



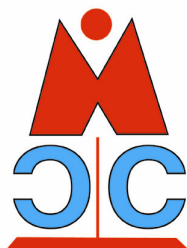
**THE REPUBLIC OF
UGANDA**
**Ministry of Local Government – Local Government Development Programme
(LGDP)**

**Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industries and Fisheries – Programme for
Modernisation of Agriculture (PMA)**

**In Association with
CARE International**

**SYNTHESIS REPORT ON COMMUNITY BASED PLANNING (CBP) PROJECTS IN
UGANDA**

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ABBREVIATIONS

APA	ActionAid Project Apac
CAPs	Community Action Plans
CBG	Capacity Building Grant
CBOs	Community Based Organisations
CBP	Community Based Planning
DDP	District Development Project - Pilot
DEAP	District Environment Action Plan
DLGTB	District Local Government Tender Board
DTPC	District Technical Planning Committee
EAP	Environment Action Plan
GoU	Government of Uganda
IPF	Indicative Planning Figure
KCP	Kumi Children's Project
LCs	Local Councils
LDG	Local Development Grant
LECs	Local Environment Committees
LGDP	Local Government Development Programme
LGs	Local Governments
MoLG	Ministry of Local Government
MoFPED	Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development
NGOs	Non Governmental Organisations
NPPA	National Priority Programme Areas
PMA	Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture
PMC	Project Management Committee
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PUIP	Peri-Urban Infrastructure Project
SCTPC	Sub-county Technical Planning Committee
SEAP	Sub-county Environment Action Plan
TPC	Technical Planning Committee
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPPAP	Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment Process
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The Local Government Development Programme (LGDP) in the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG), Programme for Modernisation of Agriculture (PMA) in the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) in association with CARE International commissioned the study to review the in-country experiences of Community Based Planning and its potential inputs to all levels of Local Government Planning Process.

To capture the experiences, lessons and identify information gaps, seven community based planning initiatives were sampled based on a set of criteria including among others NGO-led process/experiences, sector and open ended/non-sectoral planning, UPPAP experience, DDP/LGDP experience and donor experience. Each of the initiatives was facilitated to prepare a case study that was presented and discussed in a National Review workshop with the aim of drawing lessons, identifying best practices and knowledge gaps in order to inform national policy. To complement the data from the case studies, the consultants also reviewed a number of documents and synthesized the information into the final report.

Administrative Structures and Policies in Relation to LG Planning

The Government of Uganda has embraced the policy of decentralisation devolving the responsibilities of planning, resource allocation/budgeting and investment management to LGs in order to meet their mandated service provision responsibilities. As such it is a statutory requirement for each LG to produce a three-year integrated rolling development plan.

To ensure that the respective levels invest in priorities they can technically afford and of which they can meet the recurrent cost implications, the investment projects were categorised per administrative level. At the community level (village and parish), communities are encouraged to invest in small projects identified by themselves and which they can implement without recurrent cost implications for the Sub-county and District. The villages are encouraged to batch resources (form federations) in order to increase their capacity to implement and manage projects. Sub-county projects are relatively large and benefit a large population spread over a number of villages and that have recurrent costs met by the Sub-county. The District projects are those with recurrent cost implications to the district, which are even larger and sometimes benefiting more than one Sub-county.

Following from the above, it should be noted that in place are a number of structures in the LG system at the different levels that execute the planning function.

- Village Councils, Village Executives and Project Management Committees (PMCs) at the village level;
- Parish Councils, Parish Development Committees and the Parish Chief at the parish level;
- Sub-county/Division and Town Councils, Executives, Sectoral Committees, Technical Planning Committees and Investment Committees in lower LGs;
- District Councils, Executives, Sectoral Committees, District Technical Planning Committee and District Local Government Tender Board at the District level

The MoLG has issued planning process/cycle guidelines broadly involving information dissemination, needs identification, appraisal and allocation, formulation of the three-year investment/development plan, feedback, implementation, review, monitoring and evaluation. Worth noting is that, some LGs have not been able to follow the guidelines in order to produce the development plans. Nevertheless, under LGDP, a CBG has been provided among others to enhance the capacities of LGs in development planning and investment management.

Planning Process in Practice

Practice in LGs: Whereas in place are statutory structures responsible for planning, there are also a number of other structures formed by CBP practitioners to perform similar functions. Some of these structures complement LG planning processes yet others are managed parallel to the LG set-up and serve to weaken rather than strengthen the existing structures. The situation is complicated by the challenges faced in defining the most appropriate unit for CBP. Moreover the involvement of LG structures beneath LG has not taken firm root because among others LGs do not start the planning process on time as provided in the planning guidelines. As a result, most of the LG plans that are in place do not incorporate lower local council priorities and in a number of cases the communities do not explore their potential to address some of the problems at the community level through self-help initiatives. Beneath LG, planning is poorly coordinated, with a lot of overlaps and contradicting approaches. Planning in LGs is further constrained by the lack of the planning culture and skills leading to varying qualities of the development plans in place. Some of the plans are not up-dated; planning is still done sectorally with minimal integration and cross-sectoral analysis of problems and issues facing the LGs. There are also cases in LGs where investments supported by NGOs and funds from PAF are not derived from the development plans further defeating and stifling the rationale of having an integrated development plan.

Involvement of other players: Apart from individuals participating as members of the village councils, the private sector is not specifically involved in development planning yet it would have had significant input especially regarding project specifications and indicative costs. The NGOs commonly operate independently of LGs and their plans are often not integrated in those of LGs yet they have skilled personnel, logistics and the culture of consultations that would have facilitated the entrenchment of CBP in LGs if there were collaborative arrangements in place. It was also noted that in a number of cases LGs and NGOs have not devised strategies of involving traditional non-state institutions in planning despite the fact that they wield varying influences in different communities in Uganda. To ensure management, operation and maintenance of projects, PMCs have been formed in a number of communities but they have varying capacities and commitment.

Financing of Community Based Projects

The major source of funding for LGs are transfers from the centre (conditional, unconditional and equalization grants) and Graduated Tax collected as local revenue. The transfers from the centre are progressively increasing in both numbers and volumes as opposed to GT the most reliable source of local revenue that is facing a number of challenges including high default rates and payments being made at the end of the FY making it difficult to implement CBP. Nevertheless, Urban Councils reported to be

realising more revenue from a wide range of local sources not available to rural LGs. Some LGs are receiving funds from donors and others have been able to attract management skills and funds from the private sector through contracting out the management of services and facilities. It was reported that the community members are willing to contribute to co-financing a programme especially those where they have more decisions and choices as to what to do with the resources. It was also realised that where the private sector is fully convinced that the returns from user fees are attractive, they would prefer to provide their own capital to finance and operate such investments under the Build Operate and Own (BOO) arrangement.

Under the LGDP/DDP, flow of funds is fully integrated within the LG system. One of the major lessons learnt from the PUIP/DDP-Pilot experiences is that funds flow mechanisms to LGs should be within the existing institutional structures but with careful gap-stopping measures as a form of enhancing functional capacities in planning, financial management, public procurement, monitoring and evaluation as a management tool. It was also realised that there is need for a strong execution (monitoring and evaluation) responsibility from the centre (MoLG).

Most of the NGOs finance physical infrastructure projects and financial flows are always in line with NGO financial management systems and procedures. Some of the NGOs transfer the funds to the community accounts upon submission of a work plan and accountability of the previous releases. Whereas the communities are encouraged to open up bank accounts, most of them lack financial management, procurement and accountability skills. There are also some NGOs that transfer funds to LGS but on an NGO specific bank account, which implies that control and accountability can only be enforced when the NGO staff are still in place.

Summary of Main Lessons

There were a number of lessons learnt regarding CBP including among others the following:

- The process of CBP is more productive if there are motivated and skilled Resource Persons at the grassroots to drive it;
- Most of the projects that are identified at the community level are mainly infrastructure and are aimed at addressing immediate/felt needs (problem/needs based) as opposed to being aspiration/vision based – looking at long term issues;
- The absence of a strong LG structure to coordinate the planning function and/or the reluctance of the major practitioners within the LGs to integrate their plans with those of the LGs is a major constraint to the institutionalisation of CBP;
- Prioritisation of projects at parish level tend to filter out village priorities because people at the parish level tend to look at bigger projects, wider in scope than individual villages
- For purposes of making realistic plans and a balanced budget, it is important for the communities to know the resources that will be allocated to them well in advance (the community members become cost conscious if they know the resource constraints and are likely to be motivated to participate in CBP)

Implications

Implications to Policy, Government and Donors

- There is a need to make some of the structures (like PMCs, PDCs and ICs) that have proved to be effective part of the law (statutory structures).
- There is need to harmonise national level policies like those regarding structures in the Environment Statute and Local Government Act;
- Make a provision in the law and guidelines to incorporate the non-state institutions in the execution of the planning function;
- Harmonise the planning guidelines (legal framework) for integrated planning;
- Ensure harmonisation of modalities and channels of fiscal transfers from the centre to LGs;
- There is a need to invest more resources in developing the capacities of LGs for development planning. Training should be on-the-job, delivered in a realistic/functional and not only conceptual manner. There is also need for logistical support and ample time for fieldwork for practitioners to learn and share experiences.

Implications for practice

Irrespective of the method used and training delivered, CBP will remain abstract unless there is a conducive framework that goes beyond processes of identification of investments, towards allocation and investment management systems. Therefore operationalizing CBP should involve:

- Defining responsibilities/functions that should be performed at the respective levels of local authorities;
- Establishing a mechanism for resource allocation among the respective levels;
- Detailing mechanisms for communication, transparency, accountability and reporting;
- Administering incentives for progressive improvement in planning

Summary of areas to follow-up

The following emerged as contentious issues that require further exploration and resolution if communities are to realise the benefits of CBP.

- Deepening CBP processes at lower levels (villages, parishes and sub-counties)
- Further mainstreaming of crosscutting issues (gender, environment, HIV/AIDS etc.) into the planning process at all the levels from the village to the national level.
- Tension between constraints (needs) based planning versus opportunities based planning
- Sharing resources between different levels of local governments
- Tension between development needs versus capacity/sustainability issues
- Raising community expectations (open ended planning versus budget constrained planning) and their effect on community participation
- Voluntarism versus reward/benefit systems
- Tension between national (NPPA) and local priorities
- Reconciling the planning periods of LGs and NGOs.
- Mechanisms of capturing (not loosing) the priorities of the marginalized groups in upper level plans within the framework of representative democracy
- Balance between social interests and technical feasibility in deciding on priorities

PART A: INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Project

There are a number of Community Based Planning (CBP) models in use in Uganda. Different practitioners have different perceptions of what CBP entails ranging from use of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) techniques for identifying community needs to the involvement of communities in the provision of services and maintenance thereafter. This experience is not unique to Uganda but it is also true for the other countries in the Africa Region.

Because of the diversity in approaches both in terms of understanding of the concept of CBP and the actual practise on the ground, the Local Government Development Programme (LGDP) in the Ministry of Local Government, Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture (PMA) and CARE International commissioned a study to review approaches to Community Based Planning (CBP) within the context of decentralisation and to document various experiences in-country for learning lessons and sharing experiences with other partners in the region.

The project will learn from best practice in 4 participating countries (Uganda, Zimbabwe, Ghana and South Africa) and in 2 countries that will be visited (India and Bolivia). A cross-country workshop was organised and took place in South Africa to share learnings. Khanya - managing rural change of South Africa is managing the project overall but is working closely with in-country partners to achieve country objectives and the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) is providing research and dissemination support.

1.2 Objectives of the Assignment

The objective of the assignment was to produce a review of experiences in-country of participatory planning and its potential inputs to all levels of Local Governments planning process. During the review process lessons learnt and gaps identified were documented. The good practices are to be replicated where possible and further work would be undertaken to address gaps identified.

1.3 Methodology and Approach of the study

The consultant¹ followed the following process in carrying out the assignment:

a) Selection of Community Based Planning Initiatives:

Seven on-going CBP initiatives were selected on the basis of the following criteria

CBP Initiative	Criteria for choice
I. ActionAid Project Apac	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NGO experience• Open ended focus• Parish level planning experiences• Use of Community Facilitators
II. Kotido District Local Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment Project
III. Save the Children Denmark - Kumi Children's Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NGO experience• Sector focus - Child Rights issues
IV. Kayunga District Local Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DDP/LGDP experiences• Focus on District and Sub-county Planning experiences• Experiences with the use of IPFs
V. Environment Action Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NGO experience• Donor experience• Sector focus – Environment
VI. Concern World-wide - Rakai experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Open ended focus• NGO experiences
VII. Parish Development Committees (PDCs) – UNICEF	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Donor experience• Parish Development Committees almost operational country wide.

b) Preparation of case studies

The consultant assisted representatives of the chosen organisations to prepare case studies of their experiences in the implementation of their specific methodology of CBP on the basis of an agreed on format. The case studies were reviewed and discussed with representatives of the selected organisations and suggestions were made on how the case studies could be improved.

¹ The Consultants were Emmanuel Ssewankambo and Patrick Okuma of Mentor Consult Ltd P.O Box 54 Kyambogo, Kampala E-mail: mentor@africaonline.co.ug

c) Organisation and facilitation of a review workshop:

A national review workshop was organised in which the seven case studies selected to represent a wide cross-spectrum of approaches (sectoral, non-sectoral planning, NGO led and Local Government-led etc.) were presented. The workshop, which was hosted by UPDNet took place on the 12 - 13 June 2001 at Cardinal Nsubuga Leadership Training Centre and was attended by 55 participants (see workshop report presented as a separate volume). The case studies formed the basis for discussions aimed at drawing out lessons learnt in the implementation of the different approaches, best practices, and knowledge gaps in order to inform national policy.

d) Review of secondary data

The Consultant also reviewed a number of critical documents relevant to CBP which included among others:

- PMU/MoLG; Community Participation Review, 1997
- MoLG/LGDP; Reports on DDP/LGDP Minimum Conditions and Performance Measures (June 1998, August 1999, December 2000)
- PMU/MoLG; DDP M&E Review Reports (November/December 1999)
- Guidelines on CBP developed by the participating organisations

e) Reporting

The assignment involved three sets of reports/outputs:

- Case studies: The case studies that were documented and presented in the National Review workshop were refined and compiled into a report.
- Workshop report: The consultants prepared a report on the proceedings of the national review workshop capturing the lessons learnt, information gaps and areas to follow up in the action research
- Synthesis report: The Consultants prepared a draft synthesis report on the status of CBP in Uganda derived from the case studies and workshop proceedings. The CBP steering group reviewed the draft report and inputs from them informed the refinement of the draft report into the final report on the Country Status Report on CBP.

PART B: CURRENT SITUATION

2.0 Administrative Structures and Policies in relation to Local Government Planning

2.1. Policies

The GoU decentralisation policy was announced in 1992 and led to the Local Government (Resistance Councils) Statute in 1993. This provided for transfer of powers and resources to Local Governments. During 1994 the first stages of fiscal decentralisation were underway in thirteen districts and Urban Councils. Subsequently, the Constitution 1995 and the Local Government Act, 1997 both further entrenched the principles of decentralisation by empowering Local Governments with responsibilities for the allocation of public resources, for integrated participatory planning, budgeting and investment management. The 1997 Local Government Act further increased the scope of service responsibilities for lower level local councils, Sub-counties and Divisions. Under these legal frameworks, control of substantial amount of public resources was devolved to Local Governments.

The objectives of decentralisation were to:

- Transfer real power to local councils and thus reduce the load of work on remote and under-resourced Central Officials.
- Bring political and administrative control over services to the point where they are actually delivered thereby improving accountability and effectiveness and promoting the peoples feeling of ownership of programs and projects executed in their local councils.
- Free local managers from central constraints and, as a long-term goal, allow them develop organisational structures tailored to local circumstances.
- Improve financial accountability and responsibility by establishing a clear link between the payment of taxes and the provision of services they finance.
- Improve the capacity of Local Councils to plan, finance and manage the delivery of services to their areas of jurisdictions.

The Local Government Act has created five tiers of Local Councils. The highest level is the District/City Council (level 5). This is followed by County/Municipal Council (level 4); Sub-County/Municipal Division/Town Council (level 3); Parish/Ward Council (level 2) and Village Council (level 1).

The District Council; City Council; Municipal Council; Sub-County Council; Municipal Division Council and Town Council are Local Governments. The County Council, Parish Council and the village Council are administrative units. Local Governments are corporate bodies and they are charged with service provision responsibilities, which are clearly delineated in the Second Schedule of the Local Governments Act, 1997.

2.2 Categories of projects:

Every Local government is required by law to have a three-year integrated rolling investment/development plan. This means that the plan need to be reviewed and updated every year to take out what has already been implemented in the current financial year and include priorities for another year. The process of annually updating the development plans apart from serving the purpose of revising the local level priorities is also intended to inform national planning, the Medium Term Expenditure Framework and budgeting.

Local government projects can generally be categories according to the criteria of what level of local government will carry the recurrent costs implications or which level of local government will have the largest say in making decision on allocation of resources. Here below the different levels are presented with the indicative investment projects.

2.2.1 Community Investment Projects

These are investment projects to be implemented at the village/parish level. They are small projects identified by the communities themselves to be implemented without any recurrent costs implications for the Sub-county or District. Examples of community projects include among others spring protection, and clearing footpaths. Because the amount of resources at this level are commonly low and given the fact that some problems cut across villages, the villages and/or parishes are encouraged to batch resources together (form a federation between villages) to invest in a priority area.

2.2.2 Sub-county projects

Sub-county projects are relatively larger than community projects and normally benefit a larger population spread over a number of villages. These projects are decided on by the sub-county and have recurrent cost implications mainly at the sub-county level. Examples are drilling boreholes, improvements on primary schools. Despite the fact that there are differences between the community and sub-county projects, lower local governments (Sub-counties/Divisions and Town Councils) are required to prepare plans that incorporate priorities of the lower councils under their jurisdiction.

2.2.3 District projects:

Projects that are decided on by the district are bigger and benefit large populations, sometimes spread over several sub-counties. These projects have recurrent cost implications at the district. Examples are new health units, feeder roads, secondary schools etc. The district is empowered to prepare a comprehensive and integrated development plan incorporating the plans of lower level local governments (Sub-counties and Town Councils) for submission to the Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED). However, statutorily the plans are supposed to be submitted to the National Planning Authority and the role will shift from the MoFPED once the National Planning Authority is constituted.

2.3 Different Structures and their Roles

The following structures existing within the local government system at the different levels play various roles in the planning process. It should also be noted that there are a number of other parallel structures created by other practitioners especially NGOs which are playing similar roles with the ones discussed below. Worth noting is that the indicative roles presented below represent an ideal situations but there exists a number of variations across the country.

2.3.1 Village level structures

Structure	Indicative Roles
I. Village Council (All community members in the village, including the marginalized)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend community meetings to discuss/identify problems/needs of the area and available resources Contribute locally available materials and labour towards the community projects Provide basic operation and maintenance costs
II. Village Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobilise community members for planning meetings Oversee implementation of village council decisions Monitor project implementation (site monitoring) and report to village council
Project Management Committee (Water Source Committee. They are supposed to be composed of representatives of users, LC Executives, disadvantaged groups, and women.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing site security On the spot monitoring of project implementation Verifying contractors works before payment by sub-county Mobilising community contribution for project implementation Organising community operation, management and maintenance Collection of user fees

2.3.2 Implementation Structures at the Parish level

Structure	Indicative Roles
I. Parish Council (Composed of all village executives)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes final decision about priorities of the parish through some basic appraisal process;² Submits parish priorities to the sub-county

² Under the LGDP modality, the Parishes are supposed to receive Indicative Planning Figures to guide their prioritization process. They are also encouraged to plan for investments they will implement using local resources.

Structure	Indicative Roles
Parish Development Committee (composed of 5 members selected by LC II, 2 representatives from each village. Parish Chief and chairperson LC II are ex-officio members)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of problems/needs of the community • Prioritise investments within the limits of available funds • Initiate development ideas and profiles for the parish • Monitor development activities • Keep records and submit reports to parish council • Oversee and ensure completion of the projects.
I. Parish Chief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work closely with Parish Council to mobilise people to participate and contribute resources towards the projects³

2.3.3 Implementation structures in Lower Local Governments

The Lower Local Governments include Sub-counties/Divisions and Town Councils.

Key Actor	Programme Implementation Roles and Responsibilities
I. Sub-county/Division and Town Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning authority in the sub-county. Its major role is approval of investment projects, plans and budgets • Discuss and approve three year development plan • Collect actual planning ideas from the parishes and ensure incorporation of lower councils priorities in the investment plans. • Forward plans to district for integration
II. Sub-county Executive Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee the implementation of council decisions • Monitor and supervise projects and other activities undertaken in the local government, NGOs and other development players
I. Sectoral Committees (The sectoral committee work closely with the TPCs and report to council through the Executive Committee)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare sector plans (like health, education and water) and submit to council for consideration • Appraise proposed projects and act as the initial clearing house before the executive • Foster co-ordination and collaboration in implementation of sector activities in the sub-county by the different stakeholders • Monitor and assess the progress of implementation of sector activities in the sub-county • Submit routine and periodic reports to council through the Executive

³ It should be noted that whereas the Parish Chiefs have the responsibility and potential to perform broader functions in regard to planning, project implementation, monitoring and management, till to-date they have not been oriented and equipped with the skills to perform this function and are still focusing on their conventional function of Graduated Tax collection which is even in a number of cases not forthcoming.

Key Actor	Programme Implementation Roles and Responsibilities
<p>IV. Technical Planning Committee (TPCs are composed of the Sub-county chief/Town Clerk, Sub-accountant/Town Treasurer and all extension staff in the Sub-county/Town Council)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise council regarding preparation of plans and budgets through the provision of data/information, advising on resource allocation, endowment and deprivation. • Appraises individual investment projects before presentation to sectoral committee • Certifies investment projects (minor building and water works) • Monitor implementation of parish infrastructure projects and use of funds • Oversee the performance of the PDCs (where available) • Resolve conflicts between PDCs and communities
<p>IV. Investment Committee The IC is a sub-committee of council but with co-opted membership of varying and relevant expertise. Ideally the IC consists of the following representation. Council representatives, Relevant retired civil servants, Representatives of disadvantaged groups (e.g. women, youth, the disabled), Community representatives, Personnel from relevant technical departments in the sub-county and district</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise investments • Prepare preliminary design/costing of sub-county and community projects • Monitor implementation of projects • Verify the certification of contractors works to Sub-county for payment

2.3.4 Implementation structures at District Level

Structure	Indicative Roles
<p>I. District Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning authority in the district. • Its major role is soliciting of actual planning ideas and feeding them to the Planning Unit and approval of investment projects, plans and budgets • Formulate three year development plan for the district • Incorporate plans of lower LGs • Forward plans to Ministry of Local Government
<p>II. District Executive Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee the implementation of council decisions • Monitor and supervise projects and other activities undertaken in the local government, NGOs and other development players

Structure	Indicative Roles
III. Sectoral Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare sector plans (like health, education and water etc.) and submit to council for consideration • Foster co-ordination and collaboration in implementation of sector activities in the district (including the activities of NGOs and CBOs) • Monitor and assess the progress of implementation of sector activities in the district • Submit routine and periodic reports to council
IV. District Technical Planning Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise council regarding preparation of plans and budgets • Appraises individual investment projects before presentation to council • Co-ordinate implementation of the district projects on behalf of council • Certifies investment projects • Mentor Lower LGs
V. District Local Government tender Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorise procurement of council's requirements • Award contracts for works, goods and services • Maintain a pre-qualified list of contractors and suppliers • Maintain a list of contracts awarded and a blacklist of poor contract performers • Advise accounting officers on tendering procedures • Ratifies below-the-threshold procurements

2.4 Planning Process

The following are the Local government planning steps as provided by the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG). Worth noting is that most of the lower LGs have not been able to follow the guidelines either because of lack of planning skills, resources to facilitate the planning process or even lack of information about their resource envelopes/entitlements. As a result, most of the lower LGs either do not have investment plans in place or the quality of the plans to-date is far below the expected output. Nevertheless, under the LGDP modality there are funds put aside to enhance the capacities of LGs (the CBG) which some of the LGs are utilising to enhance their capacities in development planning and investment management.

ACTIVITIES FOR PREPARATION OF PLANS	MONTH
1. Information Dissemination	
a) Lower Local Governments are informed about decentralisation, roles of various levels of Local Councils and LDG allocation	September
b) Sub-county informs parishes about decentralisation, roles of various levels of Local Councils and Indicative Planning Figures (IPF) allocation	October
c) Parish Informs Communities about IPF	Nov - Dec.

ACTIVITIES FOR PREPARATION OF PLANS	MONTH
2. Needs Identification	
a) Communities identifies priorities	Jan – Feb
b) Communities forwards proposals and general priorities to the parish	February
c) Sub-county general planning and budget conference	February
d) Sub-county Sector Committees prepare proposals for 3 year investment projects	February
e) Parish prioritises and forwards proposals to the sub-county	March
f) Sub-county Investment Committee reviews projects: design and costs	March
3. Appraisal And Allocation	
a) Sub-county Technical Committee appraises proposals	April
b) Finance Committee costs recurrent budgets and make revenue budget	April
c) Sub-county council reviews appraisals and decides on investment projects to be financed	May
4. Formulation Of Three Year Investment/Development Plan	
a) Technical Committee compiles background data	Feb - April
b) Technical Committee compile situational analysis, sectoral workplans and approved investment plans into a complete plan	March – May
c) Sub-county Council reviews plans as well as budget and approves	June
5. Feedback	
a) Sub-county informs parishes about project appraisals & sub-county decisions	July
b) Three Year plan is publicised	July
c) Project Management Committees are checked and new ones formed	June
d) Parish advises the PMCs of approvals	July- August
6. Implementation	
a) Tendering of contracts	February
b) Contract awards	July
c) Contract supervision	On-going
d) Contract payments	On-going
7. Review, M & E	
a) Local Councils submit final accounts	October
b) District reviews performance of sub-counties	May
c) MoLG assessment of Local Governments	May – June
d) Final allocation of LDG	

PART C: LEARNING AND GAPS

3.0 PLANNING PROCESSES IN PRACTICE

3.1 Practice in Local Governments

3.1.1 Planning process beneath LG level⁴

As indicated in section 2.3, the statutory structures responsible for planning beneath LG level include the village councils, village executives, and parish councils and executives. In addition as indicated by the case studies in place are a number of structures beneath LG level that have been formed to execute the planning function by other CBP practitioners. Whereas some of these structures complement the LG planning processes (like the PDCs) others are managed parallel to the LG system and more often than not serve to weaken rather than strengthen the existing structures.

The scenario presented above is made more complicated because of the challenge of defining the most appropriate unit for CBP and hence difficulties in deepening CBP processes at lower levels. Nevertheless, in a number of case studies it was revealed that for effective representation, including the involvement of marginalized and disadvantaged groups, the village and parish levels are the most appropriate units for CBP. It was however noted that in many instances, this level do not adequately handle cross-cutting issues like environment and HIV/AIDS.

The involvement of statutory structures beneath LG (like village and parish Councils) in planning has not taken firm roots. This is attributed to among others, the fact that most local governments do not start the planning process according to the planning cycle in the planning guidelines. In order to beat the deadline of June 30 when local governments are required to have their plans and budgets approved by their respective councils, the plans are then done hurriedly, more often than not without integrating the plans of the lower councils as required. Sometimes a given level of Local government may not integrate the plans of the lower levels simply because the lower level authorities have not yet finalised their plans and yet the Local government has to beat the deadline of 30 June. This complicated by the fact that, the District and Lower Local Government statutory requirements and schedules are similar.

Planning beneath LG commonly concentrates on needs identification without necessarily addressing the strategies that can help to combat the problems. Little attempts are made to explore the communities potential to addressing some of the problems hence stifling self-help initiatives.

Poor co-ordination of the planning function beneath LGs is the cardinal cause of the disjointed planning in LGs, duplication in activities and the increase in number of contradicting implementation approaches.

⁴ In the context of this report, beneath LG level refers to Parish/Ward and Village levels.

3.1.2 Planning process at LG level

As discussed under section 2.3.3 and 2.3.4, the statutory structures responsible for planning at the respective LG levels include the councils, executive committees, sectoral committees, and technical planning committees. Under the LGDP/DDP lower LGs have also been encouraged to constitute investment committees to complement the technical planning committee in executing the development planning function, tap into the greater expertise in the LGs, bridge the councils and TPCs and ensure wider participation in planning. In place are also planning guidelines and the planning cycle to guide the LGs in planning.

In practice however, community based planning process does not follow the guidelines because of a number of constraints. Local governments do not have a culture of planning and lack skilled personnel to carry out their mandate of planning. While the law requires them to have a three-year rolling investment/development plan and the existence of a development plan is one of the minimum requirements to access funds under LGDP/DDP, in practice many local governments do not revise their plans in a timely fashion. The quality of the plans also varies greatly among the different local governments. Planning at the local government level is still done sectorally with very minimal integrated, cross-sectoral analysis of problems and issues facing the local governments. Some local governments at the lower levels may not even have any semblance of a development plan in place as was found out by the team which carried out performance assessment dated December 2000. It was reported that sixteen (16) LGs had not rolled their development plans to 2000/01 – 2002/03 with two LGs having plans dated 1998/2001 and one LG (Entebbe Municipality) having no development plan.

By inference, it seems that many LGs either have not internalised or question the rationale for development planning. Moreover, in a number of cases investments that are funded in the LGs especially by funds provided under PAF, by NGOs are not necessarily derived from the development plans and there are many investments in the development plans that are not funded.

3.2 *Involvement of other players*

3.2.1 The Private Sector

Apart from individuals participating in their capacities as members of the community, the private sector is not normally involved at the planning stage. Their involvement is at the implementation stage when they are contracted to supply goods, works and services to the community projects. This denies the community, the opportunity of using the expertise of the private sector in planning like determining the project specifications and indicative costs.

3.2.2 NGOs/CBOs:

As demonstrated by a wide range of case studies, there are a number of other stakeholders involved in CBP in the country especially NGOs and CBOs. Although the law specifies that the Local Governments have the responsibility of regulating the operations of the NGOs within their area of jurisdiction, in practice some NGOs operate almost independently of the local governments and more often than not their plans are

not integrated into the development plans of the local governments. The review also found out that the NGOs are better equipped to facilitate the process of CBP in that they have the skilled staff and the logistical support that is needed to facilitate the process. Most of the NGOs have a culture of consultations that they easily adapt to community based planning. Some of these organisations have also attempted to take participation in planning beyond needs identification to issues of resource allocation and investment management. LGs and NGOs should foster a collaborative arrangement that will ensure complementarity of efforts in resource allocation and service delivery.

Whereas Local Councils should steer the planning process, the external organisations should work within this framework to bring out and mainstream particular issues. The NGOs planning cycle must be merged into the LG cycle. External organisations should make their entry points into local communities through LC planning events and should be part of the plan. Planning skills should be transferred from NGOs to parish leaders and sub-county staff including the PDCs in order to build their capacity. External organisations wishing to support CBP in Local Governments should work within or support recognised structures and build on existing initiatives. When utilising the Capacity Building Grant (CBG), LGs should endeavour to ensure participation of NGOs as facilitators of their in-house workshops especially in the areas of participatory planning. NGOs on the other hand should also invite relevant LG staff to participate in their own workshops.

For the integration to be effective NGOs must be transparent in their commitments, timeframe and risks. They should use planning to present findings on particular issues to provoke discussion and raise issues. Planning process must go beyond identification of constraints/problems to deeper causes (gender, literacy, HIV/AIDS, Child Rights). There is need to be transparent about “outputs” and available funds.

3.2.3 Traditional institutions (Clans/ Elders)

In Uganda, different tribes have traditional institutions with varying degrees of influence. Whereas these institutions wield a lot of influence and control most of the decisions made in the communities, a number of stakeholders have not devised adequate strategies to elicit their involvement. Even in the LG planning guidelines, apart from these influential people being part of the village councils, their involvement is not particularly catered for. Where these institutions exist and are strong, their role in CBP must be recognised. Leadership of these institutions should be co-opted into the planning structures. This will ensure wider coverage, forestall interference in planning, and stimulate sustainability of the planning process, participation in implementation of the investments and guarantees management and utilisation of the facilities and services.

3.3 Relationship of community and LG structures

Some of the NGOs for example ActionAid Uganda and Concern World-wide have created parallel community structures to facilitate the planning process and yet there are in place statutory structures that are charged with the responsibilities of performing the duties for which they create these structures. On the other hand other NGOs for example CARE in Bushenyi work within the local government set up, supporting the local governments with the resources necessary for the realisation of their mandates.

In order to harmonise planning, minimise duplication and to ensure equitable allocation of resources to the different sections of the community, it is important that the local government initiates and co-ordinates the efforts of the different practitioners within its area of jurisdiction. As statutorily required the Local government should retain the responsibility of approving plans before they are implemented to ensure effective delivery of services within its mandate. The other players should complement and support the efforts of the local government. This can only be operationalised if the different players operate within the existing LC system instead of creating parallel structures. It should however, be noted that to-date the LGs have a lot of functional gaps in planning. But rather than bypassing them, the different stakeholders should serve to strengthen their capacities in order to spearhead and offer direction regarding planning.

3.4 Community Management

Community management, operation and maintenance of projects are mainly centred around the Project Management Committees (PMC). Under DDP/LGDP, any project with a well-defined user community is supposed to have a PMC. PMCs are composed of representatives of users, executive, disadvantaged groups, 40% women. They are responsible for:

- Providing site security
- On the spot monitoring of project implementation
- Verifying contractors works before payment by sub-county
- Mobilising community contribution for project implementation
- Organising community operation, management and maintenance
- Collection of user fees

4.0 FINANCING OF COMMUNITY BASED PROJECTS

4.1 Sources of funding

4.1.1 Sources of Local Government funds

The major sources of funding for Local Governments in Uganda are the graduated tax and transfers from the centre. The major transfers from the centre to Local Governments are the conditional, unconditional and equalization grants. It should be noted that the transfers from the centre to the LGs are increasingly taking a broader share of LG funding in both volumes and numbers of the grants. Despite a number of challenges in place, the Personal Graduated Tax is currently the most reliable source of revenue for Local Governments and it is probably the only tax people know most. It accounts for about 21% of Local Governments financing. User charge contributions, other miscellaneous sources and donor contribution account for the balance of 14%. The heavy reliance by LGs on graduated tax is disadvantageous in that it is not collected at once but in a piecemeal fashion and tax collection starts in the second half of the financial year making the implementation of planned activities difficult and hence stifling CBP.

In terms of revenue mobilisation urban Local Governments stand a better chance to collect more funds than rural Local Governments. Urban Local Governments can realise substantial yields from a wide range of tax sources that are not available in rural LGs like property tax and markets dues.

The other source of funding for Local Governments is donor support. Some Local Governments benefit from direct investments of donors and NGOs. Some bilateral donors have preferred to extend their supports directly to Local Governments. Donor support have greatly assisted some Local Governments in terms of increased investment and improved service delivery like the case is for Rakai, Kibaale and Masindi Districts.

Until recently Local Governments have been receiving funding from the private sector, especially through the provision of services, which attract user fees. Following the Decentralisation programme and the liberalisation of the economy, Local Governments were encouraged to privatise the management of their facilities such as markets (mostly by contracting out). With privatisation Local Governments have been able to realise the following benefits. First they have received fees from the private sector for services contracted, secondly the recurrent cost for providing these services were transferred wholly to the private sector and thirdly the private sector were able to bring in new resources, expertise and management skills.

The experiences of the privatisation of some of the service delivery functions have resulted into improved quality of the delivery system and the management of these services. The charge of user fees by the private sector for services, which were hitherto provided by Local Governments as public goods, has opened a new avenue for revenue mobilisation for Local governments.

4.1.2 Sources of community funds

In terms of communities, the following are the potential sources through which communities can mobilise resources for financing CAP:

- Transfers from the central government
- Transfers from the Local Governments
- Donor funds
- Contribution from NGOs
- Specific development tax from the communities, for example education tax.
- Programme co-financing/counter part funding by communities
- User fees from community investment, for example revenue from community water stand post.
- Private sector financing, especially when user fees can be charged.

In Uganda whatever local revenue, that is collected and retained by the Sub-County Local Government, 25% must be transferred to communities (LCI). In most cases where the communities are well organised such transfers can be used for implementing CAP. However, to-date the 25% of funds deflected to the village levels is not appropriately planned for, utilised and accounted because of among others conflicting political

guidance, weak supervision by the Sub-county and low financial management skills at the local levels.

Resource mobilisation from communities for financing Community Action Plans (CAP) is a tricky issue especially if the services for which resources are being mobilised were to be provided by Governments (Central or Local Government). The first question, which is normally asked by communities, is that “what about the taxes we pay annually?” Experiences have however shown that communities are willing to contribute for co-financing a programme if they have more decision and choice as to what to do with the resource. Any external support to augment their effort should be as budgetary support, which gives them the discretionary power to allocate, the resources to those areas they consider are of their priorities but not imposed on them.

Where a service attracts user fees, communities can meet the initial investment cost, thereafter through user fees a substantial amount of revenue can be realised for financing new interventions. In some cases when a private sector is fully convinced that the returns from user fees are attractive they would prefer to provide their own capital to finance and operate such investments under the Build Operate and Own (BOO) arrangement.

4.1.3 Transfer of Resource to support Community Action Plan

The experiences drawn from both the PUIP and DDP transfers of funds for financing community investments indicates that the following considerations need to be taken in deciding the funds flow mechanism to support CAP for sustainability:

- Existing institutional set up
- Sustainability of the mechanism
- Accountability mechanism for the funds being transferred
- Auditing arrangement of the funds being transferred

Both PUIP and DDP have demonstrated that to the highest extent possible, funds flow mechanism should be within the existing institutional structure but with careful stop-gapping measures. This will ensure sustainability and strengthening existing institutions. Most donor programmes tend to set parallel funds flow mechanisms. The argument in most cases is that existing institutions are weak. As a result communities are overburdened with a multiplicity of different accountability and reporting procedures depending on the number of donors operation in their locality.

Under the PUIP/DDP for the first time the programme fund has been fully integrated within the Local Government account. The community funding is fully integrated within the Sub-County account. For the first time in the history of Local Governments in Uganda Local Governments have prepared an integrated final account incorporating the donor funds. The same Local Governments staffs have been used for managing the PUIP/DDP funds. Through the programme their capacities have been improved in the four core areas of planning, financial management, public procurement, and monitoring and evaluation as a management tool. The important legacy is that whether PUIP/DDP is there or not these capacities, which the programme contributed in building will remain within the Local Government system. They could apply it whether they are using funding from their own source or from other donors.

4.2 Funding flows

4.2.1 Funding flows under existing institutional arrangements e.g. DDP/LGDP

The LGDP financed by the World Bank built on the experiences of the DDP. In addition to the community investment the LGDP finance the following:

- i. Local Development Grant (LDG) at the District, Sub-County, Town Councils and community levels
- ii. Capacity Building Grant (CBG) for all the levels above

The funds are to be accessed after the Local Governments have met a set of minimum conditions mainly in planning, financial management and public procurement procedures.

The LGDP was designed as an instrument to ensure compliance of Local Governments to the laws and regulations governing their operations and behaviours. The planning for the interventions, the allocations of resources available, the provision of the investment, and the management thereafter for sustainability were to be in conformity to the provision of the Local Governments Act, 1997. This system, which was tested by DDP, became known as the Planning, Allocation, Investment, Management system (PAIMs). Flow of funds was fully integrated within the Local Government system.

The Local Government Development Programme built on the Municipal experiences under the PUIP and the rural LGs experiences under the DDP. The addition made under the LGDP is the fact that for efficiency and ensuring compliance of Local Government performances there is need to have a strong execution (monitoring and evaluation) responsibility from the centre (MoLG). The centre needs adequate funding and tools to be able to ensure compliance with regulations and laws.

Using existing institutional arrangements to facilitate flow of funds is advantageous in the sense that they are already in place and are mandated to be providing such services and any new responsibilities are merely included into their normal schedules. Another advantage is that the existing statutory institutions are more sustainable in the long run than new creations. The main snag in using existing institutions is that they are not as well facilitated as the new structures that are created under NGO arrangements and are sometimes subject to bureaucratic delays.

4.2.2 Resource Mobilisation for Financing Community Projects

Legal provisions

Article 191 of the Uganda Constitution has empowered Local Governments to levy appropriate taxes. The taxes and fees to be levied, charged, collected include rents, rates, royalties, stamp duty, personal graduated tax, fees on registration and licensing and any other fees and taxes that Parliament may prescribe.

Article 193, of the same Constitution provides for three types of grants to be transferred from the centre to Local Governments. The grants are the Unconditional, Conditional and Equalisation grants.

Unconditional grant is the minimum amount to be paid to the Local Governments to run the decentralised services. This amount is adjusted annually taking into consideration general price changes. The benefit Local Governments have from unconditional grants is that the grants are part of their general fund and they have powers to budget for it and determine priorities accordingly. In practice they are supposed to take into consideration the National Priority Programmes Areas (NPPA), which as of now covers Primary Education, Primary Health Care, water, Feeder Roads and Agriculture extension services.

On the other hand conditional grants are those, which are to be spent on services with conditions as agreed upon between the Local Governments and the Central Government. While Equalisation grants are supposed to be given to those Local Governments, lagging behind the National standards, in specific services.

These three grants are guaranteed by the Constitution, and it allows inflation of the previous financial year to be taken into consideration while calculating the grants.

Article 195 of the Constitution and Section 85 of the Local Governments Act, have empowered Local Governments to borrow. Local Governments can borrow if they have met the following requirements:

- i. Received a Ministerial approval for the borrowing
- ii. The Auditor-General has provided unqualified report on the Local Governments accounts
- iii. Funds to be borrowed is intended for investments in priority activities and have been identified and approved by the whole Council
- iv. The Executive Committee has given a guarantee that the Council shall be able to pay back the loan and interest at the same time meet its routine operations including payment of salaries.

4.2.3 Relationship of planning to budget

Experience from DDP/LGDP performance reveals that there is limited linkage between the three year development plans that local governments make with the annual budgets. More often than not the planning process and the budgeting process are done independently. It is also common to find sub-counties with approved annual estimates of revenue and expenditure (budget) but without plans. Some Local governments have not quite appreciated the rationale and benefits of planning and they carry out the planning process in order to have a plan in place but not as a guiding framework for their development endeavours.

4.2 Funding flows under alternative arrangements e.g. NGO projects

According to the case studies reviewed, whereas there are some NGOs that fund capacity building activities, most of them finance physical infrastructure projects. Unlike under the LGDP/DDP, the NGOs do not require beneficiary communities to meet a set of performance conditions before accessing the funds but they are required to contribute locally available materials and labour during project implementation.

Funds by NGOs flow to the projects through a number of arrangements in line with the NGOs financial management systems and procedures. In a number of cases the financial year of NGOs does not match with that of Local Governments. The financial year of most NGOs runs from January to December as opposed to that of Local Governments, which is from July – June.

Most of the NGO funds are held by the NGOs on their bank accounts (for example ActionAid). This implies that whereas the community structures are aware of their entitlements/IPFs, they don't have direct control over the financial resources. Nevertheless the projects release funds to the communities upon submission of a work plan and accountability of the previous releases.

In other instances (for example Concern Worldwide), the funds are transferred to the Local Government but deposited on a project specific account without going through the local government general account (collection account). Funds are further transferred from the project specific accounts to investment specific accounts. Whereas this modality reduces possibilities of diversion of funds from project specific activities, it complicates the process of managing and auditing the project accounts. The process is worse for funds transferred to investment specific accounts where there are no accounting officers. This implies that the modality can only be effective so long as the NGO staff are still signatories to the respective accounts

There are also cases (UPPAP) where donors transfer funds directly to the beneficiary communities without passing through the local government structures. Whereas the community structures are required to open up bank accounts, some of them entrusted with funds lack financial management, procurement and accountability capacity. Another challenge under funds flow are delays caused by slow bank transfer processes, failure of the beneficiary community to meet planning and accountability requirements or bureaucratic procedures at the project level.

The advantage of these alternative arrangements is that they are not affected by the bureaucratic bottlenecks that sometimes cause delays in the flow of funds under the existing local government system. The main disadvantage is that these alternative structures which are by and large creations of these NGOs work well only when the NGOs are still in the area and may not be sustainable in the long run.

5.0 SUMMARY OF MAIN LESSONS

5.1 Facilitation and Voluntarism

The process of CBP is more productive if there are resource persons at the grassroots to drive it. In the case of ActionAid Apac, it was revealed that without trained Community Facilitators, it would not be possible to have well structured planning meetings at the village level. This same finding was reinforced by the experiences of other service providers who use paid community facilitators in CBP like Concern World-wide. Perhaps the lack of performance remuneration in part explains why sub-counties are not able to strictly follow the planning guidelines that have been given to them. Whereas the extension staff in sub-counties have a lot of skills regarding their areas of sectoral expertise, they have not been adequately oriented and facilitated to perform the

planning function. Whereas most of them submit work plans and route their reports through the Sub-county Chiefs, they still owe allegiance to the line departments at the district making it difficult for them to participate in the planning process.

The UPPAP case study on the other hand also confirmed that proper CBP needs skilled facilitation. The expertise of a national consultant(s) alone may not be useful and is inadequate. Attempts should therefore be made to develop a pool of district and local facilitators to enhance community acceptance/ownership of the training/planning and ensures that once the external experts withdraw, there are some local experts to fall back to.

Notwithstanding the above, some practitioners for example KCP who use volunteers to spearhead the CBP process have expressed a dilemma of how to maintain the spirit and motivation of volunteers over a long period of time. This is further compounded by the fact that participatory planning takes a long time. It is therefore important that in the design of CBP there should be an inbuilt mechanism of motivating and maintaining the morale of the facilitators.

5.2 Nature of projects

Most of the projects that are identified at the community level are mainly infrastructure and are aimed at addressing immediate/felt needs of the community (problem/needs based). They are rarely aspiration/vision based - looking at long-term issues. In cases where proper guidance is not given to communities, they tend to be ambitious and plan for implementation of projects without due consideration of how the recurrent costs of the projects will be handled.

Practitioners have come to realise that there are certain development issues that are not identified by the communities as problems facing them when a bottom-up process of identification of needs is followed. Issues such as HIV/AIDS and environment do not feature in the plans of communities. This raises the question of whose issues should be considered for implementation and how can these development issues be brought up without appearing to be an imposition from above. The review revealed that it is at the higher level local governments e.g. district that longer term and cross-cutting development issues are considered in the plans.

5.3 Coordination of the CBP

The absence of a strong local government structure to coordinate the planning function and/or the reluctance of the major actors within the local governments (especially NGOs, donor programmes) to integrate their plans with those of the local governments is a major constraint to the institutionalisation of community based participatory planning.

Planning outside the local govern system denies the LG structures an opportunity to enhance their capacity for planning. Some structures created by NGOs are denying the Councils the cardinal role of approving investment projects and plans which by law (Local Governments Act 1997) is not supposed to be delegated. As such, the approach to planning ceases to be holistic and becomes increasingly sectoral and/or organisation specific.

CBP requires systematic planning and consumes a lot of time. Because most of the local governments start the planning process late, they end up omitting some basic steps in the planning cycle. This compromises the rationale for CBP and quality of the output. LGs and NGOs should harmonise their planning process and cycles that currently start at different periods of the year. This however needs a policy guideline probably at a level higher than the LGs themselves.

5.4 Incorporation of lower level priorities

Most practitioners use the parish as the entry point for their interventions and prioritisation of projects for implementation. As the final selection is done at parish level, a number of village priorities tend to be filtered out. This limitation in CBP was identified by all the case studies presented. In the case of APA it was reported that articulate members of the Parish Beneficiaries Forum have an advantage over their colleagues in defending and pushing through projects identified by their villages. In the Local Government set up, the parishes tend to look at bigger projects, wider in scope than individual villages hence village issues are sometimes completely left out. This has been found to have a negative impact on community participation especially in situations where they also are not given feedback on the project appraisals and the reasons why their priorities lost out.

5.5 Budget Constrained versus open-ended planning

It has also been learnt that for purposes of making a realistic plan and a balanced budget which is required of Local governments, it is usually important for the communities to know the resources they have and the resource constraints they face well in advance. This helps them to be realistic in their plans and to consider carefully the priorities they decide to take up. The process does not raise the expectations of the communities unnecessarily. Most of the CBP initiatives reviewed reveal the resource envelope (budget) they have for the community at the beginning of the planning period to enable the community come up with realistic budgets and avoid raising community expectations. However some practitioners argued that budget constrained planning limits the exploration of other opportunities and resource mobilisation by the community members.

For the process to be genuinely empowering for all those involved, commitments made have to be fulfilled. Therefore if a parish has been given a budget ceiling, the resources committed to this have to be delivered and the projects have to be implemented and completed. This shows the communities that what they planned for was beneficial and it motivates them to go through the process again the following year.

Putting together all the projects planned and their costs into one plan and budget document is usually an uphill task. Even where guidelines and price lists have been issued to ensure consistency, variations from different parishes and in different projects are usually difficult to reconcile. The higher the number of projects, the more difficult it is to reconcile them. Therefore at all levels it is important to have people with capacity to do the aggregation if community projects are to form an integral part of a wider sensible plan. The skills, performance, functionality of the Technical Planning Committees need to be enhanced.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 *Implications to Policy, Government and Donors*

There is a need to make some of the structures that have proved to be effective part of the law (statutory structures). For example the PMCs at the project level, PDCs at Parish level and Investment Committees at the lower LG levels. However, the roles and relationships of these structures to the local councils should be made very clear. These issues should be considered in event of policy review and amendment of the LG Act. Amendments of the various regulations should be a continuous process based on the lessons learnt by practitioners of CBP.

There is need to harmonise national level policies. For example the National Environmental Statute provides for the establishment of different environment committees from the village to the district level. One of the main purposes of these committees is to come up with environmental action plans but which are supposed to finally be integrated in the LGs development plans. The members of these committees are commonly similar to those on the other committees (including local councils). Since planning for the environment should not be different from development planning it may be prudent to have the same planning process under similar structures to minimise overlaps and reduce workloads.

The laws should make a provision of incorporating the non-state institutions because in some areas like Karamoja, the elders for example are key decision makers and if they are not involved they can frustrate attempts for CBP.

Harmonise planning guidelines (legal frameworks) for integrated planning. Ensure that sectoral planning processes for particular sectors (like health, water, education) are mainstreamed into the district development planning process. Central Government should also seek to discourage issuing of parallel planning guidelines to LGs by the different line ministries for the conditional grants. Utilisation of the Conditional Grants should be within the framework of the development plan.

The Government should ensure harmonisation of modalities and channels of fiscal transfers from the centre to LGs. Transfers from the centre should not substitute local revenues because the level and extent of participation for resources generated from within is far higher than resources coming from without.

Donors should release the IPFs as allocated and on time to avoid stifling the zeal for involvement in planning.

Funding should only be made to investments derived from the LG comprehensive development plan. To-date most the LG plans are neither generated through a consultative process nor are they comprehensive. This implies that donors should invest more funds in developing the capacities of LGs for development planning. They should also lobby for NGOs to adhere to the requirement of funding above.

6.2 Implications for Practice

There is a lot of interest and commitment to the institutionalisation of CBP as a mechanism of improving service delivery. The challenge is designing practical and replicable guidelines. From the review of experience one can infer that irrespective of the method used and trainings given, CBP remains abstract unless there is a conducive framework that goes beyond processes of identification of investments, towards allocation and investment management systems. Therefore advocating for a particular methodology of CBP (vision/opportunity or needs-based) may have little implications for practice but rather operationalizing CBP should be built on the pillars elaborated below. We believe that if these pillars are in place the constituents will develop interest and progressively participate in CBP over the years. This is especially because the planning process is not a one off event but a continuous/rolling process. These pillars should be clearly included in the investment planning guidelines for LGs that will be revised.

- a) Define responsibilities/functions that should be performed at the respective levels of local authorities. For planning to be realistic, the different levels of local authorities should plan for investments for which they will be responsible to implement and manage. As advocated for under LGDP, planning for investments, which specifically have recurrent cost implications to a higher level should only be done with prior approval and commitment for the mandated level to meet the recurrent cost implications. To enhance local revenue/resource mobilization as well as empower the constituents to demand accountability of resources, it is desirable that the lower levels are encouraged to plan for and implement small, low cost investments even without external support.
- b) Based on the respective roles establish mechanisms for resource allocation among the respective levels. Planning within a given resource envelope is likely to be rational and will encourage villages to identify and reflect the priorities which they can address without external support (enhance self help initiatives). Whereas the District/Municipal levels should go through the three-year medium term planning, consultations with constituents and lower local authorities should be limited to identification of priorities for investment in the next one year. Before prioritized investments are implemented they should be subjected to an appraisal for social acceptability, financial feasibility and sustainability. This implies that for all investments arrangements for meeting the recurrent cost implications should be clarified to avoid 'white elephants'.
- c) Ensure that a detailed mechanism for communication, transparency, accountability and reporting is in place. There is need to inform constituents of the financial allocations, planning processes, outcomes of the planning process and the roles and responsibilities of the different stakeholders during implementation and management. Documentation of the planning process (simple minutes of meetings) will provide information required for learning and process improvement, monitoring and administering the incentive/disincentive system.

d) As currently practiced under LGDP, administer incentives for progressive improvement in planning. The incentives could include:

- Lobbying the donor and sectoral ministry to plan through the LG procedures and only support investments that are derived from the development plans. For this to happen, it implies that the plan should be prepared with due consideration of national policies and strategies. As provided for under the law, LG plans should be comprehensive and integrated. Given the existing functional gaps in planning within the LGs, donors should consider allocation of more resources to support the improvement of the planning skills in LGs.
- Ensuring that realistic time bound plans are prepared and implemented. Planning without action is a major contributor to loss of interest by the constituents in development planning.
- The allocation of additional resources as incentives to LGs that demonstrate progressive improvements in the quality of communication and planning.

Other issues that need to be considered include:

- Remuneration of facilitators of CBP. The community members through their elected representatives should have a say in the levels of remuneration as is done by ActionAid in Apac.
- Documentation and sharing of experiences and lessons should be an ongoing process practitioners learning from each other. Documentation should be simplified and information stored where it is supposed to be used for planning and as a reference for monitoring and evaluation of change. Information, Education and Communication of CBP experiences should be a major pre-occupation of most of the LG and development programs. There is an opportunity of using the UPDnet as a coordinating organ.

6.3 Implications for Training and support needs

The participation in project planning and implementation was a learning process. However there was no targeted training done, even if, it was known to be useful. For example, it was obvious that most, if not all, of the people voted onto the CAP Committees in Kotido District lacked leadership skills for commercial project, they lacked project planning and management training and social empowerment skills like gender and development training. All these have to be taught but this was not done. Rather the project relied on community-based professionals such as teachers, nurses, extension staff, other professionals and students.

- (i) Training should be on-the-job. Those doing CBP need to go through as many real-situation exercises as possible in order to distil best practices that stand the test of time;
- (ii) Support needs to go to implementation of the plans in order to generate feedback with which to further develop the processes.

The training needs that would be helpful for facilitators (and possible providers) are:

- Project planning and management
- Leadership training skills
- Gender and Empowerment
- Business/crafts skills
- Communication
- Community and resource mobilisation
- Financial management, procurement and accountability
- Documentation/communication
- Lobbying, networking and advocacy

All the above training needs should be delivered in a realistic/functional and not only conceptual manner.

Other capacity enhancement requirement include:

- Logistical support for CBP (Transport, Allowances, Stationery)
- Time requirements (for field work, to learn and share experiences – practitioners need structured learning experiences through exchange visits to CBP initiatives, participation in Peer groups/networks/workshops)

7.0 SUMMARY OF AREAS TO FOLLOW-UP

The following emerged as contentious issues that require further exploration and resolution if communities are to realise the benefits of CBP. The planned revision of the LGs investment-planning guide should take into consideration and address these issues.

- Deepening CBP processes at lower levels (villages, parishes and sub-counties)
- Further mainstreaming of crosscutting issues (gender, environment, HIV/AIDS etc.) into the planning process at all the levels from the village to the national level.
- Tension between constraints (needs) based planning versus opportunities based planning
- Sharing resources between different levels of local governments
- Tension between development needs versus capacity/sustainability issues
- Raising community expectations (open ended planning versus budget constrained planning) and their effect on community participation
- Voluntarism versus reward/benefit systems
- Tension between national (NPPA) and local priorities
- Reconciling the planning periods of LGs and NGOs.
- Mechanisms of capturing (not loosing) the priorities of the marginalized groups in upper level plans within the framework of representative democracy
- Balance between social interests and technical feasibility in deciding on priorities
- The planning guidelines should include provisions for community members to discuss issues of project implementation, management and sustainability at the planning stages of the project.

Appendix I: Terms of reference

Terms of reference for initial review and workshop

1 Introduction.

Over the years a lot of efforts have been put in by both Government and donor communities to promote participatory planning processes. The Local Governments Act 1997 stipulates that Local Governments Plans should integrate plans of lower councils (Parish/Villages). Internationally the concept of Community Based Planning of much interest to both donors and researchers. It is against this background that a Regional initiative is under way to study and document the practice of Community Based Planning in four African countries of Uganda, Zimbabwe, Ghana and South Africa.

In order to generate this review of experience in-country, 17 paid days are available, plus a limited amount of subsistence/workshop costs.

2 Assignment Background

There are a number of community based planning model in use in Uganda. The concept of community based planning is not new in Uganda. Different agents have different perceptions of what community based planning entails ranging from use of PRA techniques for identifying community needs (up front participation) to involvement in the provision of the service and its maintenance thereafter. This experience is not only unique in Uganda but is also true in other counties within Africa Region. It is because of this diversity in approaches both in terms of the understanding of the concept of community based planning and the actual practise on the ground that is why this study is being commissioned so as to document the various experiences in-county for learning lessons and sharing the experiences with other partners within the region.

3 Objective of this phase

The objective of the assignment is to produce a review of the experiences in-country of participatory planning and its potential inputs to all levels of Local Governments planning process. During the review process the lessons learnt and gaps identified shall be documented. The good practices shall be replicated where possible and further work will be taken to address the gaps, which would have been identified.

4 Scope of the assignment

The assignment shall involve the review of the experiences of community based and participatory planning in-country. From this, learning and gaps can be identified which will be shared across the four participating countries at a workshop at the end of July.

The review work requires a consultant who is conversant with community-based planning in Uganda since it would entail the following:

- Contacting key informants to get a list of initiatives and projects
- Inviting projects to the workshop and asking them to write a summary of their experience using the checklist in Annex 2
- Verifying some of the data, for example with district authorities
- In some cases using existing literature to complete the checklist
- Following up with telephone interviews and face-to-face interviews, to complete the information and follow-up on interesting points.

5 Tasks

The consultant shall be required to perform the following tasks:

1. Select at least six on going community based planning initiatives based on the following experiences (criteria):
 - a) Sector focus
 - b) Open ended focus
 - c) Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment Project
 - d) NGO experiences
 - e) LGDP/DDP experiences
 - f) Donors experiences
1. Using the format in annex 1 assist each of the representatives from the above six categories of initiatives to prepare a case study.
2. Organise and facilitate a workshop of about 30 – 40 participants where the resource persons from each of the above categories of initiatives shall present their experiences.
3. Prepare the workshop proceeding and the synthesis of the six case studies using format found in Annex 1 and 2.

6 Inputs

A graduate who is conversant with community-based planning in Uganda, has facilitation skills and good writing abilities in English.

7 Outputs required for this phase

The following deliverables are expected from the consultant

- i. Six case study reports on the current practices of community based planning process in Uganda
- ii. Facilitation of a workshop arranged in conjunction with the Uganda Participatory Development Network (UPDNET)
- iii. Synthesis report on the in-country experience, which summarise experiences, lessons learnt and gaps.

8 Implementation arrangement

Timing

The assignment shall be implemented as per the following time frame:

- 1) 10 days review and preparation of the case studies (see Annex 1 for case study formats)
- 2) 7 days preparation of workshop and writing the workshop and synthesis reports.(see annex two for format for synthesis report)

Reporting arrangement

All reports shall be submitted to the Co-ordinator, Programme Management Unit (PMU); Ministry of Local Governments for circulation and review by the core research team.

Critical document for review

Community Participation Review (CPR) Report - PMU