



UGANDA DEBT NETWORK

REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT PLANS AND THEIR ALIGNMENT TO THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

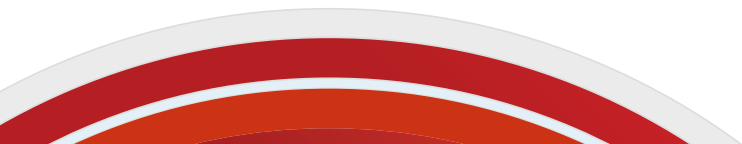
*(Case study of Moroto, Bukedea, Bushenyi and Kanungu
Districts)*

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS.....	3
Background to the NDP	4
NDP Priorities and intervention areas	5
Table 1: Summary of priority areas and Interventions	5
2.0 Justification.....	6
3.0 Objectives.....	6
4.0 Methodology.....	6
4.1 Scope of the study	6
4.2 Data collection and analysis	6
5.0 Key Findings.....	7
5.1 Alignment of DDPs with the NDP	9
5.3 Challenges faced in implementing the NDP	10
6.0 Conclusion	15
7.0 Recommendations:.....	16
9.0 References.....	18



ABBREVIATIONS

ABEK	Alternative Basic Education in Karamoja
BFP	Budget Framework Paper
CS	Civil Society
CSBAG	Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group
CSOs	Civil society Organizations
DEO	District Education Officer
DDP	District Development Plan
FIEFOC	Farm Income Enhancement and Forest Conservation
FY	Financial/Fiscal Year
HSD	Health Sub District
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IPFs	Indicative Planning Figures
LG	Local Government
MoFPED	Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development
NDP:	National Development Plan
NPA	National Planning Authority
PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan
PTC	Primary Teachers' College
UDN	Uganda Debt Network
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
VAPs	Village Action Plans



1.0 Introduction

Uganda Debt Network (UDN) actively works to ensure that poor people effectively participate in influencing Central and Local Government (LG) policies, monitor implementation of service delivery and Government program implementation to ensure that communities receive value for money. UDN was very instrumental in the development, implementation, evaluation and revision of Uganda's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. The organization spearheaded the Civil Society (CS) involvement in formulating the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) and actively participated in its implementation and revision in 2005. The PEAP expired in 2008 and the National Development Plan (NDP) was developed to replace it. In order to assess the effectiveness of its implementation, UDN undertook a review of the District Development Plans (DDPs), Departmental work plans and budgets of Moroto, Bukedea, Bushenyi and Kanungu districts to establish their alignment.

Background to the NDP

The NDP is a national framework which is intended to guide planning at all levels in Government institutions for the 5 year period (2010/11-2014/15). The theme of the current NDP is "Growth, Employment and Socio-Economic Transformation for Prosperity". The plan aims to accelerate socio-economic transformation to achieve the national vision of a transformed Ugandan society from a peasant to a modern and prosperous country within 30 years¹. The formulation of DDPs and district budgets is perceived to be participatory right from the community level and are expected to reflect the NDP priorities and the national budget. To achieve the national vision, the **NDP focuses on the following eight strategic objectives:**

1. Increasing household incomes and promoting equity
2. Enhancing the availability and quality of gainful employment
3. Improving the stock and quality of economic infrastructure
4. Increasing access to quality social services
5. Promoting science, technology, innovation and ICT to enhance competitiveness
6. Enhancing human capital development
7. Strengthening good governance, defense and security
8. Promoting sustainable population and the use of environmental and natural resources.

¹ National Development Plan (2010/11-2014/15), Pg 1.

NDP Priorities and intervention areas

The Government identified investment priority areas to be undertaken during the implementation of the NDP to provide a basis for socioeconomic transformation. These are outlined in table 1 below.

Table 1: Summary of priority areas and Interventions

NO	INVESTMENT PRIORITIES	INTERVENTION AREAS.
1.	Strengthen human resource development	Education
		Health
		Infrastructure
		Skills development
		Water & Sanitation
2.	Infrastructure development	Energy
		transport infrastructure
		Oil & Gas Information
		communications technology - ICT
3.	Facilitating availability and access to critical production inputs	Agricultural inputs (farm implements, fertilizers etc)
		Iron ore
		Water for production (irrigation)
		Meteorology
4.	Promotion of science, technology and innovation	Industry technology and inputs
		Technology incubation
		Technology uptake and commercialization
		Research fund
		Upgrading Jua Kali
		Science laboratories
		Promote value addition
		Establishment of science parks

Source: National Development Plan (2010/2011 – 2014/15)

2.0 Justification

The NDP has been implemented since 2010 and a mid-term review is being conducted by NPA. The review is intended to assess the performance of the plan against the objectives, targets and desired results towards socioeconomic transformation. UDN therefore undertook this review to share the findings with NPA for input in the national review process which would enhance the implementation and achievement of the NDP objectives in the remaining two and a half years. The findings will also inform the formulation of the sub sequent ones.

3.0 Objectives

The objectives of this review were to;

1. Establish whether the DDP priorities are in line with those identified in the National Development Plan.
2. Assess whether the implementation of the district budgets and DDPs meet the intended objectives of the NDP.
3. Identify challenges faced in implementing the NDP and strategies to improve its implementation.

4.0 Methodology

4.1 Scope of the study

The study was conducted in Moroto, Bukedea, Bushenyi and Kanungu Districts. It considered how the key social sectors of health, production and Marketing, Roads and works; and Education were prioritized and budgeted for in alignment with the NDP.

4.2 Data collection and analysis

Primary data was obtained by interviewing district and sub-county officials². Questionnaires were administered to facilitate this process.

The collection of secondary data entailed reviewing relevant budget documents and reports from the districts and sub counties. Some of these documents include, DDPs, district budgets, departmental work plans , Annual Reports, district performance reports and the NDP which was the centre of focus. The Internet was used as an additional source of information for literature that was not obtained in hard copy. It is intended that the findings of this review will be shared, discussed and disseminated to relevant stakeholders to influence a change in the implementation of the NDP to achieve intended objectives³.

² The District Planner, Community Development Officer, District Production Officer, District Inspector of Schools, Chief Finance Officer, District Education Officer, Assistant Sports Officer, Assistant District Health Officer, District Engineer and the LC V Chairperson, Senior Assistant Secretary and Sub-county Chiefs.

³ Stakeholders include Respective district officials and sub county representatives, national level officials like the MoFPED and National Planning Authority, Parliamentarians and other policy makers.

5.0 Key Findings

This section presents study findings with detailed information discussed with regard to the different case studies on the specific sectors ranked in the DDP reflecting their investment priorities.

1.1 Alignment of DDPs with the NDP

5.1.1 Inconsistency of DDPs with the NDP

Time lag: Civil Society is cognizant of the fact that the NDP is supposed to be implemented at both national and Local Government levels within a 5 year timeframe (i.e. 2010/11-2014/15). Although the districts visited have adjusted the timeframe for their DDPs from 3 to 5 years to match the 5-year NDP, there is a one –year time lag in the start and end date for the two plans. For example, in all the four districts of Bukedea, Moroto, Bushenyi and Kanungu, it was discovered that the DDPs are to be implemented for the period 2011/12-2015/16, which doesn't match the NDP period of 2010/11 - 2014/15. Since the NDP investment priorities are considered in the various DDPs, the difference in time line will affect the results of the mid-term review of the NDP due to the delay in implementation of the DDP by one year.

Guidelines for DDP development: In Kanungu and Bukedea districts, the guidelines for developing a DDP were availed late by the Ministry of Local Government after the districts had finalized their development plans. Hence, the guidelines were not followed in the development of the DDP. This causes lack of harmonization in the formats of DDPs making it difficult to compare performance across different districts in relation to NDP targets.

5.1.2 National Priorities Vs. Local Priorities

Respondents interviewed in the four districts were concerned that the NDP does not fully reflect the aspirations of Lower Local Governments. This was attributed to the fact that the NDP was developed using a top-down as opposed to a bottom –up approach. This is very evident since all reviewed DDPs were developed after the NDP had been developed; hence all Local Governments were mandated to incorporate priorities in the NDP into their DDPs. Although districts considered national priorities in their DDPs, it is important to note that they also incorporated their specific priorities to cater for crucial community development. This causes the division of available resources to finance both local and national priorities which affects the quality of service delivery at the community level. This is likely to affect the implementation of the NDP priorities and overall achievement of national objectives. For instance in Moroto district, Security/

Peace building was considered a key priority for the district yet it was not identified as one in the NDP. As a result, the allocation to this activity from the Central Government was minimal.

Also, in the NDP, though the actual targets and outcomes to be achieved at the end of the 5 year period are clearly spelt out with verifiable indicators, this is not the case in the DDPs. In the Bukedea DDP, some departments such as water and sanitation, works and technical services, statutory bodies, and planning have targets but only for the FY 2011/12. There are no targets for the rest of the four financial years to 2015/16. On the other hand, an overall five year indicative district development budget for all the sectors are included in the DDP; and a five year monitoring and evaluation plan for only some departments like Production and Marketing, health and Natural resources. In the DDPs however, the focus is mainly on the outputs to be realized in the district and not on actual outcomes. Therefore, there is need for districts to have clear targets in the DDPs which should be aligned with those in the NDP and also monitoring plans for all departments for the whole five year planning period. This would help in monitoring the extent to which NDP objectives are being achieved.

5.2 Alignment of district budget priorities with the DDPs and *the NDP*

5.2.1 Inconsistency between NDP priorities and Local Government Budget priorities

In both the NDP and all the DDPs reviewed, key priorities have been identified for implementation by the respective districts over the 5 year period. It was noted however that some priorities in the DDPs are not reflected in the district budgets. For example, in the 5 year DDP of Bushenyi District, one of the major problems identified under the production sector is that of inadequate value addition to agricultural products. In FY 2012/13, only 200,000/= shillings is allocated for value addition; moreover this money is to be spent on organizing sensitization workshops on quality improvement. This reflects a mere 2.8% of the total budget for trade and industry sector, and 0.014% of the total production budget.

In the NDP, the education sector is considered number one priority with an average share of 17.9% for the 5 year period compared to works and transport with 16%, health with 11.3% and agriculture 5%⁴. In Bukedea district budget however, out of 11 departments, roads, education, production and health were considered 3rd, 4th, 8th and 9th priorities respectively in FY 2012/13. While in Kanungu district, health, education, production and roads were considered 6th, 8th, 10th and 11th priorities respectively. If NDP priorities are to be effectively implemented to achieve the targets, there is need to align district budget priorities with national priorities.

5.2.2 Local government Budgeting not informed by planning

In Moroto and Bushenyi districts, it was evident that the district budgets were not adequately informed by the planning process. In the education sector for instance, though all districts are required to submit enrollment figures for primary and secondary schools, this information is not used by the Central Government. An interview with the District Education Officer of Moroto district revealed that despite the increase in the enrollment rates for primary school pupils, the allocations to districts have not kept pace with the increased enrollment. In fact, the allocations remained stagnant for the last 3 consecutive years. This is likely to affect the achievement of education sector targets at district and national level.

In Moroto district, due to the high dropout rates in the primary schools (mostly upper primary), it has been difficult for the district to lobby for the construction of more classrooms in the district. In addition, the district is still grappling with issues of poor quality of education. As pointed out by the District Education Officer (DEO) Moroto district, “on average, the district has over 300 teachers, and yet only 60 houses do exist, leaving a deficit of about 240 houses. As a result, some schools have been forced to improvise accommodation, hence using classrooms as houses in the night”.

In Kanungu district, the changing needs of people make it difficult to effectively plan and budget. During community consultations for planning, views are not representative of everybody because very few members turn up for the meetings e.g. in the health sector, a preference of staff houses tend to compete with security at a later stage.

5.3 Challenges faced in implementing the NDP

5.3.1 Limited awareness of the NDP

Despite the existence of the NDP for at least 2 years, most Local Government officials and citizens are still not aware of its contents. This is attributed to its poor dissemination and mass sensitization on the NDP at both higher and lower local government levels hence posing a challenge to its implementation. Therefore there is a need to sensitize the public about the plan to enable communities demand for effectively participation in the planning process by aligning their priorities with those of the NDP at their local levels. This will ensure that its implementation benefits the people of Uganda.

In Bushenyi district for instance, the NDP has not been disseminated to officials operating at lower local government levels. District officials claim that they do not have sufficient funds to run copies for all sub-county and parish officials. Even at the district, only 3 copies are available which have to be used by all the different departments.

In Bukedea district, just like in Bushenyi district, 3 copies are available for district officials to share for reference purposes. Discussions with officials indicated that the different departments have to depend on the information given by the district planner to plan and budget in alignment with the NDP. This strongly points out that not all officials are conversant with the content of the NDP since they have to rely on the planner for reminders. Also, community representatives consistently request district officials to explain more about the NDP even when it is outside the agenda during sub county and district meetings. Some communities in their Village Action Plans capture concerns that are conflicting or divergent from the NDP priority areas. This signifies lack of community ownership of the plan.

Kanungu district has 4 copies of the NDP; each found in specific offices which include; the Planning unit, CAO, Chair person LCV and in the registry (which is supposed to be used for reference by all other district officials). Apart from the planning unit, other departments like education, health and works do not have copies.

Officials interviewed in all the districts reviewed decried the size (417 pages) of the NDP which discourages them from reading it in depth. Besides the NDP document being too big, it is also written in very technical language, making it quite difficult for an ordinary citizen to comprehend. For planning purposes and reference, copies are required in the different sectoral implementing departments.

5.3.2 Inadequate skilled man power to conduct planning at Local Government levels

Local Government officials in the districts visited identified inadequate skilled personnel as a challenge for effective planning at both higher and lower local government levels. In each of the 4 districts, there is only one planner who is responsible for planning for the whole district. However, the sub-counties and parishes, lack adequate technical staff to engage in planning and yet plans are supposed to be derived right from the parish level. This makes bottom-up planning rather difficult.

5.3.3 Limited funding to implement priorities in the NDP

The implementation of NDP priorities at Local Government levels has been hampered by low funding to the different districts. In the two districts of Moroto and Bushenyi, local revenue accounted for less than 5% of the total district budget. Since a larger portion of the district resources are in the form of transfers from the Central Government (conditional grants), these districts are not able to fund all their local priorities but have to implement national priorities. This is attributed to the abolition of graduated tax, which used to constitute a large portion of local revenue collections. Currently, though districts are receiving graduated tax compensation, the amount received is far less than

the graduated tax that used to be collected.

Though a number of new taxes were introduced by the Central Government, the districts still find it hard to collect these taxes due to absence of proper guidelines by Central Government on how to collect these taxes. For instance, Local service tax was introduced to boost local revenue collections in the districts. However, in the two districts surveyed, it was revealed that most people and businesses were not being taxed hence very little was being collected from this tax in these districts. This is further compounded by lack of up-to date records on the number and location of tax payers in the business, making it difficult for these people to be traced.

The low revenue in these districts has affected implementation of key projects at Local Government. In Moroto district, Alternative Basic Education in Karamoja (ABEK) is considered to be one of the key projects being implemented in the education department. However, though this program has been taken on by the Government, very little support is provided for this program. The bulk of resources are being availed by the development partners and Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Government's contribution for this program is only limited to payment of teacher's salaries and not provision of scholastic materials. This will definitely have a bearing on the sustainability of this program, especially when funding from donors and CSOs for this program ceases to exist.

In Bukedea district, despite budgeting, a district official alluded to the fact that there is high ambition to achieve change yet the resource envelop is not commensurate to the activities and work plans prepared by the LG. Too many priorities are being considered with limited funding evidenced by budget cuts from Central Government is a detriment to activity implementation. In addition, in the FY 2012/13, the district will rely on 99% of Central Government transfers while the locally mobilized resources will be apportioned for co-funding of NAADS and meeting departmental operations⁵. This makes planning, budgeting, monitoring progress and achieving objectives unclear and difficult.

For Kanungu district, it is also unlikely that some planned activities by the district can fully be implemented to realize the vision since 93% of the district's funding is expected from central Government which is inadequate⁶. Due to budget cuts by Central Government the district is often forced to change project designs to fit within the amount of funds received by the district. Locally generated revenue is also inadequate to cover the short fall.

In all the districts visited, it was discovered that some activities are dictated by Central Government without room for flexibility to fit in other programmes even with the

5 Bukedea Local Government Performance Contract, 2012/13

6 Kanungu District Budget 2012/13

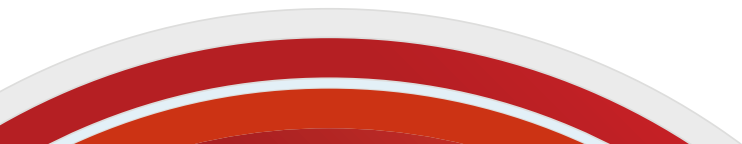
different terrains of district locations. This therefore affects the delivery mechanism on achieving the NDP objectives.

5.3.4 Joint stakeholders meeting on the progress on NDP implementation

In Bukedea district, officials condemned the joint workshops and meetings to discuss the NDP implementation (right from the time of its formulation) with different categories of stakeholders e.g. MPs together with technical personnel. Discussions are always dominated by MPs' debates with political views instead of having meaningful discussions with the technical stakeholders involved directly in the implementation who can objectively advice. In addition, some of the meetings and workshops are organized at the national level about the same time especially end of year and the same person is expected to attend. This portrays lack of planning by Government agencies and affects the quality of contributions and input made by the different stakeholders to improve on the NDP implementation process.

5.3.5 Inconsistent policy dissemination by Government

District officials in Bukedea were concerned about Government's consistent sudden passing and change of policies even before they are accustomed to one, there is always a change made. For instance, an official said, "In 2011/2012 by second quarter, the funds allocated to the district for activity implementation were reduced by half and by fourth quarter, it was also cut by half. This affects planning, activity implementation and the overall realization and achievement of district and NDP objectives.



6.0 Conclusion

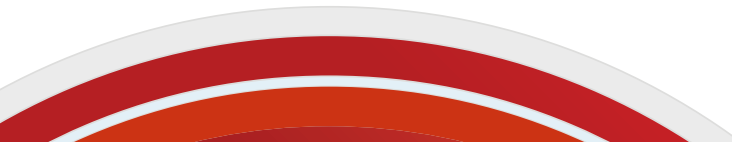
The implementation of the NDP is supposed to be conducted under the existing central and LG structures. It is expected to be shared responsibility among different stakeholders (public sector, the private sector and the non-state actors). With reference to the district work plans, budgets and sectors considered in this review it is evident that they are not fully aligned with the NDP priorities. This observation was also made by the Auditor General in his report (2011) where a review of the budget performance indicated that the implementation of the national budget was not properly aligned with the NDP. There were huge variances between sectoral allocations and releases.

In the districts visited, it is the planner who is charged with the responsibility to guide planning and budgeting activities since most officials are not conversant with the NDP. At the sub county, the level of participation of communities with reference to the plan is not sufficient due to lack of ownership of the plan. This is attributed to its poor dissemination.

The implementation of the NDP has been challenged by the fact that its facilitation is inadequate characterized by budget cuts from Central Government which also affects quality service delivery. Therefore, adequate funding and good governance will support the performance of the NDP and ensure the achievement of its intended objectives to ensure national socio-economic transformation.



7.0 Recommendations:

1. Government should allocate adequate funding to facilitate the dissemination of the NDP at all levels in the following ways;
 - a) Produce smaller and simpler versions of the NDP to be availed to all local governments for easy dissemination. These could be distributed to all districts, sub-counties and parishes to guide the planning process. The citizen's guide to the NDP is available on the internet but not readily accessible at the district levels.
 - b) Continuous capacity building of all district officials on the NDP(both at higher and lower local levels) to enable them appreciate the NDP and the national priorities.
 - c) Translation of the NDP in the widely spoken local language, disseminate and conduct comprehensive community sensitization. National Planning Authority should identify individuals trusted by communities to disseminate the plan to ensure ownership.
 - d) NPA should ensure that the different coordinating units of the NDP implementation should ensure that workshops are attended by a homogeneous category of stakeholder e.g. district leadership/technical people, politicians, etc should be invited separately for workshops and meetings and their input can be harmonized at a later stage. This will facilitate meaningful and fruitful discussions for alternative measures to improve the implementation of the NDP.
 - e) NPA should ensure that districts harmonize the timelines for implementing the NDP with those in the DDP. They also need to incorporate clear measurable indicators in the district plans, targets as well as the actual outcomes that they expect to achieve at the end of the 5 year period.
 2. In terms of funding, the districts ought to identify new and more sustainable sources of funding to enable them implement both local and national priorities as opposed to relying on the Central Government and development partners for assistance. In addition, the district can increase its partnership with the private sector as a means of cost sharing.
 3. For effective planning, in the absence of planning officers at sub-county and parish levels, the Government should build the capacity of officials at lower local government levels to enable them take full charge of the process. This will improve on planning linked to the district budgets and development plans.
 4. Central Government should allow flexibility on the re-allocation of conditional grants by districts to priority projects within the same budget line. This will help to avoid the change of project designs which delays implementation and also to fulfill her decentralization policy.
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5. In terms of priorities, the government should consider investing in regional as opposed to national priorities since different regions have different needs and resources. For instance in the case of the North Eastern region (particularly in the Karamoja region), investment in a solar project would be viable since the region is endowed with adequate sunshine. The power produced from this project could be used to supply the entire region.
6. Government through the National Planning Authority should consider a consultative review process of the NDP implementation to start from the community level. This will also enhance and encourage the implementation of the bottom up approach in planning.

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