgatlhe (1995) notes this is so because the decentralisation process in Botswana has not been matched with financial control and autonomy. This is evident in projects indicated in the district development plan as they are approved by central government. Funding for development and recurrent funds of local authorities, particularly councils, are mainly derived from the central government, thus making it easy for them to be controlled from the centre. This situation has resulted in some commentators arguing that councils have been reduced to mere appendages of the central government. The District Development Committee in Botswana does not handle funds. In Uganda the situation is more or less the same with the resistance committee which operate like the DCC in Botswana. The resistance committees do not handle their own funds as they are controlled from the centre by the central resistance committee.

Planners in Gaborone particularly in the macro planning unit and with the sectoral responsibilities in the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, who are tasked with preparing the National Plan possess very little knowledge about rural areas and their problems. In addition, Ellison (1990) argues that many planners have never read a DDP and some admit to not even knowing what they are. He further asserts that some officers have bluntly reported that even if they did have district plans, in the end they proceed without reference to district plans. It therefore, leaves one to wonder whether the DDPs are incorporated in the National Development Plan.

There is also a problem of lack of information from the centre to the district. The central officials do not always avail the required planning information with regard to available resources to districts such that districts plan without adequate information. Ngwato (1990) stresses that as a consequence of this lack of information, the central government often regards district plans as ambitious.

Despite such problems experienced during the district development planning, district development planning *has* managed to bring some services closer to the people. This has been attributed to the commitment of the political leadership to rural development, an imperative intrinsic in developmental states, particularly ones locate in Africa. The onuses are upon the central government to ensure that its official's treat the district development plans with the importance that they deserve during the making of the National Development Plan.

### Conclusion

The cases of Uganda and Botswana demonstrate that local authorities through decentralisation are a key part of the development process in both countries, however uneven. This has been possible because the state in both countries is committed to development (though to different degrees). In Uganda, despite the threats to the system of decentralisation, and unlike in other developing countries like Nigeria, which have failed to reap fruits from decentralisation, Uganda's experience has brought benefits to the ordinary person. It has arguably led to participatory and collective responsibility in the development of the country, particularly in the rural areas.

Decentralisation in Uganda has gained momentum making the recovery process from massive degeneration of public service provision and the loss of political accountability quicker. The benefits from the process are surely visible. Though by no means perfect, local government allows the marginalised to air their views through their representatives, right up to the central government. The involvement of women and the disabled is institutionalised. Even in the developed world, it is rare to find such institutionalised empowerment. Resource mobilisation has equally increased and this is now matching the area covered in service provision and quality of service given (service coverage). Staff motivation has been given

consideration thus enhancing commitment, crucial if Uganda is to have any pretensions to being developmental, and planning capacity for those who have undergone training has greatly improved. However, there is room for improvement and inclusion for a truly democratic process, particularly creating conflict-free zones at different local levels. The challenge is to make decentralisation work more and more in the service of development.

In Botswana too, although local authorities are allowed to make an input in the development process through district development plans, the final decision as to what goes into the National Development Plan rests with the central government. Nevertheless, local authorities play an important role in Botswana's developmental process and have aided the development trajectory of the country. They have not only brought services such as basic education, roads, health facilities etc closer to the electorate but have also played a key role in their provision. However, as noted above, a lack of resources is one of the major hurdles local authorities face, as they are overly dependent on central government for resources (both financial and human).

In both cases, decentralisation has been used as a tool by the government to improve service delivery and also, and this is contentious, to open up democratic space for input into both policy planning and implementation. In doing so, decentralisation can be said to help legitimise the regimes in both countries, visibly demonstrating to the populace that 'their' governments are delivering. As delivery is key to any notion of a developmental state, this can be said to be of high importance. Of course, as the chapter has shown, problems beset decentralisation in both countries; this is arguably normal and expected as ideal type models do not exist in the real world. But what cannot be denied is that decentralisation within the broader governance structures of both Botswana and Uganda demonstrates commitment to development and this commitment has been proven by demonstrable results.