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China in West Africa's Regional Development and Security Plans[1]

Emmanuel Akyeampong*

Abstract

This article argues that we are presently in another global economic transition. The old centres of growth have witnessed serious economic reverses with several countries going into 'receivership' in the West – Greece, Cyprus, Portugal, Northern Ireland, and possibly Spain and Italy. The fastest growing economies in the world are no longer in the West but in developing regions such as Africa and Asia. China has emerged overnight as the second largest economy with predictions that it would overtake the United States within the next generation. China's economy has gone from one of export-driven growth to the prospect of continued growth based on internal demand, driven by one of the fastest and largest growing middle classes in history. South–South trade also holds great promise as one of the engines of continued growth for China. China's recent rise began with its designation as the world's 'factory' by Western multinational companies in the 1980s, seeking to increase their profit margins by outsourcing production to areas with cheap but disciplined labour. As China moves beyond the initial phase of labour-intensive industries to more technologically advanced industries, it has turned to developing countries in continents such as Africa for raw materials, investment and business opportunities in areas such as the construction of infrastructure (roads, railways, hydroelectric dams and so on).

Résumé

Le présent article soutient que nous sommes actuellement dans une autre transition économique mondiale. Les anciens centres de croissance ont connu des revers économiques graves, avec plusieurs pays en Occident qui sont entrés dans une phase de « redressement », notamment la Grèce, Chypre, le Portugal, l'Irlande du Nord, et peut-être l'Espagne et l'Italie. Les économies les plus dynamiques du monde ne sont plus en Occident, mais dans les

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régions en voie de développement telles que l'Afrique et l'Asie. La Chine est devenue du jour au lendemain la deuxième plus grande économie et, selon les prédictions, elle dépassera les États-Unis au cours de la prochaine génération. L'économie de la Chine est passée d'une croissance tirée par les exportations à la perspective d'une croissance continue fondée sur la demande intérieure, tirée par une classe moyenne dont la croissance est la plus rapide dans l'histoire. Le commerce Sud-Sud a également de fortes chances de devenir l'un des moteurs de la croissance continue de la Chine. L'essor récent de la Chine a commencé avec sa désignation dans les années 1980 comme « l'usine » du monde par les entreprises multinationales occidentales, qui cherchaient à augmenter leurs marges bénéficiaires en externalisant la production vers les zones disposant de main d'œuvre bon marché et disciplinée. Alors que la Chine, qui était initialement caractérisée par des industries à forte intensité de main-d'œuvre, passe aux industries les plus technologiquement avancées, elle s'est tournée vers les pays en voie de développement dans des continents comme l'Afrique pour les matières premières, l'investissement et les opportunités commerciales dans des domaines tels que la construction d'infrastructures (routes, chemins de fer, barrages hydroélectriques, etc.)

Introduction

China's growing presence in Africa over the past decade or so reflects China's growing stature in the global economy, now the world's second largest economy after the United States. In the post-Cold War era, we have now progressed from a unipolar world revolving around the United States to one of contested uni-polarity. The value of China's trade with Africa has grown astronomically from US$1 billion in 2000 to $55 billion in 2007, $198.4 billion in 2012, and $221.88 billion in 2014.[2] In 2009 China surpassed the World Bank as Africa's top lender and also became Africa's leading trading partner.[3] In this same past decade, several African countries have experienced a commodity boom and strong economic growth. In the past decade or so, six of the world's fastest growing economies have been in Africa – Angola, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Chad, Mozambique and Rwanda. In eight of the past ten years Africa as a region has grown faster than Asia.[4] While economists have conceded that China has become a global economic power, though we often hear about a possible slow-down in China's economy and its global implications, the jury is out on Africa's recent economic growth spurt, whether this is just a commodity boom with no underpinning structural changes to transform the present economic opportunity into a permanent 'take-off'.[5] Though China represents an important resource for Africa, few African countries have a 'China policy'. South Africa may be one of the exceptions, but even South Africa remains dissatisfied about its economic

relations with China, which over-privilege the export of raw materials to China. Thinking outside the box in economic transitions can unleash great potential for growth. One such historic example is the Marshall Plan after World War II, when a fast growing American economy, due to the demands of European war economies, discerned how strategic self-interest could entwine with benevolent capitalism in its offer to help rebuild Europe and Japan. America, in the process, grew even faster.

On independence, many African governments inherited mono-crop or mineral economies. The little-developed colonial infrastructure was to tap areas with economic resources, leaving large regions outside the infrastructural nexus. To take the example of Ghana, the only deep-water port on independence was in Takoradi, constructed in the 1920s.Railway lines radiated from Sekondi-Takoradi to areas of mineral wealth, also connecting the capital city of Accra with the second largest city of Kumasi in the interior. This second link was, perhaps, more for security reasons, as the Asante had been a military threat to British presence in the Gold Coast for much of the nineteenth century. In the colonial period, cocoa-growing communities would construct 'feeder' roads through community labour to link their towns to the rail lines.

Independence in the 1950s and early 1960s came on the back of the commodity boom of World War II, and African politicians were optimistic about their ability to accelerate and diversify economic growth. Importantly, newly independent countries such as Ghana and Nigeria sought to reduce their economic dependence on their former colonial masters. The decision by West African countries to integrate their economies in 1975 through the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was part of this post-independence vision. It has faced an uphill struggle, together with several other regional endeavours, as Africa's economies remained extraverted towards the West and regional economies are poorly integrated. Today, Africa stands at a critical juncture: the world's eyes are on the continent as the next place of economic growth with euphemistic phrases like 'Africa Rising' common. Africans are particularly concerned that this moment of opportunity translates into economic transformation and enduring growth. China can play an instrumental role in making this a reality. This article reflects on the lessons of history, and offers a careful assessment of Africa's present condition and potential drivers of change for the future, using West Africa as a case study.

Thinking Outside the Box: The Economic Opportunity Africa Represents

Two of the fastest growing countries in Africa, Mozambique and Rwanda, are rebounding from ground zero, being former war-torn countries. Opportunities for growth are consequently limitless, and clear, strong leadership has accelerated the process. This analogy can be extended to most of Africa, which, with the exception of settler colonies, suffered extreme under-development during colonial rule. This was the economic logic of colonial rule, which sought to expropriate wealth, and not necessarily to invest wealth. Colonial investments were aimed at making the colony more productive, to enhance its economic value to the metropole. Albert Sarraut (1872–1962), Colonial Minister for France from 1920–24 and 1932–33, summed up the essence of a colonial economy:

> Economically, a colonial possession means to the home country simply a privileged market whence it will draw the raw materials it needs, dumping its own manufactures in return. Economic policy is reduced to rudimentary procedures of gathering crops and bartering them.
>
> Moreover, by strictly imposing on its colonial 'dependency' the exclusive consumption of its manufactured products, the metropolis prevents any efforts to use or manufacture local raw materials on the spot, and any contact with the rest of the world. The colony is forbidden to establish any industry, to improve itself by economic progress, to rise above the stage of producing raw materials, or to do business with the neighboring territories for its own enrichment across the customs barriers erected by the metropolitan power.[6]

The colonial economy revolved around commerce, mining and agriculture. Mining was extractive and the raw material exported with little processing. In agriculture colonial governments encouraged mono-crop economies. Infrastructure aimed at the extraction of resources and rail and roads connected ports to areas rich in mineral resources or agricultural production. Colonial infrastructure was not intended to integrate colonial economies or provide a foundation for economic growth based on internal logic.

The BBC's 'The Story of Africa' notes that as early as the 1920s most of the main railway lines in colonial Africa had been completed. The motivation for these lines was mainly twofold: for the effective military and political control of colonies, and to transport minerals from mines to ports:

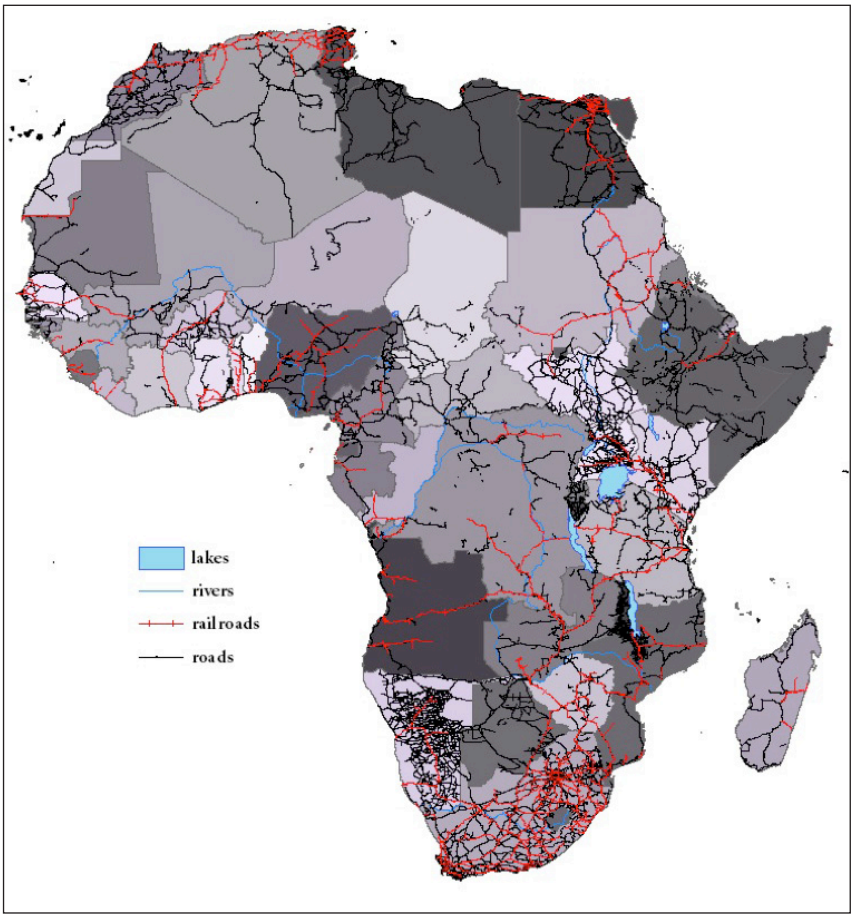
> A large number of lines were built simply to transport minerals from mines to ports, with little benefit to communities on the way. In the Belgian Congo, copper from Katanga was taken to the port of Lobito in Angola on the Benguela railway. In Liberia a railway was built from the iron producing region of Nimba country to the port of Buchanan.[7]

These examples can be multiplied. In Sierra Leone, the railway was limited to the capital of Freetown, built to transport European colonial officials and expatriates from the segregated Hill Station to their places of work. The total mileage of railway lines in Sierra Leone is therefore only eighty-four miles, and was motivated by the desire to protect Europeans from malaria-infected Africans.[8] A World Bank-sponsored report describes the fragmented railway systems inherited at independence:

> Although grand master plans for integrated rail systems have been proposed, none has been fully implemented and, for the most part, the African rail system remains fragmented, with lines connecting cities within a single country or linking a port and its immediate regional hinterland. The only significant international networks are those centered in South Africa and stretching north to Malawi, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Tanzania; the North African network in the Maghreb; and the East African network linking Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania. A few railways cross borders to link landlocked countries to ports, and others provide inland railheads from which goods can be on-forwarded by road. But there has historically been little trade between most African countries outside southern Africa, and the financial and economic case for more integrated links is unlikely to be strong.[9]

According to this study, West Africa has some of the lowest statistics of route kilometre railways operated, as well as passenger kilometre usage of railways. The railway map of sub-Saharan Africa today visually highlights this deficiency:

Figure 1.1: Map of Africa Showing Rail and Major Road Networks



Source: Mark Duerksen (GIS).

Road networks, though more extensive, are also uneven in distribution and quality. Only Nigeria within West Africa has more paved than unpaved roads (26,005 miles versus 6,100 miles) with the closest competitor, Ghana, having 9,353 miles of paved road against 28,208 miles of unpaved road.[10] Deficiencies abound in other public service areas. To take the example of electricity supply, it is estimated that only 24 per cent of the population in sub-Saharan Africa have access to electrical power and many regions that have power are subjected to rolling blackouts. Even oil-rich countries, Nigeria being a classic example, are plagued by power supply problems. Not saddled with 'a pervasive existing energy infrastructure – and the absence of a cumbersome regulatory apparatus [like the developed countries]',

Bruce Kogh and Hedda Schmidtke underscore the opportunity for Africa to introduce renewable technologies from scratch, combining hydro, solar, geothermal, biogas and biomass gasification based on local resources and needs.[11] The authors cite as a precedent in leapfrogging Africa's spectacular adoption of mobile telephony and pioneering of novel banking facilities such as the use of mobile telephones in money transfers, and see the opportunity for similar innovation in energy supply. Thinking outside the box in terms of innovation in these contexts can bring significant economic returns. The giant mobile phone company Celtel's CEO Marten Pieters recognized the economic potential in creating new linkages when he observed:

> Africa's borders are colonial, they do not reflect economic or linguistic relations, so there is a lot of inter-country traffic and that is where the opportunities lie. Calls between Kinshasa and Brazzaville are still routed via Europe. We think that there is a big opportunity to build a genuinely African communications system, so we are focusing on establishing cross-border links, which is why we offer subscribers in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania discount rates from normal international tariffs.[12]

It has taken a former colonial country like India, now a giant in information and communications technology (ICT) and a strong advocate of South–South cooperation, to launch a US$500 million pan-African e-network in February 2009 as part of its 'Aid to Africa' programme.[13] The economic opportunities in Africa are immense and China, with its expertise in hydroelectric generation, solar energy, railway construction and other crucial areas, its current global economic status, interest in raw materials for its economic production, and involvement in infrastructural development in Africa through resource-backed loans is positioned to play an instrumental role in Africa's developmental efforts. A closer examination of attempts at regional integration in West Africa will enable us apply these insights on China's potential role in West Africa's endeavour to expand production and markets.

ECOWAS: The Struggle for Regional Integration and a Role for China

ECOWAS was created in 1975 with the initial intention of establishing a Free Trade Area among the member states as a step towards higher forms of regional integration – a customs union, common markets and economic union. Regional integration has been an uphill struggle for ECOWAS since its inception.[14] The francophone countries, the majority in the bloc, with their common currency (the CFA franc) and close orientation to France, posed a challenge to the development of a common market. Administered in a single federation during the colonial period, the former French countries

have more common institutions and structures, from economic institutions to the uniform gauge on their railway lines. It is not surprising that the francophone countries in West Africa, with the exception of Guinea, were able to form an economic and monetary union, Union économique et monétaire ouest-africaine (UEMOA), in 1994, to facilitate trade between countries that share the CFA franc. UEMOA has developed a customs union and a common external tariff, and has been described as one of the advanced integration schemes in Africa.[15] The activities of the West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ), comprised of the English-speaking countries and Guinea, complement UEMOA. WAMZ aims to introduce a single currency, the Eco, for its members, with the eventual expectation that the CFA and Eco will merge to create a single stable currency for all of West and Central Africa.

Ironically, it has been the World Bank's Structural Adjustment Programmes that since the 1980s have prompted several countries to unilaterally lower trade tariffs and resolve other impediments to free trade. France, from the 1990s, has pushed its former African colonies in financial difficulties towards the World Bank and the IMF, looking to unload the financial burden of underwriting African economies. Intra-ECOWAS trade remained a minimal 11 per cent between 1996 and 2001, while over 40 per cent of ECOWAS imports for the same period came from the European Union (EU).[16] And despite expressions of political commitment to the vision of a common market and stronger regional trade, within the ECOWAS region trade has remained low. A 2011 report based on COMTRADE data estimates that it has remained constant between 10 and 15 per cent.[17]

Yet there are also promising indicators in the diversity of West Africa's regional trade compared to West Africa's trade outside the continent. This diversity reflects comparative advantage through factor endowments, underscoring a complementarity in regional economies compared to West Africa's economic relations to the West or Asia, which have emphasized the export of agricultural products and minerals. Thus, Ghana, Benin, Togo and Senegal export more manufactured goods and machinery within West Africa than they do in their trading relations outside the region. In addition, ECOWAS trade seems to represent a significant proportion of the external trade of the less naturally endowed West African countries, underscoring its important role in wealth creation for these countries. Thus, ECOWAS trade represents 78 per cent of Burkina Faso's trade, 60 per cent of Togo's, 46 per cent for Senegal, and 35 per cent for Mali.[18] Regional trade hence contributes more to economic diversification, and this can reduce the vulnerability of West African countries to external shocks based on price volatility of the primary products they export to the West and Asia. Instructively, domestic

firms that look to regional trade have more permanent labour force arrangements than firms dependent on global trade.[19] Growing evidence also suggest that remittances from African migrant workers in other African countries have more of a poverty-reducing impact on receiving households. Wourtese observes that comparatively, inter-continental remittances were on average ten times larger than intra-African remittances and accrued to the already better-off households, leading to a reduction in the incidence, depth and severity of poverty in the receiving households. They however widened inequalities between rich and poor households. He finds evidence that intra-African remittances reduce inter-household inequality considering that they flow to poorer households.[20]

Strengthening regional trade has become imperative in the light of the recent global economic recession, which witnessed a general falling off of trade. Countries in Africa that traded with the EU and Asia – rather than among themselves – were among the hardest hit in the global recession.[21] Banik and Yoonus see stronger regional trade as a way for ECOWAS countries to increase aggregate demand and to meet regional development expenditures.[22] It is not a choice of regional trade versus global trade, but a combination of both in ways that have positive results for West Africa in terms of growth and development. Hence the changing patterns in trade relations between West Africa and the EU, for example, are positive as the EU moved from the non-reciprocal trade concessions given to West African countries in the Yaoundé and Lomé I–IV Conventions to a series of reciprocal economic partnership agreements with West Africa from 2008. These are structured in the form of an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), though progress has not been smooth sailing, and some experts worry about the possibility that the introduction of reciprocal trade with Europe before the consolidation of the regional market in West Africa may undermine efforts at regional integration.[23]

The success of regional integration in West Africa, and of trading agreements with the EU and other external trading blocs or countries, depends on an improved infrastructure within West Africa. Poor transport infrastructure, bad communications and undependable power supply, among other factors, make the cost of doing business and moving goods in West Africa high. Banik and Yoonus recommended, among other things, the need to build better infrastructure within ECOWAS; for ECOWAS countries to take more initiatives towards regional trade rather than the focus on trade with more advanced countries; and the need for a conscious commitment from the better resourced countries – Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire – to trade with relatively resource-poor countries in the region.[24]

Here there is the need to think outside the box at two levels: at the country level in West Africa and in terms of a China policy. This is where a more coherent China–ECOWAS agenda becomes necessary. At the country level, China's presence is evident in several African countries, pursuing bilaterally at the national level several of the goals we have underlined as necessary at the regional level. For example, China is assisting Ghana in its energy problems, rail and road networks, and other infrastructural projects. The Bui hydro-electric dam in the northern region of Ghana is the largest Chinese infrastructural project in the country, built by Sino-Hydro at an estimated cost of US$622 million and financed by the Chinese Export-Import Bank (EXIM Bank). The eventual cost of constructing the Bui dam stood at $790 million. The Ghana government's financial contribution was $82 million, and the loan was collateralized through the export of cocoa from Ghana to China.[25] The dam, completed at the end of 2013, was expected to generate 400 megawatts, a fifth of Ghana's hydro-capacity.[26] In the past Ghana has exported hydro-electricity to Côte d'Ivoire, Togo, Benin and Burkina Faso through the Akosombo dam, and it was envisaged that the Bui dam would supply Burkina Faso. The Bui dam has not been able to operate at its maximum capacity due to low rainfall levels, and has therefore not been able to intervene decisively in the current energy crisis in Ghana, which has led to a prolonged period of load shedding.[27] In 2006 China pledged to build a new plant at Kpong to increase water supply in Ghana to the eastern parts of Accra by 40 million gallons a day.[28] In 2009 the Chinese government provided the Electricity Corporation of Ghana with US$170 million in supplier's credit for the extension of electricity to 300,000 households.[29] China has assisted Ghana in the rehabilitation of the international road that leads from the capital city of Accra through Kumasi to Burkina Faso. In 2005 China pledged to assist Ghana with the rehabilitation of its rail system.[30] In June 2006 the Chinese Prime Minister joined Ghana's then President J.A. Kufuor to open the US$29 million stretch of highway leading out of Accra to Kumasi.[31] Ghana is now a commercial exporter of oil, and China is again assisting Ghana in the construction of a natural gas pipeline.

Rich in natural resources, Ghana can afford these resource-backed contractual agreements with China to build or rehabilitate infrastructure. The Bui dam is backed with Ghana's cocoa and the construction of the gas pipeline by Ghana's crude oil. Ghana's exports to the West and Asia are unprocessed primary products. We have seen that Ghana exports more manufactured goods and machinery to its West African neighbours, yet ECOWAS trade represents only 18 per cent of Ghana's trade.[32] Ghana stands to benefit more in terms of economic diversification and value-added

production through regional trade than through inter-continental trade. It would be in the interest of the better resourced countries in West Africa like Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria to think strategically in regional terms, and to commit resources to the development of regional infrastructure like road networks that would expand their market reach. One of the goals of ECOWAS is the development of an integrated rail network. But it expects funding to come from the outside, and there is a sense in which national wealth is considered national property and not a regional resource. But West Africa is not resource-poor and represents perhaps the largest trading bloc in Africa. China, with its favourable loan terms and willingness to undertake resource-backed infrastructural projects, would be a natural partner in this endeavour to transform West Africa's physical infrastructure.

At present Ghana lacks a China policy, as do many other African countries, in spite of their enthusiasm about the economic opportunities represented by China. We have gone from an era where there were no alternatives in the context of World Bank hegemony to one of choice. Western alarm at China's growing economic presence, discourse on a second 'colonial occupation' by China, criticism of Chinese business practices in Africa and African states' struggle to comprehend China have delayed the development of coherent China policies. The first China–ECOWAS economic and trade forum was held in Beijing in September 2008. Coming after the first China–Africa Summit in 2006, West African countries hoped not only to highlight their natural wealth in agriculture, mineral wealth and oil and gas reserves, but also to underscore the viability of their financial institutions and stock markets and the attractiveness of their regional trading bloc. Infrastructural projects were at the centre of deliberations at this conference. Considering the instrumentality of this relationship, it is somewhat surprising that the next ECOWAS–China meeting did not take place until 2012 in Accra. Again, infrastructural development was at the heart of discussions, especially roads, railways, housing, construction and transportation; and the strengthening of collaboration between the private sector in West Africa and the Chinese private sector. These plans bode well for China, which actively seeks new ways to continue its remarkable growth that has lifted millions from poverty in China. But China will also have to think outside the box in its relations with ECOWAS, and Africa generally, relating in ways that builds African political economies, choosing to self-monitor and exert a mutually beneficial presence even where institutional and monitoring structures in African countries are weak. An economically prosperous Africa means an expanded market for China, and African demand for more high quality Chinese products and capital goods. China would need to facilitate relations

through forums that educate African governments and businesses on China. It would have to work with African governments to monitor and regulate what we call the 'third face of China', individual Chinese migrating to Africa in search of wealth. The recent debacle in Ghana over illegal Chinese small-scale gold miners, and its unhappy implications for the otherwise mutually beneficial relations between the two countries, is a good case in point.

Loose Cannons: Chinese Adventurists and Crises Moments in Africa–China Relations

In July 2012 the youth of the village of Manso-Nsiena in the gold-rich Amansie West District in the Ashanti Region of Ghana clashed with some Chinese suspected of being engaged in illegal mining operations in the district. The cause of the confrontation was the destruction of the local environment in a community with a history of buruli ulcer, a disease closely associated with environmental changes. National attention was riveted and temperament provoked at images carried in national news media, such as those in the *Daily Graphic*,[33] which showed half-dressed Chinese miners swinging shot-guns, which they fired in the air to deter the youth of Manso-Nsiena from approaching the mining camp. An armed police detachment rushed in from the nearest large town of Manso Nkwanta to defuse the situation and detained nine Chinese. There followed a few days of utter confusion and national debate on radio and in newspapers about who authorized these Chinese miners to engage in mining operations in Manso-Nsiena, their blatant disregard of Ghanaian laws seen not only in their mining without a license but also the bearing of arms, and what disciplinary measures should be enforced against them. Part of this confusion can, perhaps, be traced to what Lloyd Amoah has critiqued as the absence of a coherent Ghana policy on China, the ambivalence that marks official relations with China and public unease at the increasing Chinese presence in retail trade and even illegal mining.[34]

The confused official response to Chinese illegal mining incidents may have two contributing factors. First is the ambivalence towards Western condemnation of China's lack of support for human rights in Africa. Highly conscious of its much-lauded democratic credentials and its interest to keep donor funds flowing, Amoah argues that Ghana, engages in 'self-censorship regarding her dealings with China at the expense of elaborating an independent, pragmatic China policy'.[35] China has a firm policy of 'non-interference' in the political affairs of trading partners in stark contrast with Western insistence on human rights and the World Bank's post-1989 position on political reform as a condition of the receipt of aid packages.

African governments appreciate the absence of condescension in China's treatment of its African partners, explaining the paradox of the eagerness of African leaders to engage China despite the West's criticism of 'Beijing's perceived amoralism'.[36]

Second, and perhaps more importantly, the confused official response reflects the reality of dealing with the three 'faces' of China in Africa: the state-owned enterprises that act as multinational corporations; the large private industries that operate with state backing; and the huge influx of ordinary Chinese who have flooded Africa in the past decade in search of a brighter economic future. So, there is, for instance, Ghana's dealing with Sinohydro, which has built the Bui hydro-electric dam on the Volta River or the China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) that has invested in Ghana's oil industry. During the late President J.E.A. Mills's visit to Beijing in September 2010, the China Development Bank extended a loan of $3 billion to develop Ghana's oil and gas sector, while China's Export-Import Bank pledged $10.4 billion to support infrastructural development projects. Then there are the established private industries such as Huawei Technologies that is installing fiber optic cables in Ghana and manufactures the wireless router used for Internet service through the mobile phone provider Airtel.[37] Lastly are the ordinary Chinese who have entered the retail market in Ghana, flouting rules that limit the retail sector to only Ghanaians, flooding the market with cheap or shoddy Chinese manufactured goods, and illegally invading the small-scale mining sector, another area restricted to Ghanaian nationals.[38] Illegal mining incidents with the Chinese have worsened, leading to accidents in early June 2013 and much national and international attention. Apparently, there is a drive in parts of China such as Shanglin, an impoverished county in southern Guangxi Province, where news of the gold rush in Ghana has spread by word of mouth, to immigrate to Ghana. The *South China Morning Post* estimated in 2013 that there were about 50,000 Chinese gold miners in Ghana, two-thirds of whom had come from Shanglin. A twenty-four year-old man from Shanglin, Wen Daijin, interviewed for a news story in the *UK Guardian* in June 2013, reported that 'In my township, only men with physical disabilities don't have plans to go to Ghana'.[39]

Diplomatic relations between China and Ghana come to a head in June 2013 with the deportation of hundreds of Chinese illegal miners. Not only were the Chinese miners in contravention of the Minerals and Mining Act of 2006, which clearly states in Section 83 (a) that licenses for small-scale mining would only be granted to Ghanaian citizens, the Chinese miners had introduced equipment that aided productivity in sand mining in river beds, but also polluted these river beds. Photographs of the polluted rivers in the

Ghanaian media stoked national alarm and led to the formation of a task force of immigration and military personnel on the instruction of the government to root out Chinese illegal miners and end their operations. Invited into partnerships by cash-strapped Ghanaians with mining licenses, the enormous Chinese investment in equipment like excavators, and in the compensation of farmers who farmed on mining concessions, drew them more directly into the actual process of mining in order to recover and make profit on their investment. They constructed make-shift mining camps in gold-rich areas in Amansie-West, Dunkwa and Bibiani. The success of their operations and the presence of gold winnings on the mining sites attracted armed robbers, leading to the need for the Chinese to arm themselves. It is instructive that many of these arms were legally acquired by the Chinese and licensed with local law-enforcing agencies for protection. I saw several such permits approved at the police headquarters at Manso-Nkwanta on 3 August 2013.

But the acquisition of firearms by Chinese miners added to the proliferation of small arms in a region recently plagued by civil wars in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire, which led to the dispersion of small arms as these conflicts came to an end. This potentially dangerous situation led to the commissioning of a study that examined the impact of armed groups and guns on human security in the ECOWAS region.[40] Then there is the indigenous craft production of small arms by blacksmiths in West Africa, who serviced guns for hunters and farmers and gradually learned to manufacture pistols and rifles. With West Africa's porous borders there are already huge security concerns about the proliferation of small arms in the region, a development made direr with the acquisition of firearms by criminal networks, and the growing tendency for illegal miners to arm themselves. We have seen the consequences of these developments, especially in the Sahel–Sahara region.[41] During the recently ended civil war in Côte d'Ivoire, armed rebels sought skilled miners from Ghana to come with their equipment and exploit gold-rich areas in rebel-held areas under armed protection.[42] To this troubling situation has been added the arms abandoned by the Chinese miners in Ghana who fled at the approach of task forces. These guns were subsequently appropriated by villagers near the mining camps, making the Chinese reluctant to return for equipment they abandoned, considering the often tense relations between these Chinese miners and villagers.

The operations of the task forces were also marked by abuses as they provided an opportunity for both law enforcement agents and civilians to seize assets like cars and mining equipment from the Chinese, who acquiesced in fear of their lives. Chinese media displayed images of injured Chinese miners assaulted by the task forces. The evidence from the burnt

down mining camps I visited in August 2013 underscores how traumatic the activities of the task forces might have been for the miners, both Chinese and Ghanaian. In the aftermath of the deportations, both the Ghanaian government and the Chinese embassy in Ghana have reflected on whether they could have better handled this case of illegal Chinese miners. The loss of cash and capital goods to the Chinese, the impact on rural economies that benefitted from their presence and purchases, the injection of small-scale technologies that revolutionized mining for ordinary Ghanaians, all testify that the Chinese presence in small-scale mining was not completely adverse. Chinese participation in small-scale mining, only recently legalized for Ghanaian artisanal miners who had operated illegally for years as the colonial and postcolonial state endorsed expatriate and mechanized mining, put ordinary Ghanaians and Chinese on a collision course. The situation ended catastrophically partly because of the lack of a China policy on the part of the Ghanaian government, appreciative of its economic relations with the Chinese government but still treading on unfamiliar territory in its larger engagement with China; and partly because of China's interest in the activities of its state-owned enterprises and large private firms who pursue Chinese strategic interests overseas, but are disinterested or unable to monitor the activities of ordinary Chinese who immigrate to African countries. The stronger partner in this relationship, China, would have to take the initiative in building win–win relations with African countries. This cannot remain at the level of rhetoric, as economic weakness in substance disables African countries from driving this relationship. To promote a mutually beneficial relationship with African countries when China's economic might privileges it, and the minimal share of Africa's trade with China disadvantages Africa, requires an instance of enlightened strategy on the part of China.

Conclusion: China's Development Vision for Africa

In 1947 the United States decided that it was actually not in its interest to continue a policy that economically weakened its recent enemies, Germany and Japan, and that it was strategic to help rebuild war-torn Europe. Labelled as the Marshall Plan, and announced by US Secretary of State George Marshall at a lecture at Harvard University on 5 June 1947, the US committed US$3 billion (the equivalent of $130 billion today) between 1947 and 1951 to rebuilding war-torn Europe and Japan.[43] The US ended the 'Morgenthau Plan', which sought to curtail Germany's expansionist ambitions by 'pastoralizing' it; a process reinforced by the Soviet interest in stripping Germany of its advanced machinery. This is a remarkable example of thinking outside the box: 'It was a political signal that the US saw it in its

interest that other nations, even its former enemies, prosper.'[44] In another example of enlightened strategy, in 1947 the US and other richer countries set up the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which allowed developing countries to subsidize and protect their fledgling industries. The result of these enlightened 1940s policies was spectacular, leading to what has been described as the 'golden age of Capitalism' (1950–73), witnessed in per capita growth rates in Europe, the US, and Japan, as growth rates leapt from 1.5 per cent in Japan to 8.1 per cent.[45] The remarkable role Japan (only recently displaced to the third largest economy in the world by China) and Germany have since played in the global economy provides strong evidence that economic growth is not a zero-sum game. And the US not only grew rich but also gained international goodwill that arguably only recently came into question in its military misadventures in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Parts of Africa have gone through recent wars or are still engulfed in conflict: Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Angola, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and much of North Africa in its 'Arab Spring'. This, in addition to the economic deficits of colonial rule, sets the context for a boom in reconstruction. Africa's growth potential has become noticeable in the past decade. Its wealth in minerals is astounding, and we are experiencing a revived agricultural sector, thanks in part to World Bank policies in support of export agriculture. The Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) facility extended by the World Bank also allowed poor countries debt relief and to redirect monies that would have gone to debt repayment to development projects. At the level of the African Union and the regional blocs, experiments in institutional reform, good governance, and peer review continue in the face of systemic corruption. What will China use its growing wealth and stature for in this critical juncture in African history with the current debate over whether this is Africa's time to enter sustained economic growth and structural transformation? We could continue to see Africa as a supplier of raw materials important to China's growth, a market for dumping Chinese manufactures, and a site for Foreign Direct Investment, presently with some of the highest rates of return; or this could be part of the ground-shifting process that transforms Africa's economies and changes the fortunes of the continent for the better in the long term. Unimpaired by a colonial legacy, noted for its lack of condescension or patronage compared to the West, and with a fund of goodwill based on its investments in infrastructural projects from the TanZam Railway to the Bui hydro-electric dam, China could be a force for good and positive change in Africa if it partners Africa in its developmental

agenda, providing capital, technology and vision. Like the Marshall Plan, this is the time for China to think outside the box, to assume an enlightened strategy towards Africa. The outcome would be even stronger economic growth for China.

Notes

1. This article was first presented at the Beijing Forum in November 2013 on a Panel on 'Regional Cooperation and Conflict: From a Multicultural Perspective'.
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18. *ibid.*
19. *ibid.*
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22. *ibid.*
23. Alaba, 'EU-ECOWAS EPA'; and von Uexkull, 'Regional Trade and Employment in ECOWAS'.
24. Banik and Yoonus, 'The ECOWAS story', p. 324.
25. See, for example, *Daily Graphic*, 28 October 2005, 7 August 2006, and 26 September 2007. Additional funding of $168 million was later required with $22 million from the Ghanaian side.
26. Interview with Anthony Boye Osafo-Kissi, Resident Engineer, Bui Power Authority, 5 August 2013.
27. See www.buipower.com/node/107.
28. *Daily Graphic*, 6 January 2006.
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Knowledge is Power and Power Affects Knowledge: Challenges for Research Collaboration in and with Africa

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Abstract

This article engages with the challenges facing genuine research collaboration and knowledge production in a North–South interaction. It maps the asymmetries in global knowledge production in general and revisits African realities in particular. Using the experiences of the Norwegian research programme NORGLOBAL as an empirical reference point, it critically explores the limitations of partnerships and identifies some challenges resulting from the centuries of Northern hegemony established in all spheres related to global affairs and interactions. It presents some thoughts and suggestions as to how these limitations might be reduced or eliminated in favour of a truly joint effort to meet the challenges on the way towards equal relations and mutual respect.

Résumé

Le présent article se penche sur les défis en matière de collaboration de recherche véritable et de production de connaissances, dans le cadre d'une interaction Nord-Sud. Il dresse les asymétries dans la production mondiale de connaissances en général et revisite les réalités africaines en particulier. En utilisant les expériences du programme de recherche norvégien NORGLOBAL comme point de référence empirique, il explore de manière critique les limites des partenariats et identifie quelques défis résultant des siècles d'hégémonie du Nord établie dans tous les domaines liés aux affaires et interactions à l'échelle mondiale. Il présente quelques réflexions et suggestions quant à la façon dont ces limites pourraient être réduites ou éliminées en faveur d'un véritable effort conjoint pour relever les défis et arriver à des relations d'égalité et de respect mutuel.

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This article benefits from experiences within the Programme Board of 'Norway – A Global Partner' (NORGLOBAL) at the Norwegian Research Council (NRC). These inspired some more general reflections on the opportunities and limitations of academic collaboration between North and South. The first cycle of the programme ended after more than five years in mid-2014. The caesura motivated some preliminary conclusions and recommendations by the board members. This self-reflection had been the point of departure for the deliberations that follow. They put the case study within a more general context of North–South relations with a particular view on Africa in the academic settings of externally-funded activities. Hence the insights provided by the initial experiences of NORGLOBAL are used for a more principled engagement with the subject of research collaboration.[1]

North–South Collaboration Revisited

Current examples of collaboration between policy makers, development agencies and funding institutions in the spheres of research, including the involvement and role of scholars, offer differing results and conclusions. The tricky part – often not explicitly reflected upon – is actually the (self-) critical exploration of the extent to which European or Western frameworks are considered as universal and/or taken simply for granted as being hegemonic when it comes not only to applied but also to best practices. This is at times the invisible hand shaping exchanges within the frame of an interaction guided by mindsets not (yet) emancipated from the paternalistic and patronizing undercurrents of an earlier period.

A recent study compiled by two members of the Executive Committee of the European Association of Development Research and Training Institutions (EADI) has reconfirmed what many (though far from all) involved in these processes were aware of. Based to a large extent on interviews with practitioners, the findings document that research partnerships 'are far from immune to the tensions and conflicts permeating unequal power relations accruing from unequal access to funding, knowledge and expert networks'.[2] This is a reminder that international cooperation – even when done with the best of intentions – is far from being per se good. Well-meaning engagement is not protected from flaws, setbacks and failures in terms of asymmetric forms of cooperation. 'North–South partnership' (which interestingly enough is hardly ever called South–North partnership) in the true sense of the word requires careful and critical self-reflections especially (though not exclusively) by those from the North entering the minefield but trying to avoid the trappings of all sorts of common devices related to

paternalism or racism. As will be shown, also the often praised Nordic or Scandinavian forms of development cooperation, considered for quite some time as positive examples, are anything but immune to such setbacks.[3] Even its critical analysis is prone to flaws and risks one-sided engagement with the subject. In this particular case the empirical research revealing limitations in Nordic interaction with African partners is itself based almost exclusively on interviews with locally-based Nordic 'development experts' and practitioners. Through such a reductionist approach the method (unintentionally) again marginalizes the view of the partners in the 'recipient countries', who remain – nomen est omen – on the receiving end.[4]

A lack of deliberate and conscious consideration of the underpinning structural asymmetries as a core obstacle and challenge for any meaningful partnership, in the true meaning of the word, already risks failure. Being international in nature, outlook and practice does not mean being automatically on the safe side. Something international in nature and organization is far from necessarily all-inclusive, or securing adequate representation. All too often inter-nationalism in its basic characteristics and with regard to its main beneficiaries is confined to those countries and their people inside the circle of power – in contrast to those remaining at the margins or outside and on the receiving end. Put differently, if European or Western or Northern or any other type of internationalism exercises a power of definition over others and imposes its values, norms, mindsets and views as a particular (in this case Eurocentric) project on the rest of the world – as done for far too long in the history of European colonial and imperialist expansion – then this international dimension of European frameworks is of dubious value, at least for others. So-called progressive political-philosophical ideologies and perspectives rooted in Western trajectories are by no means secure scaffolding that avoids falling prey to 'the discrete charm of European intellectuals'.[5]

Not by accident had the World Social Science Report 2010 as its sub-title 'Knowledge Divides'.[6] Especially the contributions to its chapters four and five provide sobering evidence for the fact that the current internationalization – like its preceding stages – tends to reinforce the dominance of the North. This does not exclude challenges, also from within the belly of the beast. The Enlightenment was always ambiguous establishing on the one hand a rationality, which promoted a pseudo-scientific belief in mono-causal, linear progress and development as all-embracing concept to explain and master the world while at the same time providing the tools and instruments for emancipation based on questioning this claim. The era of Enlightenment, to a large extent, established a smokescreen covering Eurocentric dominance through claims of universality. But the legitimizing humbug of such claims

has been questioned not only by those raised at the receiving end of such an introverted, self-centred mindset, but also by some of those socialized within the system and supposed to be an integral part of its reproduction. Emancipation from hegemony, power and subjugation is a collective effort, which crosses boundaries and is in itself internationalism in practice.

Being European or Northern or of any other descent therefore moulds but does not pre-determine worldview and convictions in an irrevocable manner, even though cultural and religious factors (and the privileges that go hand-in-hand with the social positioning of many scholars in the Northern hemisphere) should not be dismissed lightly in the formation of identities and mindsets. But primary experiences and socialization do not exclude or even deny processes of learning, changing, adapting and re-positioning. A continued supremacy of American-European social sciences, as diagnosed in the World Social Science Report 2010, does not offer scholars any excuses to abstain from joining counter-hegemonic strategies also from within the dominant spheres of influence and knowledge production. Partnership in research and knowledge production should in principle be able to overcome boundaries.

African Realities and Perspectives

In as much as economic disparities were integral parts of the unequal development reproduced on a global scale since the days of colonial-imperialist expansion, the world of science and knowledge production displays similar characteristics of inequality. Scientific dependence in Africa[7] corresponds with and is an integral part of the structurally anchored socio-economic imbalances.[8] As the concept paper for a continental summit on higher education in Africa,[9] co-organized by CODESRIA in March 2015 in Dakar, (self-)critically summarized, less than 0.5 per cent of GDP is invested in in research in the continent, with less than 1.5 per cent of the annual global share of research publications being a result. This current quantitative dimension illustrates the impact and consequences of a historical process, which had its origins in the colonial-imperialist expansion of central Europe and the imposition of its forms of reproducing societies (including mindsets, ideologies and knowledge) for centuries to come in a global project claiming (misleadingly so) universality in character, creating the misperception that it would reach beyond the universal hegemony executed. As aptly summarized on the occasion of the celebration of CODESRIA's fortieth anniversary:

> That knowledge has been colonized raises the question of whether it was ever free. The formulation of knowledge in the singular already situates the question in a framework that is alien to times before the emergence of

> European modernity and its age of global domination, for the disparate modes of producing knowledge and notions of knowledge were so many that knowledges would be a more appropriate designation.[10]

The perpetuation of such a system degrades the continents of the so-called global South and their own specific academic realities to second grade juniors. Africa, and to a certain extent also Latin America, tend to be at best considered as laboratories or test cases for exploring or verifying by application more general theories created in the Northern hemispheres.[11] As a result, Eurocentric hegemony produced a locally embedded dependency culture, at interplay with local elites exercising political and administrative control over societies predominantly in their self-interest as kinds of satellites feeding – despite occasional radically different populist rhetoric – into the further entrenchment of the globally dominant systems.[12] This unfortunate constellation of a 'combination of domestic repression and financial strangulation' greatly affected subsequent tertiary education and research in African countries that were shaped by a toxic blend of an 'incontinent insistence of conformity and sycophancy by authoritarian rulers',[13] captured by Joseph Ki-Zerbo in the image of a sign that was hung on the entrance to Africa saying 'Silence, Development in Progress'.[14]

As a result, the so-called postcolonial sphere of local science, research and academic knowledge production (as well as its dissemination) remained a domain defined to a large extent by external factors. Far from being home grown, scholarly efforts were often restricted by the global economic disparities and structures permeating all other spheres of social organization of life and work. African scholars, aware of the challenge and willing to face it, are engaged in uphill struggles to at least reduce, if not to overcome, such distortions.[15] Despite their efforts, ownership remains in many if not most cases outside of the African realm, also with regard to the power of definition of what is considered to be 'truly' academic and scholarly, or for that matter relevant. The triumph of neoliberalism during the last decades has done anything but ease the challenge. Rather, 'the proliferation of neo-liberal practices in the institutions … force academics to pursue short-term goals without any connection to the public interest in their teaching', thereby 'contributing to the emergence of a new "crisis of quality" engineered from within the institutions'.[16] As a result, 'a pervasive consultancy culture has undermined serious scholarship and, in extreme cases, has even violated ethical standards'.[17]

Ebrima Sall, as part of a stocktaking exercise in the World Social Science Report 2010, concluded that 'The challenge of autonomy, and of developing interpretative frameworks that are both scientific and universal,

and relevant – that is, "suitable" for the study of Africa and of the world from the standpoint of Africans themselves – is still very real'.[18] His predecessor as Executive Secretary of CODESRIA is as adamant in advocating a dismissal of foreign perspectives imposed upon the continent and its people as an integral part of the 'North–South asymmetries in international knowledge production'.[19] He criticizes 'mainstream African Studies' that 'has constituted itself into a tool for the mastering of Africa by others whilst offering very little by way of how Africa might master the world and its own affairs'.[20] He further concurs with Mahmood Mamdani that 'the culture of knowledge production about Africa… is based on analogy: Africa is read through the lenses of Europe and not on terms deriving from its own internal dynamics'.[21] African Studies might indeed, more so than any other so-called area studies (which are as global as they are local), reflect the distortions rooted in a colonial perspective surviving in times dubbed as post-colonialism – a term which tends to obscure the continuities effectively impregnating the ongoing unequal relations between societies and people.[22]

This view is reconfirmed by the authors of the EADI paper,[23] who identify the notion of power as being a necessary challenge in efforts to effect 'transformational' research on global issues. Arguing that 'there is no such thing as a-political research' the findings suggest: 'Partnerships are embedded in a web of power relations while development-oriented research often implies conflicting and contesting objectives between scholars, aid agencies and development practitioners.'[24] This requires efforts to create an enabling environment for more equal partnerships, guided by the need to deconstruct an agenda claiming to be global, but in actual fact still to a large extent driven by actors in the North. All too often, such efforts remain confronted with the dilemma that even with the best intentions these are still based and dependent on Northern funding and Northern scholars, who might try to overcome the structural constraints but remain confined to operations rooted and embedded within a Northern setting. These undertakings often have hardly any direct Southern participation – neither in terms of funding nor by direct individual and institutional representation. Southern partners – individuals as well as institutions – remain at the receiving end as implementing agencies, often added on after decisions are taken without them being adequately (if at all) consulted during the process. At best, they are invited to indicate their willingness to enter such forms of cooperation in funding applications, in which they had no say during the drafting process, to create the impression that this is about true partnership – while it clearly is not.

The Case of NORGLOBAL

The first cycle of NORGLOBAL was operational between February 2009 and June 2014.[25] The programme was established to strengthen Norwegian research on and for development in low – and middle-income countries and to contribute to additional research capacity in these countries. The programme had a special responsibility to generate new knowledge within the field of development-related studies in Norway. NORGLOBAL encompasses a number of thematic areas, including women and gender issues, health, food production and the effect of development cooperation, as well as issues relating to conflicts, climate, the environment and clean energy. These topics were among the priorities being addressed within the various thematic activities under the diverse NORGLOBAL programme calls. Most activities were funded following calls for proposals and applications within the thematic areas, while a few others were the result of a cooperation with other NRC programmes, for example through joint-funding announcements. Several of the thematic calls stipulated as a condition that projects are required to incorporate the active participation of researchers from countries in the South financed through budgets applied to promote cooperation and strengthen capacity building in these countries.

In summary, the programme objectives were designed and initiated to:

- Strengthen research in Norway on development in developing countries, as well as ensure an effective, flexible, visible and coherent organization of this research by consolidating much of the effort within the field of development under a single programme, and through cooperation with other programmes.
- Strengthen research for development, through the integration of development perspectives into relevant programmes.
- Strengthen the research capacity of developing countries by enhancing research cooperation between researchers based at institutions in the countries in question and leading Norwegian research institutions and qualified scholars.

The programme dealt with some ten thematic priority areas, for which calls were drafted and issued (often announced several times):

- Poverty and Peace (POVPEACE)
- CGIAR Fellowship Programme (CGIAR)
- Globalisation of Environment, Energy and Climate Research (GLOBMEK)
- Women and Gender (GENDER-EQ)

- Economic Growth, Poverty Reduction, Reproductive Health and Population Dynamics (ECONPOP)
- Western Balkan Countries Development Studies Programme (W-BALKAN)
- Tax Havens, Capital Flows and Development (TAXCAPDEV)
- Research on Humanitarian Policy (HUMPOL)
- Effect of Aid (AIDEFFECT).[26]

The Programme Board had a far-reaching mandate. It allocated research funds in principle (and depending on the specific call) also for projects including PhDs, networking, equipment and other costs related to a closer interaction between Norwegian and Southern partners as well as capacity building components both in Norway and in the Southern partner institutions and countries. Financial support was based on accepting an application submitted in response to calls issued by the Programme Board. Applicants had to be individual scholars affiliated to Norwegian research institutions and universities. Collaboration with partners in the global South were in many cases a pre-requisite, as was the allocation of a certain proportion of the funds for these partners. The collaboration with African counterparts was among the priorities. Partner institutions in a total of sixteen African countries were among the recipients of research grants under the different programmes: Benin, Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gambia, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The budget was to a large extent provided by NORAD as the specialized directorate under the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with limited additional funds from the Ministry of Education and Research. Since its inception, the amounts allocated varied according to the specific areas and calls.[27] NORAD had a representative as an *ex officio* member on the Programme Board, but the board members' authority in decision-making remained fully autonomous. NRC staff members in charge of the sectors facilitated informed decisions. They prepared, circulated and summarized the necessary information (including the reports and rankings compiled by individual reviewers or review panels, whose identity remained undisclosed to the Programme Board). They also submitted recommendations based on these assessments, while the board took final decisions as a result only of its internal deliberations. These were at times different from the views of NORAD or the NRC recommendations. Notably, for the whole period all the decisions were taken without any major dissent among the board members, in mutual agreement and on a consensual basis, at times after extended discussions guided by a remarkable degree of respect for diverse

competences, differing arguments and approaches. At times, the final decisions also deviated considerably from the rankings submitted by the reviews.

The board had a total of eight members, of whom only the NORAD appointed representative and the chairperson were Norwegians. The other six members were scholars recruited from other countries to reduce the risks of any potential conflict of interest. They were competent in a variety of disciplines and areas, such as political sciences, sociology, development studies, social anthropology, economics, agricultural sciences, environmental sciences and human geography with a variety of practical regional experiences in different countries and continents. The Programme Board undertook a self-evaluation taking stock of the first five years as an input to the formulation of the mandate, aims and goals for the following phase.[28]

Beyond NORGLOBAL 1

By December 2014 the NRC had appointed the members of a new Programme Board for the next anticipated term (dubbed NORGLOBAL 2). But while the board met to resume work for the next cycle in early 2015, the conservative Norwegian government, in power since late 2013, undertook considerable policy changes. The office of a minister for development affairs was abandoned and development cooperation became an integral part of the portfolio of the foreign minister. While the new office bearer, as a trained economist, had among other positions a history in the UN Commission on Sustainable Development and as Managing Director of the World Economic Forum, which increasingly focused on matters in the global South, he was more reluctant to continue allocating funds to such research. What was taken for granted turned out to be in doubt. By mid-2015 the new board was still awaiting the overdue decision to continue funding the programme and was forced to operate with the unspent funds from NORGLOBAL 1, unable to initiate calls in the absence of any new budget.

While criticism also mounted in the public domain,[29] the Norwegian Prime Minister Erna Solberg and her Minister of Foreign Affairs Børge Brende emphasized that education is a human right. In a joint article published ahead of the opening of an Oslo Summit of Education for Development they declared in July 2015:

> We must reverse the recent downward trend in development assistance for education, and leverage our assistance to attract investments from various other sources. For our part, we are in the process of doubling Norway's financial contribution to education for development in the period 2013–2017.[30]

The next day, in her opening speech to the Oslo Summit, Prime Minister Solberg reiterated:

> We need to innovate and forge new partnerships. Information technology and globalisation offer new opportunities. We must make the most of these opportunities and work together to secure education for all children and young people.[31]

It seems as if the awareness about the obvious connection between school education and institutions of higher learning, research and academic excellence as integral parts of knowledge production (and components of the much referred to development) has not yet managed to gain ground within Norway's current government. Instead of moving forward, its policy moves several steps backward, deals with educational and poverty-related matters in isolation and adheres to a neoliberal paradigm, which is neither new nor liberal.

Such setbacks, which document the effects of conservative governments in the Nordic countries not only in terms of their migration policy, cannot however eliminate the insights gained and presented during the course of NORGLOBAL 1. When NORAD during 2012/13 embarked on a research strategy process seeking to improve current practices, the Programme Board was asked to offer its views. It recommended that the following priority areas, among others, should be considered with special preference:

- natural resource and energy management/governance
- industrial policy and labour market dynamics
- promotion of health.

It was also suggested that the creation and dissemination of knowledge should be considered in future research activities as a complementing aspect attached to the subject-related analyses. Most prominently, the Programme Board emphasized that NORGLOBAL has already established research activities on the effects of climate change and was in contact with the Global Environment and Climate (GEC) initiative and its activities. It had also established a close alignment with the new Future Earth initiative. Therefore not by coincidence, the board in its report stressed as a priority,

> That research in this area is continued and is linked to concerns specific to the global South and to development challenges. Research here could and should engage researchers in the engineering and technical communities as well as in biology and other relevant natural sciences, with a view to strengthen the notion of sustainability.

Sharing the understanding of the Future Earth approach,[32] it stressed the need for an alliance of different initiatives, working in a solution-orientated

mode within interdisciplinary research on global environmental change for sustainable development. As the initial design of the Future Earth initiative summarizes:

> Future Earth will address issues critical to poverty alleviation and development such as food, water energy, health and human security, and the nexus between these areas and the over-arching imperative of achieving global sustainability. It will provide and integrate new insights in areas such as governance, tipping points, natural capital, the sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity, lifestyles, ethics and values. It will explore the economic implications of inaction and action and options for technological and social transformations towards a low-carbon future. Future Earth will explore new research frontiers and establish new ways to produce research in a more integrated and solutions-oriented way.[33]

But such a noble statement, which also links to the aims and aspirations of NORGLOBAL, needs to be realistically interrogated. There is a need to acknowledge and implement in any research design that the global is at the same time local and vice versa. Much more awareness among scholars and donors alike should be fostered concerning the practical implications of the inter-connectivity between seemingly different worlds and social realities. Methodology as well as theory should consciously integrate such understanding in its approaches.

This resonates strongly (and deliberately) with the World Social Science Report 2013.[34] Similar to Future Earth, it seeks to reconcile and bring together the social, human and natural sciences and explicitly endorses the Future Earth approach as a like-minded (and joint) initiative, which

> provides a unique and robust institutional basis for accomplishing something that has long been called for: research that brings the various scientific fields together on complex, multi-faceted problems. In addition, Future Earth fosters knowledge production, guided by a vision of science working with society to find solutions for global sustainability.[35]

However, by stressing 'a vision of science with society', the potential collaborators should be daring enough not only to think outside of the box but also to collaborate with those so far considered in their civil society and social movement roles of no direct relevance for closer interaction. The separation between the sciences as knowledge production from actors producing possibly less academic but equally socially relevant knowledge has not yet been overcome. In reality, however, the results of these initiatives might pass the test and provide as relevant and useful insights as the example of the Civil Society Reflection Group on Global Development Perspectives might be able to show.[36] Its major report so far had a measurable impact

on the Rio+20 debates and engages with closely related issues.[37] Other earlier initiatives of the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation relating to its programmatic engagement over more than thirty years within the areas of 'Another Development' and 'What Next' testify to similar undertakings, directly linking to the approaches of the Future Earth initiative.[38] Matters of climate change are indeed issues reaching far beyond academic discourse and into wider social movements for global change, which should not be ignored when it comes to further knowledge production, utilization and – even more importantly – the related fundamental search for alternative concepts of development.[39]

As the World Social Science Report 2013 points out:

> Global environmental change is about humans changing global environments, and about humans, individually and collectively, shaping the direction of planetary and social evolution. The social sciences therefore have a vital role in enriching society's understanding of what it means to live – and maybe thrive – in the Anthropocene, and in raising awareness of the opportunities, accountabilities and responsibilities this brings with it.[40]

Challenges

Current (self-)critical examinations suggest that the mainstream academic community is not at all close to an amicable solution to overcoming the dichotomies existing in the forms of knowledge production and the specific focus and nature of such common knowledge production within North–South interaction – also in isolation from other initiatives by NGOs.[41] The NORGLOBAL Programme Board diagnosed *inter alia* 'a clear danger that partners in projects managed by Norwegian research institutions become junior partners who work in a fairly asymmetrical relationship with managing researchers'. For the EADI paper the structural constraints show similar results 'often leading to southern partners becoming implementers of a northern agenda'.[42] Overall, 'collaborative North–South research projects still tend to favour supporting southern researchers individually, but neglect broader institutional support that would be essential to enhance autonomous research capabilities of southern institutions'.[43] The NORGLOBAL board, sharing a similar concern, therefore recommended that

> Projects should also be monitored during their execution and evaluated after completion with respect to whether they lead to future collaborations, produce joint research reports or lead to subsequent research bids, and more generally contribute effectively to building sustainable research capacity in the South.

The problem is exacerbated by the dubious if not toxic so-called relevance criteria defined within the neoliberal mind of those executing the power of governing. They are manifested in the shifts of emphasis towards so-called Impact Factors in scholarly production measured by indicators such as the number and ranking of publications. These dubious criteria, void of any concept of practical social or political relevance, are increasingly applied not only by those holding the power of definition over academic advancement and careers but also by Northern funding agencies:

> This provides an incentive for northern research institutions to seek collaboration with well-established (usually western) foundations rather than to engage in complex partnerships with southern partners involving capacity-building components. The tensions between short-term recognition of academic excellence and longer-term capacity building objectives lie at the heart of the North-South research partnership debate. …the more northern institutions put an emphasis on publishing numerous articles in renowned journals for their own survival, the weaker the incentive to invest in building effective partnerships that contribute to capacity building and inclusion.[44]

In addition, funding tends to be project-related, which is not conducive to long-term planning and investment in human resources and institutional collaboration. This seems to be confirmed by the observation that 'successes seem to be more frequent when dealing with applied research geared toward the development of technical "solutions" – for instance in the area of health or civil engineering – than in the case of more fundamental research in social sciences writ large'.[45]

Shifting the emphasis to a new alliance between scholars of a wider range of disciplines, connecting the human (social) with the natural sciences more closely is however only one important aspect of the challenges ahead. Efforts seeking to address the fundamental obstacles towards sustainability should at the same time not risk losing sight of imminent problems existing in terms of socio-economic realities produced by and testifying to the current reproduction of a fundamentally flawed and unsustainable form of human reproduction.

Therefore, new forms of collaboration should not abandon engagement with other issues, which impact on the mindset, dominant configurations in societies and global orders and the continued abuse of natural resources as well as a further promotion of inequalities. Some of the current issues requiring consideration by concerned social scientists would include as much discussion about social protection floors as well as a critical interrogation of the emerging hype on the assumed positive role of the middle classes,[46] as well as potential governance options by means of a taxation policy, to mention

only a few relevant issues. These are intrinsically related to concepts of social policy, justice and sustainability. Their discussion by a group of gender-aware scholars of both sexes representing different disciplines, cultures, religions and regions would create new insights linked with the search for future models of social reproduction to secure sustainability and a point of departure for the next generations.

If the social sciences are indeed useful in efforts to 'untangle the processes by which global environmental change affects societies, and thus help them to respond to it in context-sensitive ways',[47] then a mere 'switch' from rigorous social analyses (including class analysis) towards environmentally-oriented research is not a solution. While it might be a correct observation that there exists a continued lack of interest among social scientists in global environmental change, and that disciplinary barriers are prevalent also with regard to other sciences,[48] this cannot result in abandoning the original strength of the disciplines. As the World Social Sciences Report 2013 recognizes:

> The insights of traditional social sciences have often been dismissed as value-laden, contextual, and therefore unreliable. Yet attention to context and values may be precisely what is needed to lead humanity out of its current predicament. The growing engagement of the social sciences in global change research is a sign of their readiness to deliver. This engagement now needs to be accelerated.[49]

The relevance of social sciences within integrated research on global change has been stressed in an initiative under the GEC framework. Climate and global environmental change are understood as a central concern and subject for the social sciences, and global change as organic to this field of science. This is emphasized by stating the obvious, that 'the simple recognition that if the fundamental causes and consequences of global change are social, then so must the solutions be'.[50] Such a perspective was also the common understanding at a meeting of some seventy participants representing international, regional and national development aid agencies and research funding agencies, along with African scholars and scientists.[51] They reiterated the crucial role of social scientists in issues related to sustainable development research, since the resulting challenges are to a large extent the consequence of social activities and behaviour. This also impacts on perceptions and strategies of how best to address the challenges. After all:

> Critical to a social-ecological perspective is the role of humans as reflexive and creative agents of deliberate change. Understanding how values, attitudes, worldviews, beliefs and visions of the future influence system structures and processes is crucial. It challenges the idea that catastrophic global environmental change is inevitable, and directs attention to possibilities for acting in response to such change.[52]

As the World Social Science Report 2013 also notes:

> Global environmental change is simultaneously an environmental and a social problem. Social science research helps us to comprehend the complex dynamics of 'social-ecological' or 'coupled human-natural' systems, and can help explain how these systems unfold and interconnect across space, from the local to the global, and in time, from the past and present into the future.[53]

Concluding Reflections

Future Earth suggests being a pioneering initiative to bridge the North–South divide in the face of meeting the challenges for global survival in times of devastating effects of climate change. At the same time, however, it remains confronted with lasting structural disparities which the initiative seems to be aware of and seeks to at least reduce if not to overcome. In early July 2014 the alliance that initiated Future Earth had announced the results of an open bidding process for the hosting of five global hubs. These were to be established to function as a single secretarial entity. The status was awarded to research institutions in Canada, France, Japan, Sweden and the United States. They will be complemented by four regional hubs in Cyprus, Japan, the United Kingdom and Uruguay – the latter the only location out of nine representing the global South. Strikingly, the African continent is not represented in any institutional form in this configuration, while being widely considered to be the region of the world, whose people are most dramatically affected by the environmental shifts as a result of climate change.

In response to a critical article voicing frustration by mainly Asian observers over Northern bias,[54] members of the Science and Technology Alliance for Global Sustainability (an informal international partnership of sponsors of Future Earth composed of members from research, funding and the international sectors dubbed 'the alliance'[55]) stated that 'work is ongoing to address this important issue, particularly in terms of the development of strong regional hubs that will become part of the secretariat'.[56] This seems not to be an ideal start and might confirm reservations as to the genuine motives of the initiators. On the other hand, they might well have reasons to bemoan the lack of serious bids presented from institutions located elsewhere, offering the opportunity to allocate more responsibility (and funds) to Southern agencies. If, as a result of disproportionate means, limited capacity or maybe even the prevailing suspicions that a competition is anyway unfair and unfavourable to Southern bidders, the potential players from these regions abstain, the end result will be another self-fulfilling

prophecy.[57] This experience suggests that even the most sensible insights are not yet a cure to the quagmire when it comes to the practical steps of implementing a sound idea.

Declared awareness of asymmetrical North–South relations does not eliminate the risk that these are perpetuated even within settings of those claiming to be aware, as long as historically rooted animosities and structural legacies as well as internalized value systems and behavioural patterns prevail. The EADI survey identified in conclusion

> large gaps between stated ambitions and actual practice regarding research partnerships. Under the drive of 'global studies' and the global public goods agenda, research organizations with no previous exposure in North-South collaboration are joining in and face many of the traditional pitfalls well-known in international development cooperation, such as basic contextual understanding, cultural sensitivity and a need to explicitly address the issue of power relations, all of which remain central to the success of such research collaboration.[58]

In addition, local policy priorities impact on the agenda. Bridging the scholars – consultants–donors divide remains, under these circumstances, a challenge. Academic criteria guiding career planning in a scholarly environment – such as the infamous 'Impact Factor' of publications – often overrule practical or even policy relevance. North–South cooperation still remains in the hands of Northern partners with Southern counterparts as a fig leaf or junior partner reduced to an implementing agency for local empirical studies and data collection, which, after completion of local service functions, are later owned by the Northern 'big brother/sister'.

As a result, indeed at times relevant insights for local policy-makers and communities in the South generated by new research end in peer-reviewed journals, whose commercial publishing priority remains prohibitive to access by those who might benefit most from it. Often, research projects awarded with the necessary funding, are not even tasked or expected to share their insights with a wider audience as the potential beneficiary of the new knowledge created. Similar to the lack of investment in institutional capacity building as part of such research collaboration, the publishing of the results remains in the Northern domain. Instead, one could make provisions that research results are supposed to be published in accessible ways in a local context, and provide the necessary funding for this as an integral part of the project. This would at least be a deliberate effort to address the imbalances by putting money where the mouth is.

While this emphasizes the need to mobilize for further resources allocated by governments to enable such true collaboration, it also reminds actors engaged in such cooperation to live up to the proclaimed goals:

> The academic community must support their counterparts in Africa as they struggle against the ravages of the consultancy syndrome that rewards reports over refereed academic papers, against the repressive practices and criminal negligence of their respective national governments and against the pressures for the commercialization of educational systems. Universities should not wait for the initiatives of governments and donors. Instead, they must seek ways creating autonomous spaces for interacting with each within a 'commonwealth of scholars'. This will entail changes in the current relationship between African scholars and the university communities elsewhere.[59]

But such interaction would also require a paradigm shift away from the monolithic understanding of theory towards the plurality of theories, including a 'theory from the South'.[60] Such 'new theoretical currents, grounded in deep knowledge of and engagement with the realities of life in Africa, will be able to fill in the current void of theorization in the "Euro-America" and to stimulate a global return to Theory'.[61] But over and above such fundamental shifts in premises, there remains a need to equate sustainability with notions of justice, equality and civil as well as political and socio-economic rights for individuals and collectives within a world of cultural and religious diversity impacting on and shaping norms and values as well as life perspectives. This requires the pursuance of the same goals with differing but complementing responsibilities to transcend borders not only geographically but also mentally and beyond narrow disciplinary confinements, while paying respect and recognizing diversity and otherness when seeking and establishing common ground. Last but not least, despite all these demanding aspects, one should never compromise on quality, but rather re-define the criteria for meaningful quality and relevance – for both, knowledge and life.

Notes

1. An earlier version of the paper was prepared for a meeting on 'Enhancing collaboration between the development aid and the global environmental change communities to achieve development goals in Africa', organized by the International Council for Science (ICSU) and the Swedish Development Agency (Sida) on 5 and 6 May 2014 at the Soweto Campus of the University of Johannesburg. I thank Inger-Ann Ullstein, Jan Monteverde Haakonsen and their colleagues from the NRC and Kevin Noone and other members on the Programme Board of NORGLOBAL for the fruitful cooperation during the last years and all the indirect inputs to this paper, for which I bear the full and sole responsibility. Its final revisions also benefitted from the observations shared by the reviewers.
2. Gilles Carbonnier/Tiina Kontinen, *North–South Research Partnerships: Academia Meets Development?* Bonn: EADI (EADI Policy Paper Series), June 2014, 3. For

a considerably modified later version see Gilles Carbonnier/Tiina Kontinen, 'Institutional learning in North-South research partnerships', *Revue Tiers Monde*, 221, January–March 2015, 149–62.

3. Maria Eriksson Baaz, *The Paternalism of Partnership: A Postcolonial Reading of Identity in Development Aid*, London: Zed 2005.
4. See the review by Jonathan Goodhand, Journal of Agrarian Change, 7 (3): 418–20. For a general, critical assessment of the developmental discourses in current forms of cooperation see inter alia the special issue of Progress in Development Studies 6 (1), 2006, guest edited by Uma Kothari as well as chapters in Mark Duffield/Vernon Hewitt, Empire, Development & Colonialism. The Past in the Present, Woodbridge: James Currey, 2009.
5. See the challenge to Slavo Zizek by Hamid Dabashi, 'The discrete charm of European intellectuals', I*nternational Journal of Zizek Studies* 3 (4), 2009. Accessible at http://zizekstudies.org/index.php/ijzs/article/view/220/314. See also Hamid Dabashi, *Can Non-Europeans Think*?, London: Zed, 2015.
6. *World Social Science Report 2010. Knowledge Divides*. Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and International Social Science Council (ISSC) 2010.
7. Paulin J. Houtondji, 'Scientific dependence in Africa today', *Research in African Literature* 21 (3): 5–15.
8. Cf. Peter Weingart, 'Knowledge and Inequality', in Göran Therborn, ed., *Inequalities of the World. New theoretical frameworks, multiple empirical approaches*. London: Verso, 2006, 163–90.
9. Published on 17 March 2015 as 'Africa Focus, Africa: Higher Education Must be Higher Priority', http://allafrica.com/stories/201503190891.html.
10. Lewis R. Gordon, 'Disciplinary decadence and the decolonisation of knowledge', *Africa Development* 39 (1), 2014, pp. 81–92 (here: p. 81; italics in the original).
11. See on this the revised PhD thesis by Wiebke Keim, *Vermessene Disziplin. Zum konterhegemonialen Potential afrikanischer und lateinamerikanischer Soziologien*. Bielefeld: transcript 2008.
12. Revealing for this anomy have already been the early insights presented in the chapter 'The Pitfalls of National Consciousness' in the manifesto by Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967 (French original 1961); but also the mimicry he disclosed in his earlier work, *Black Skin, White Mask*s, New York: Grove Press, 1967 (French original 1952).
13. Thandika Mkandawire, 'Running while others walk: knowledge and the challenge of Africa's development', *Africa Development*, 36 (2), 2011, pp. 1–36 (here: p. 15).
14. *ibid*.
15. See among the numerous noteworthy efforts some of the results facilitated by CODESRIA, such as the contributions to Paul Tiyambe Zeleza/Adebayo Olukoshi, eds, African Universities in the Twenty-First Century. Volume II: Knowledge and Society, Dakar: CODESRIA, 2004; Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, ed., The Study of Africa. Volume I: Disciplinary and Interdisciplinary Encounters, Dakar: CODESRIA, 2006; as well as Alois Mlambo, ed., African Scholarly

Publishing, Oxford: African Books Collective, Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation and the International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications, 2006. For a summary overview on the impact of African intellectuals challenging the restrictive system see Thandika Mkandawire, 'African intellectuals, political culture and development', Austrian Journal of Development Studies 18 (1) 2002, pp. 31–47.

16. Ibrahim Oanda Ogachi, 'Neo-liberalism and the subversion of academic freedom from within: money, corporate cultures and "captured" intellectuals in African public universities', *Journal of Higher Education in Africa* 9 (1&2), 2011, pp. 25–47 (here: p. 44).
17. Recommendations for Reinvigorating the Humanities in Africa. Submitted by the Forum on the Humanities in Africa of the African Humanities Program. University of South Africa, 7 June 2014. For consideration by the African Higher Education Summit. Dakar, Senegal, 10–12 March 2015, p. 11. Released on 5 December 2014 at: http://www.acls.org/Publications/Programs/Reinvigorating_the_Humanities_in_Africa.pdf.
18. *World Social Science Report 2010*, pp. 44ff.
19. Adebayo Olukoshi, 'African Scholars and African Studies', in Henning Melber, ed., *On Africa. Scholars and African Studies. Contributions in Honour of Lennart Wohlgemuth*. Uppsala: Nordic Africa Institute 2007, pp. 7–22 (here: p. 17).
20. ibid., p. 15.
21. ibid., p. 18. Cf. Mahmood Mamdani, 'African studies made in USA', CODESRIA Bulletin 2, 1990; and 'The Challenge of the Social Sciences in the 21st Century', in Ruth Mukama and Murindwa Rutange, eds, *Confronting 21st Century Challenges: Analyses and Re-dedications by National and International Scholars*. Volume 1, Kampala: Faculty of Social Sciences and Makerere University, 2004.
22. For some critical reflections on the contested notion of African Studies from the perspectives of an European scholar see Henning Melber, 'The relevance of African Studies', *Stichproben. Vienna Journal of African Studies* 9 (16), 2009, pp. 183–200, and Henning Melber, 'What is African in Africa(n) studies? Confronting the (mystifying) power of ideology and identity', *Africa Bibliography* 2013, November 2014, pp. vii–xvii.
23. See note 2.
24. Carbonnier/Kontinen, 'Institutional learning', p. 159.
25. Further details at: «http://www.forskningsradet.no/prognettnorglobal/Home_page/1224698160055» http://www.forskningsradet.no/prognettnorglobal/Home_page/1224698160055. The designed first chairperson of the newly established Programme Board, Carl-Erik Schulz, died in a tragic accident while hiking on Table Mountain on 30 November 2008 and so could not take up this function. I dedicate this article to his memory.
26. In addition, NORGLOBAL cooperated occasionally with other programmes in the Research Council, such as INDNOR on India. The programme board also handled a limited call sponsored by the Norwegian embassy in Malawi, which allocated funds to research projects aimed at presenting findings to strengthen political governance.

27. In 2013, NORGLOBAL had a disposable budget of some NOK 153.5 million (around US$ 25 million), of which for the first three months some NOK 51.5 million (around US$ 8.5 million) were used.
28. The report was drafted in August/September 2013 by the board's chairperson Helge Hveem, based on the inputs of the other board members.
29. Both Helge Hveem, the chairperson of NORGLOBAL 1, and Øyvind Østeryd, the chairperson of NORGLOBAL 2, are among the top senior scholars in Development Studies in Norway, and have published critical opinion articles in established Norwegian print media, appealing to correct this situation. For another critical intervention see the opinion article by John Y. Jones/Henning Melber in *Development Today* 8, August 2015.
30. Erna Solberg/Børge Brende, 'No Education, No Development', published on 6 July 2015 in Project Syndicate. Accessible at «https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/no-education-no-development/id2426818/» https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/no-education-no-development/id2426818/.
31. The Prime Minister's Opening Speech at the Oslo Summit of Education for Development, 7 July 2015. Accessible at: https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/the-prime-ministers-opening-speech-at-the-oslo-summit-of-education-for-development/id2426937/.
32. See «http://www.icsu.org/future-earth» www.icsu.org/future-earth and «http://www.futureearth.info» www.futureearth.info.
33. Future Earth, *Future Earth Initial Design: Report of the Transition Team*, Paris: International Council for Science (ICSU), 2013, p. 11.
34. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and International Social Science Council (ISSC), *World Social Science Report 2013. Changing Global Environments*, Paris: OECD Publishing and UNESCO Publishing, 2013.
35. *World Social Science Report 2013. Summary*, p. 5.
36. See http://www.reflectiongroup.org/.
37. *No future without justice. Report of the Civil Society Reflection Group on Global Development Perspectives*, Uppsala: Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, 2012 (*Development Dialogue* 59). Accessible at: http://www.dhf.uu.se/publications/development-dialogue/dd59/.
38. See for a summary on some of the contributions Henning Melber, ed., 50 Years Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation,, Uppsala: Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation 2012 (Development Dialogue 60). Accessible at: «http://www.dhf.uu.se/publications/development-dialogue/dd60/» http://www.dhf.uu.se/publications/development-dialogue/dd60/; and more specifically by Niclas Hällström with Robert Österbergh, eds, What Next Volume III: Climate, Development and Equity, Uppsala: Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation and What Next Forum 2012 (Development Dialogue 61). Accessible at: http://www.dhf.uu.se/publications/development-dialogue/dd61/. The Foundation's web site offers access to several more related publications.

39. See Henning Melber, 'Whose world? Development, civil society, development studies and (not only) scholar activists', *Third World Quarterly* 35 (6), 2014, pp. 1082–97.
40. *World Social Science Report 2013. Summary*, p. 4.
41. This observation by no means suggests that NGO-interactions are immune from paternalistic forms of collaboration. Rather, they reproduce to a large extent similar problems and challenges as encountered in the collaboration among scholars and academic institutions. See as examples some of the articles in the special issue of the *Austrian Journal of Development Studies* 31 (1), 2015 on 'Civil society, cooperation and development'.
42. Carbonnier/Kontinen, *North-South Research Partnerships*, p. 10.
43. ibid., p. 9.
44. ibid., pp. 5 and 7.
45. *ibid*., p. 16.
46. See for a critique of such discourses Henning Melber, 'Africa and the middle class(es)', *Africa Spectrum*, 48 (3), 2013, pp. 111–20 and 'Where and what (for) is the middle? Africa and the middle class(es)', *European Journal of Development Research*, 27 (2), 2015, pp. 246–54.
47. *World Social Science Report 2013. Summary*, p. 14.
48. *ibid*., p. 12.
49. *ibid*., p. 9.
50. Heide Hackmann/Asunción Lera St. Clair, *Transformative Cornerstones of Social Science Research for Global Change*, Paris: International Social Science Council, May 2012, p. 8.
51. 'Enhancing collaboration between the development aid and the global environmental change communities to achieve development goals in Africa', conference held at the University of Johannesburg, Soweto campus, 5–6 May 2014.
52. *World Social Science Report 2013. Summary*, p. 7.
53. *ibid*., p. 4.
54. 'Future Earth's "global" secretariat under fire', SciDevNet, 23 July 2014. Available at: «http://www.scidev.net/global/sustainability/news/future-earth-global-secretariat.html» http://www.scidev.net/global/sustainability/news/future-earth-global-secretariat.html.
55. Core members include the ICSU, the ISSC, the IGFA/Belmont Forum, UNESCO, UNEP, UNU and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).
56. 'Future Earth's globally distributed secretariat designed to be flexible and diverse', 7 August 2014. Available at «http://www.futureearth.info/news/future-earths-globally-distributed-secretariat-designed-be-flexible-and-diverse»http://www.futureearth.info/news/future-earths-globally-distributed-secretariat-designed-be-flexible-and-diverse.
57. China, for example, reportedly took an explicit decision not to bid to host the secretariat, while potential Indian partners did not respond to invitations to participate in the bidding process. Nor was there any African organization willing to act as a host for a hub or to coordinate a bid.

58. Carbonnier/Kontinen, 'Institutional learning', p. 160.
59. Mkandawire, 'Running while others walk', p. 25.
60. John Comaroff and Jean Comaroff, *Theory from the South or, How Euro-America is Evolving toward Africa*.,London: Paradigm 2012.
61. Ksenia Robbe, 'African studies at a crossroads: producing theory across the disciplines in South Africa', *Social Dynamics* 40 (2), 2014, pp. 255–73 (here: p. 259).

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Le financement de l'éducation dans les collectivités locales, quels défis ?

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Résumé

Le présent article a pour objectif de faire une analyse de l'appui financier accordé par l'Etat aux collectivités locales du Mali, en vue de cibler les catégories de dépenses inclues dans le financement et observer leur appropriation par les bénéficiaires des services de l'éducation. Un échantillon de 20 communes basées dans cinq régions a été sélectionné, pour analyser la structure des allocations budgétaires de 2007 à 2012, en termes de catégories de dépenses et d'appropriation par les bénéficiaires directs et indirects. De même, la variation des effectifs d'apprenants, d'enseignants et du nombre d'établissements d'enseignement est analysée, afin de faire la lumière sur le lien avec l'évolution du budget. Il ressort de l'analyse qu'au moins 84 pour cent du financement va directement aux bénéficiaires indirects, à savoir les enseignants et le personnel de l'administration scolaire, tandis que seulement 16 pour cent reviennent aux apprenants et à leurs parents : les bénéficiaires directs : c'est là que se situe la contradiction qui suscite la présente publication. Pourquoi cette inégalité d'appropriation ? Quelles solutions envisager ? L'article tente d'introduire le débat sur la réduction de cette inégalité qui semble être un facteur déterminant pour l'atteinte des objectifs de l'Education Pour Tous (EPT). Quelques suggestions d'argumentation du plaidoyer auprès des décideurs sont faites. Enfin, la présente publication rappelle aux décideurs, la nécessité de prendre en compte le rythme de progression des effectifs d'apprenants, d'enseignants et du nombre d'établissements scolaires, dans le financement de l'éducation. Les collectivités locales peuvent orienter leurs efforts vers les catégories de dépenses en replis, afin de compléter les efforts entrepris par l'État à travers la loi des finances-le budget d'État.

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Abstract

This article aims to analyse the support provided by the state to local collectivities in Mali, to target the expenditure categories included in the funding and observe their appropriation by the beneficiaries of education services. A sample of 20 communes based in five regions was selected to analyse the structure of budgetary allocations from 2007 to 2012, in terms of expenditure categories and appropriation for direct and indirect beneficiaries. Similarly, the change in the number of learners, teachers and the number of educational institutions was analysed in order to clarify the link with the change in the budget. The budget analysis showed that at least 84 per cent of funding was allocated to indirect beneficiaries, namely teachers and staff of the school administration, while only 16 per cent went to learners and their parents – direct beneficiaries: here lies the contradiction that prompted this publication. The article attempts to introduce the debate on this inequality which appears to be a determining factor in achieving the goals of Education for All (EFA). Some suggestions for advocacy and engagement with decision-makers were made. Finally, this publication reminds decision-makers of the need to consider the increase in the number of learners, teachers and the number of schools in education financing. Local collectivities can direct their efforts towards the declining expenditure categories, to complement the efforts of the state through the Finance Law – the state budget.

Introduction

Cette contribution a pour objectif principal, de faire une analyse de la problématique du financement de l'éducation en milieu décentralisé. La réponse de l'Etat aux attentes des collectivités locales à travers les allocations budgétaires est évaluée, grâce à une analyse comparative de quelques communes du Mali. Ainsi, nous aborderons plusieurs points, notamment celui la problématique du financement de l'éducation dans les collectivités locales et particulièrement de la cohérence entre les intérêts et opportunités de participation des différents acteurs au fonctionnement et à la gestion du système éducatif. Ensuite, une analyse les données et présentation des résultats de travaux qui font la synthèse de la réponse de l'Etat aux attentes des communes, à travers les allocations budgétaires globales, puis par catégorie de dépense. De plus, l'inégalité d'appropriation du financement y est abordée en mettant côte à côte les bénéficiaires directs, à savoir les apprenants et leurs parents d'une part, et de l'autre, les bénéficiaires indirects : les enseignants et le personnel de l'administration scolaire.

Contexte

L'objectif principal de cette recherche est d'analyser la réponse de l'État aux attentes des communes ciblées à travers l'appui accordé, via le budget d'État. Il s'agit ainsi d'évaluer le budget accordé par l'État aux communes ciblées de 2007 à 2012 et d'analyser la variation annuelle des catégories de dépenses du financement accordé à l'échantillon, en termes d'appropriation par les bénéficiaires directs et indirects et situer le lien avec la variation des effectifs d'apprenants, d'enseignants et le nombre d'établissements d'enseignement. On peut alors se poser certaines questions relatives au lien, entre la variation du budget et les effectifs d'apprenants, d' enseignants et le nombre d'établissements d'enseignement. Ensuite, il s'agit de proposer une meilleure réponse aux attentes des collectivités locales.

L'État met à la disposition des collectivités territoriales, sous forme de subventions, et selon son mode de gouvernance, les ressources financières nécessaires à la mise en œuvre des compétences transférées. Ces collectivités sont censées mobiliser les ressources financières complémentaires pour accomplir leur mission. L'analyse de la circulation des flux financiers entre l'Etat et les collectivités permet de comprendre les contraintes du financement de l'éducation, d'argumenter la nécessité d'une amélioration de la contribution des acteurs.

Certaines réformes administratives et réglementaires ont balisé le terrain en vue du développement du processus de décentralisation, dans sa forme (Malam & Ilboudo 2012: 17). L'autonomie concédée à un système éducatif peut ainsi prendre plusieurs formes (Haecht 1996) :

- l'autonomie dans le modèle territorial, avec un transfert de compétences aux collectivités ;
- l'autonomie dans le modèle solidariste, avec des subventions accordées aux établissements d'enseignement non-publics ;
- l'autonomie au modèle participatif qui prévoit la participation des acteurs à la gestion du système scolaire.

Concernant le cas spécifique du Mali, le titre 4 de la loi n° 99-46 AN RM du 28 décembre1999, portant loi d'orientation sur l'éducation, traite du financement et de la gestion de l'éducation. Il précise la procédure d'allocation et de gestion des ressources ainsi que de l'évaluation de l'éducation. Cette loi distingue les acteurs, bénéficiaires, ordres et types d'enseignement ci-après :

Les principaux bailleurs de l'éducation :

- l'Etat ;
- les collectivités territoriales ;

- les communautés ;
- le privé.

Les bénéficiaires des services de l'éducation, selon cette même loi, sont :

- les élèves et étudiants ;
- les enseignants ;
- le personnel d'administration, de gestion, d'encadrement et d'appui pédagogique ;
- les parents d'élèves et étudiants.

En outre, il comprend quatre ordres d'enseignement (l'éducation préscolaire, l'enseignement fondamental – cycles I et II-, l'enseignement secondaire et l'enseignement supérieur) et quatre types d'enseignement (l'éducation non formelle, l'éducation spéciale, l'enseignement général et la formation technique et professionnelle). Les trois modèles ci-dessus cités se retrouvent dans le système éducatif du Mali :

- l'autonomie dans le modèle territorial, avec un transfert de compétences aux collectivités, peut être observée au niveau des régions, cercles, et communes et particulièrement dans l'enseignement fondamental et secondaire.
- L'autonomie dans le modèle solidariste avec des subventions accordées aux établissements d'enseignement non-publics, peut être observée au niveau des établissements privés d'enseignement secondaire.
- L'autonomie au modèle participatif qui prévoie la participation des acteurs à la gestion du système scolaire, peut être observée au niveau des écoles communautaires.

Selon le niveau d'avancement du processus de décentralisation, chaque pays met en œuvre sa politique de scolarisation. L'exemple des cartes éducatives, introduites en 1999, au Burkina Faso est édifiant. Il s'agit d'un ensemble de techniques et de procédures, utilisées pour la planification des besoins au niveau local (MEBA – Burkina Faso 1999). Ce document, en dépit d'une analyse des indicateurs liés à l'utilisation des ressources matérielles et humaines, au même titre que les ressources financières, ne s'étend pas suffisamment sur l'allocation et l'utilisation des ressources financières ; en plus de la variation des allocations budgétaires et dépenses, seuls le coût par apprenant, les dépenses globales, le nombre de structures et le nombre de formations y sont traités. Au Mali, les régions administratives et leurs démembrements bénéficient d'une inscription au budget d'Etat qui inclut des dépenses en éducation, et en sus de la dotation budgétaire des Ministères en charge de l'éducation et de la formation.

Ainsi donc, il apparaît clairement que le processus de financement de l'éducation est assez complexe et nécessite une analyse poussée, pour fixer les proportions optimales d'abord pour les différents acteurs, les ordres d'enseignement, puis les établissements d'enseignement, les catégories de dépenses et les bénéficiaires finaux. Par ailleurs, l'appropriation des ressources de l'éducation est liée à plusieurs facteurs exogènes et endogènes qui varient selon le contexte économique et social. Dans tous les cas, le soutient de l'Etat est indispensable pour l'atteinte des objectifs d'éducation, rendant nécessaire une conciliation des différents intérêts. En effet, l'analyse des textes législatifs et réglementaires relatifs à la décentralisation permet de constater que les compétences ci-après ont été transférées aux collectivités locales :

- l'élaboration et la mise en œuvre du plan de développement local en matière d'éducation ; l'élaboration des stratégies locales de scolarisation dans les écoles fondamentales du 1er et 2e cycle ;
- l'élaboration et la mise en œuvre des stratégies d'éducation de la petite enfance ;
- la construction, l'équipement et l'entretien des écoles fondamentales du 1er et 2e cycle ;
- le recrutement et la gestion du personnel enseignant de l'éducation préscolaire et du 1er et 2e cycles de l'enseignement fondamental ;
- la gestion et le suivi des institutions préscolaires ;
- la prise en charge des salaires des maîtres des écoles communautaires.

Selon les textes ci-dessus mentionnés, le transfert de compétences de l'Etat vers les collectivités territoriales se limite aux ordres inférieurs d'enseignement : le préscolaire, le primaire et le secondaire. L'enseignement supérieur reste centralisé.

Enfin, ces textes, à l'image de toutes les publications et recherches ci-dessus cités, ne traitent pas de l'appropriation du financement de l'éducation par les bénéficiaires des services éducatifs, et omettent ainsi la prise en compte de cette inégalité qui semble freiner l'atteinte des objectifs de l'éducation pour tous.

Problématique

Les concepts clés ci-après ont été retenus pour l'analyse : l'éducation, les collectivités, la discrimination.

1. Selon *wikipédia*, l'éducation est, étymologiquement, l'action de « guider hors de », c'est-à-dire développer, faire produire. Elle signifie maintenant plus couramment l'apprentissage et le développement des facultés physiques, psychiques et intellectuelles ; les moyens et les résultats de cette activité de développement. Chaque pays dispose de son propre système

éducatif, avec un rôle traditionnellement dévolu aux acteurs, à travers le financement et/ou l'appropriation du budget, la contribution aux actions sur le terrain et une intervention souvent croissante de l'État.

Le rôle et la place de l'Etat varie d'un acteur à l'autre selon la vision de sa mission. Par exemple, la Banque Mondiale a, dans son rapport de 1997, apporté des modifications par rapport à ses perspectives sur l'Etat : le faisant passer de son rôle d'intervenant direct et de régulateur, à celui de catalyseur et de partenaire. Par ailleurs, trois parties sont censées coordonner les actions : l'Etat, la société civile et les bailleurs de fonds. La société civile n'a pas fait l'objet d'une définition précise, malgré son rôle dans le processus (Lakhal, Altinok, & Tarik 2007: 9-12).

La loi n° 0093-008 du 11 février 1993 relative à la libre administration des collectivités locales mentionne que ces dernières sont dotées chacune de la personnalité morale et de l'autonomie financière et aucune ne peut établir ou exercer de tutelle sur l'autre. Ces collectivités locales représentent l'Etat au niveau régional et local.

Au sens général, la discrimination est une inégalité qui se manifeste sur le fond d'une égalité supposée. Mais la norme qui fonde l'égalité en question peut ne pas être strictement juridique : elle trouve alors sa source ailleurs.

Les premières recherches sur l'enseignement en Afrique, réalisées à partir des années1920, émanent principalement d'une discipline : la sociologie. Cette prédominance ne sera pas sans influence sur l'évolution du choix des théories, des concepts et des thèmes développés au sein de la recherche éducative. La sociologie de l'éducation est demeurée très marginale et n'a guère bénéficié de recherches individuelles dont l'isolement n'a pas permis la reconnaissance, ni la création de courants d'idées suscitant la confrontation et l'émulation scientifiques (Lange 2003: 1).

Malgré cette situation, de nombreuses publications sont réalisées par les institutions internationales en charge de l'éducation (UNESCO, UNICEF, PNUD, USAID…) et témoignent de l'engagement des décideurs à soutenir les actions visant à assurer un développement harmonieux du système éducatif. Dans de telles circonstances, pour assurer un équilibre entre les ressources disponibles et l'offre de l'éducation, chaque pays est confronté à des choix difficiles (UNESCO 2011: 93).

De plus, la publication de données statistiques est entachée par le manque d'objectifs précis pour l'utilisation future des données. Compte tenu du poids des salaires d'enseignants dans la dépense globale pour l'éducation, une maîtrise de cette catégorie de dépense semble incontournable pour assurer le financement adéquat du système éducatif. Par ailleurs, un ratio élèves/maîtres de 50 en 2012, a été ciblé comme objectif par le PISE III,

tandis qu'un nombre assez important de communes est à plus de 60 élèves par maître (GSB-Mali 2012: 13). Ce qui donne l'opportunité d'évaluer les besoins réels en accroissement de budget, comme d'effectifs d'enseignants.

Les collectivités locales du Mali affectent des ressources à l'éducation d'une manière assez diversifiée. Dans la région de Koulikoro, certaines communes affectent plus de la moitié de leur budget à l'éducation, tandis que d'autres moins d'un pour cent (GSB-Mali 2012: 7). Cette situation est due à la faiblesse des capacités des communes à mobiliser des ressources, dans le cadre de la prise en charge des compétences transférées. La loi est peu explicite sur cette question.

Cette recherche a pour objet de faire une analyse de l'appui accordé par l'Etat aux communes ciblées, en ayant en vue la réponse donnée aux attentes des acteurs, à travers les allocations budgétaires. Elle se distingue des précédentes recherches, par l'extension de l'analyse aux catégories de dépenses, dans l'objectif d'une meilleure argumentation des besoins d'amélioration des allocations budgétaires. En effet, la question de l'appropriation des ressources de l'éducation par les bénéficiaires directs et indirects est traitée, en orientant la réflexion sur l'argumentation du débat autour des catégories de dépenses dont la variation favoriserait le plus l'atteinte des objectifs de l'Education pour Tous. L'objectif ultime étant la réduction de l'inégalité d'appropriation du financement, afin de favoriser l'efficience dans la gestion des ressources affectées à l'éducation. Par expérience, les problèmes d'efficience sont perceptibles à partir de certains symptômes (Canada 1995: 15-16) :

1. le caractère raisonnable des données sur l'efficience de l'organisation : données exprimées en volume d'extrants, en niveau de qualité et de service, en utilisation d'effectifs, du matériel ou des installations, ou en coût unitaire des extrants ;
2. les plaintes de la clientèle sur un aspect quelconque du service ;
3. la tendance évolutive des services, par rapport à la charge de travail depuis au moins trois ans ;
4. le caractère adéquat de la structure organisationnelle ;
5. les travaux en retard ;
6. les occasions d'améliorer ;
7. le caractère raisonnable de l'utilisation des ressources (exemples: matériel, énergie) ;
8. l'incidence des systèmes et pratiques de l'organisation sur son efficience.

Les symptômes n° 1 et 7 sont retenus pour jouer un rôle central dans l'analyse, Les symptômes n° 2, 5 et 6 vont jouer un rôle secondaire et les symptômes

n°3, 4 et 8 sont exclus de l'analyse en raison des difficultés d'élaboration des indicateurs qui matérialisent ces symptômes.

Méthodologie

La recherche a tourné autour des questions suivantes :

1. Quel budget annuel de 2007 à 2012 est alloué aux communes ciblées ?
2. Quelle variation de la part du budget annuel de 2007 à 2012 revient à chaque catégorie de dépenses et quel est le rapport avec la variation des effectifs d'apprenants, d'enseignants et du nombre d'établissements d'enseignement
3. Quelle part du financement désagrégé par catégorie de dépenses revient aux bénéficiaires directs et indirects ?

La recherche a été organisée en deux phases :

- Au cours de la première phase, et pendant la revue de la littérature 20 communes dans 5 régions ont été choisies, et ont servi de base pour l'analyse comparative des allocations budgétaires des exercices budgétaires de 2007 à 2012, ainsi que celle du poids de chaque catégorie de dépense dans l'allocation budgétaire globale. Les 6 communes du district de Bamako ont servi de référence pour apprécier les indicateurs découlant de l'analyse de l'échantillon.
- Dans la seconde phase, une évaluation comparative de 2007 à 2012 a permis d'apprécier les efforts à recommander. En plus, les catégories de dépenses sont affectées à deux groupes de bénéficiaires selon l'appropriation du financement par les bénéficiaires en deux groupes : les bénéficiaires directs (apprenants et parents d'apprenants) et les bénéficiaires indirects (enseignants et personnel de l'administration scolaire). Cette classification a servi à argumenter les choix d'orientations stratégiques pour les améliorations proposées.

Tableau 1 : Vue synoptique du cadre méthodologique

N° ordre	Objectifs spécifiques	Questions de recherche	Techniques de collecte de données	Outils	Source de données
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Evaluer le budget annuel accordé par l'Etat aux communes ciblées de 2007 à 2012	Quel est le budget annuel alloué par l'Etat aux communes ciblées de 2007 à 2012 ?	Revue de la littérature	Zotero+ documentation	- internet - archives MEN - diverse documentation
2	Analyser les catégories de dépenses de l'échantillon	Quelle part du budget annuel revient à chaque catégorie de dépenses?	Revue de la littérature + enquête	Zotero+ documentation	- internet -archives MEN -diverse documentation
3	Analyser le rapport entre la variation du budget et celle des effectifs d'apprenants, d'enseignants et du nombre d'établissements d'enseignement	Quel rapport entre la variation du budget et celle des effectifs d'apprenants, d'enseignants et du nombre d'établissements d'enseignement	Analyse	Excel, analyse statistique	Données collectées
4	Proposer une meilleure alternative de réponse aux attentes des communes	Quelle part, du financement désagrégé revient aux bénéficiaires directs et indirects? Comment réduire les inégalités	Analyse qualitative	Zotero+ documentation	- internet -archives MEN -diverse documentation

Source : Dembélé

Résultats

Les résultats ci-après découlent de l'analyse des allocations budgétaires de 2007 à 2012, par région et par commune :

La liste des catégories de dépenses se présente comme suit:

- Catégorie n° 1 : personnel ;
- Catégorie n° 2 : matériel didactique ;
- Catégorie n° 3 : appui en matériel de l'enseignement fondamental ;
- Catégorie n° 4 : entretien courant des écoles ;
- Catégorie n° 5 : alimentation des cantines scolaires ;
- Catégorie n° 6 : Autres dépenses.

Par ailleurs, la cotisation scolaire pour l'enseignement public fondamental est uniformisée sur l'étendue du territoire national et chiffre à 1 500 FCFA. Le programme d'enseignement fondamental est uniformisé sur l'ensemble du territoire national, quel que soit le statut de l'établissement ; ce qui suscite des besoins identiques en matériel didactique.

C'est ainsi que dans l'enseignement fondamental, le coût annuel de scolarisation se situe en moyenne, entre 76 671 FCFA pour un établissement public, contre 159 000 FCFA pour un établissement privé.

Tableau 2 : La moyenne d'allocation budgétaire par commune et par Catégories de dépenses de 2007 à 2012 (% de la dotation budgétaire)

Régions/ communes V	Catégories de dépenses						
	N° 1	N° 2	N° 3	N° 4	N° 5	N° 6	TOTAL
Koulikoro	89	0	7	2	0	2	100
Sikasso	89	0	7	2	0	2	100
Ségou	61	0	25	7	0	7	100
Mopti	76	0	11	4	4	5	100
Gao	81	0	11	4	0	4	100
District de Bamako	92	0	5	2	1	0	100
MOYENNE	81	0	11	4	1	3	100

Source : (MEF, 2009)(MF, 2008)(MEF, 2007)(MEF, 2010)(MEFB, 2012) + Calculs de l'auteur

Le dépouillement des données collectées a permis de constater que

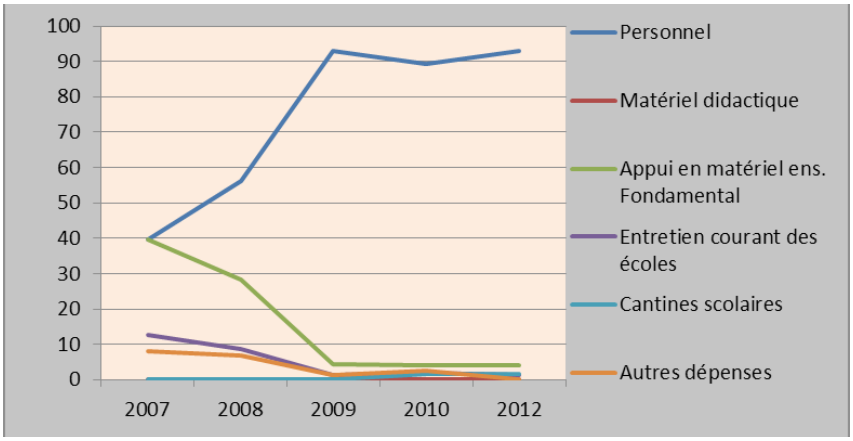
1. la classification des catégories de dépenses entre les bénéficiaires et selon le niveau d'appropriation donne le résultat ci-après :

- d'une part, les apprenants et parents d'apprenants, autrement dit les bénéficiaires directs s'approprient les catégories de dépenses n° 2, 3, 4 et 5 ;
- d'autre, les enseignants et le personnel de l'administration scolaire s'approprient les catégories de dépenses n° 1 et 6.

Ainsi donc, il ressort des données du tableau n° 2 qu'en moyenne, 84 pour cent de la dotation budgétaire par commune reviennent aux bénéficiaires indirects ; et le reste, soit 16 pour cent revient aux bénéficiaires directs.

2. Seule la catégorie n° 1 a enregistré une hausse moyenne annuelle (+11%). Les autres catégories de dépenses ont enregistré un repli respectivement de (-7%), (-2%), notamment les catégories n° 3, 4 et 6. Les montants des catégories n° 2 et 6 n'ont pas varié au cours de la période sous revue. La représentation au niveau du graphique 1 ci-après démontre cette progression :

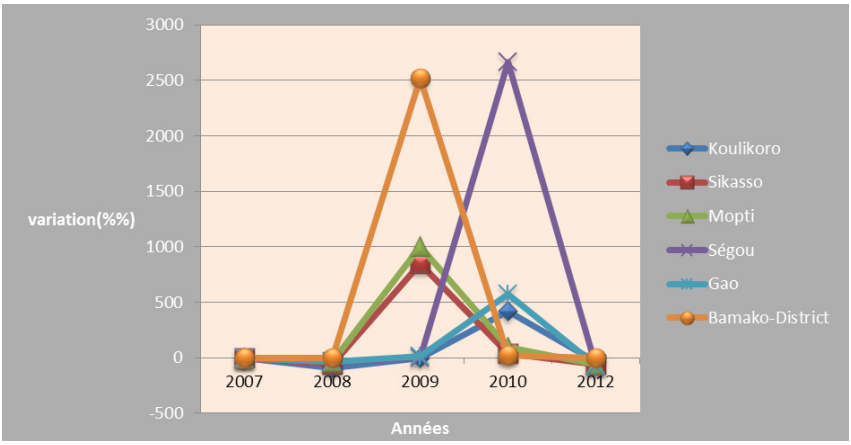
Graphique 1 : Variation moyenne annuelles des catégories de dépenses des communes de 2007 à 2012



Source : (MEF, 2009)(MF, 2008)(MEF, 2007)(MEF, 2010)(MEFB, 2012)

3. L'analyse comparative des allocations budgétaires des régions a permis de constater que les dotations budgétaires des régions ont évolué en dents de scie au cours de la période sous revue : après un léger repli entre 2007 et 2008 (-43%), les allocations budgétaires des régions ont subi une hausse significative, respectivement (+728%) et (+635%) en 2009 et 2010. Enfin un repli (-50%) est constaté en 2012. La représentation graphique 2, ci-après permet d'illustrer cette tendance.

Graphique 2 : Évolution des dotations budgétaires des communes de 2007 à 2012



Source : (MEF, 2009)(MF, 2008)(MEF, 2007)(MEF, 2010)(MEFB, 2012)

Dans cette progression, le district de Bamako et la région de Ségou enregistre une fluctuation plus marquée, à travers :

- une hausse de (-1%) à (+2516%) de 2008 à 2009, puis un repli de (+2516%) à (+22%) de 2009 à 2010, pour le district de Bamako ;
- une hausse de (-6%) à (+2661%) de 2009 à 2010, puis un repli de (+2661) à (-73%) de 2010 à 2012 pour la région de Ségou.

Par contre, une fluctuation moins significative est enregistrée par les régions de Mopti et Sikasso. Enfin, une faible variation est constatée au niveau des régions de Gao et Koulikoro.

4. De l'observation de la taille des dotations budgétaires, il ressort que les effectifs d'apprenants les plus importants ne sont pas dotés des budgets les plus conséquents. De même, les effectifs d'enseignants les plus importants ne sont pas dotés des budgets les plus importants. En revanche, le nombre d'écoles le plus important est doté de budgets plus élevés.

Tableau 3 : La moyenne de dépense par élève, par école, par enseignant et par Commune en 2012

Indicateurs Régions V	Nombre de communes sélectionnées	Dépense moyenne annuelle			Salaire moyen annuel d'un enseignant (FCFA)	Ratio élève/ maître
		Par école (millions FCFA)	Pour l'entretien d'une école (FCFA)	Par élève (FCFA)		
Koulikoro	3	11,52	126386	42694	1511869	40
Sikasso	4	10,84	165355	22107	1264284	62
Ségou	5	7,35	170370	22206	1049158	49
Mopti	5	17	206169	51253	1917831	42
Gao	3	9,59	37986	18595	1256672	64
Moyenne	4	11	141253	31371	1399963	51
National	703	14	Non disponible	32113	1335623	53

Source : Calculs de l'auteur à partir de l'arrêté n° 2012 /2582/MEFB-SG du 12 septembre2012 et (GSB-Mali, 2012. 34-58)

La dépense publique moyenne annuelle par école se chiffre à 11 millions de FCFA (y compris les salaires des enseignants), contre 10 millions de FCFA pour le district de Bamako. La dépense publique moyenne annuelle d'entretien d'une école se chiffre à 141 253 FCFA, contre 62 915 FCFA, pour le district de Bamako. La dépense publique moyenne annuelle par élève de l'échantillon se chiffre à 31 371 FCFA, contre 17 479 FCFA, pour le District de Bamako. De même, le salaire moyen d'un enseignant se chiffre à 1 399 963 FCFA et le ratio élève/maître est de 53 élèves par enseignant, pour l'ensemble de l'échantillon, contre une cible de 50 élèves par enseignants pour le PISE III.

Enfin, malgré la baisse significative des effectifs d'apprenants, d'enseignants et du nombre d'écoles des communes relevant de la région de Gao en 2012, respectivement (-60%), (-44,08%) et (-68,99%), une hausse moyenne annuelle respective de (+2,53%), (+8,21%) et (+3,16%) est constatée au niveau du reste de l'échantillon.

Divers types d'inégalités

Le choix de l'échantillon a été exclusivement basé sur la disponibilité des données permettant d'affiner l'analyse. En effet, malgré la multitude de publications sur les allocations budgétaires et les effectifs d'apprenants et d'enseignants, il n'a pas toujours été possible de trouver en même temps

tous les indicateurs ciblés par l'analyse, pour la même circonscription administrative et particulièrement la commune. C'est ce qui justifie la taille réduite de l'échantillon.

Toutefois, quelques éclairages sur la représentativité de l'échantillon, et la crédibilité des résultats qui en découle, se retrouvent dans l'écart assez réduit, entre les présents résultats, et ceux issus de travaux réalisés par des institutions dont la qualité du traitement de l'information ne fait pas de doute. C'est le cas pour la dépense moyenne annuelle par apprenant, le ratio élèves maîtres, la dépense moyenne par école (Banque Mondiale 2010 : 23, 25, 78, 90)

Divers types d'inégalités sont décelés à l'issue de l'analyse des résultats :

- l'inégalité de variation des catégories de dépenses du budget : une hausse (+11%) est constatée pour la catégorie n° 1, contre un repli respectivement de (-7%) et (-2%) pour les catégories n° 3, 4 et 6 ; les autres catégories de dépenses n'ont pas varié.
- l'inégalité entre le rythme de progression du budget et la variation des effectifs de bénéficiaires : malgré l'évolution en dents de scies, la variation moyenne annuelle du budget est 254 pour cent pour l'ensemble de l'échantillon, contre 2,53 pour cent pour les effectifs d'apprenants et 8,21 pour cent pour les effectifs d'enseignants.
- l'inégalité d'appropriation du budget par les bénéficiaires directs et indirects : l'analyse de la structure des catégories de dépenses du financement publique de l'éducation, selon le niveau appropriation prouve qu'au moins 84 pour cent reviennent aux enseignants, et les 16 pour cent restant reviennent aux apprenants ;
- l'inégalité de variation des catégories de dépenses favorables aux différents groupes de bénéficiaires : en effet une hausse (+11%) est constatée pour les catégories de dépenses auxquelles accèdent les enseignants, contre un repli de (-2%) à (-7%), pour les catégories auxquelles accèdent les apprenants.

La question fondamentale qui se pose se situe au niveau de l'appropriation du financement publique de l'éducation qui semble contradictoire, puisque les bénéficiaires directs, à savoir l'apprenant et ses parents ne bénéficient directement que de 16 pour cent. Pourquoi pas l'inverse ? Malgré l'évidence de la prise en charge des salaires d'enseignants et du personnel de l'administration scolaire, pour assurer les services éducatifs, il apparaît clairement que le rapport de force à ce niveau mérite d'être amélioré à travers des catégories de dépenses favorables aux apprenants et à leurs parents, tout en tenant compte du niveau de vie dans le financement des salaires d'enseignants et du personnel de l'administration scolaire.

Discrimination ?

Cette inégalité d'appropriation peut-elle être qualifiée de discrimination ? Nous référant à la définition des concepts, la réponse est oui. En effet, la notion de discrimination s'étend à un groupe de manière immédiate : il est dit qu'un groupe est victime de discrimination lorsque le critère qui l'identifie sert régulièrement de support à une discrimination individuelle. Certains groupes discriminés possèdent une longue histoire, une culture ou des valeurs communes (exemple : les groupes ethniques), alors que d'autres ne se perçoivent pas forcément comme tels (exemple : les personnes handicapées). La discrimination peut être directe ou indirecte : la discrimination directe est patente et peut être constatée et dénoncée ; tel n'est pas le cas pour la discrimination indirecte. Tandis que le repérage de la discrimination directe relève de l'analyse juridique, qui permet de déceler une différence de traitement opposée à l'égalité. Le repérage de la discrimination indirecte relève de l'analyse statistique : elle est repérée par les effets, non par les causes. L'intention de l'auteur de la mesure discriminatoire (apparemment neutre), n'est pas prise en compte, seul compte le résultat. C'est le cas pour les apprenants et leurs parents d'une part, et d'autre, les enseignants et le personnel d'administration scolaire.

Pour y remédier, une discrimination positive est rendue nécessaire : elle consiste à renverser le fonctionnement de la discrimination indirecte en favorisant les apprenants et leurs parents à travers une amélioration des allocations de ressources; En effet, cette situation peut et doit servir d'argument dans le plaidoyer auprès des décideurs, pour l'amélioration de l'allocation de ressources au profit des apprenants et de leurs parents qui les soutiennent, tout en préservant les intérêts des enseignants. Dans le même ordre d'idée, la faible capacité de financement des collectivités interpelle pour une révision du mode de partage des responsabilités entre l'Etat et les Collectivités en cas de transfert définitif des compétences : le maintien des salaires d'enseignants au compte de l'Etat et la prise en charge des autres dépenses par les Collectivités semblent plus adaptés à la capacité actuelle de ces acteurs, en attendant un meilleur renforcement de leurs capacités de mobilisation de ressources.

Par ailleurs, les difficultés d'accès à l'évaluation des effectifs d'apprenants et d'enseignants du district de Bamako ont constitué des obstacles à la production des indicateurs ci-après, pour cette localité :

- le salaire moyen d'un enseignant ;
- le ratio élèves / maître.

C'est pourquoi cette localité n'a pu être intégrée à l'échantillon. Toute fois les données de cette localité ont été utiles pour une appréciation objective de la dépense publique moyenne annuelle par élève, de la dépense publique

moyenne annuelle par école; et particulièrement, la dépense publique moyenne annuelle d'entretien d'une école.

Enfin, le mode de synthétisation des données sur l'allocation budgétaire, à savoir la synthétisation par circonscription administrative, sans mention sur la synthèse par catégorie de dépense, a constitué un obstacle aux analyses poussées dans ce domaine.

Conclusion

Le nombre d'écoles est un facteur important dans l'allocation budgétaire au profit des communes. Il semble prédominent dans la répartition actuelle du budget, au niveau de l'échantillon ciblé par les travaux.

Toutefois, le nombre d'enseignants et d'apprenants peut servir d'argument pour l'amélioration des dotations budgétaires des communes : les communes ayant les effectifs les plus élevés doivent être mieux dotées. Par ailleurs la tendance évolutive des catégories de dépenses appropriées par les apprenants, permet une meilleure évaluation de l'augmentation des besoins en matériel didactique, et en crédit de fonctionnement pour les cantines scolaires, par exemple. De telles informations peuvent être très utiles pour les arbitrages budgétaires. Les recommandations ci-après découlent de l'analyse :

1. En dépit de l'austérité budgétaire à laquelle l'Etat est confronté, la hausse des catégories de dépenses en repli au cours de la période sous-revue peut être planifiée.
2. L'analyse comparative des dotations budgétaires des régions prouve que la prise en compte des effectifs d'apprenants peut améliorer la prise en compte des attentes des communes en termes de dotations budgétaires.
3. L'observation des dotations budgétaires annuelles permet d'attirer l'attention des décideurs sur la nécessité de maintien du rythme des allocations budgétaires des communes
4. La contribution des communes au financement de l'éducation peut être orientée vers les catégories profitables aux apprenants, afin de compléter les efforts entrepris par le gouvernement.

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Uganda's Vision 2040 and Human Needs Promotion

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Abstract

In 2013 the President of Uganda Yoweri Kaguta Museveni launched Uganda's Vision 2040, a thirty-year development master plan which has received both praise and criticism from Ugandans. Although Vision 2040 has received both praise and criticism in almost equal measure, in this article I argue that Vision 2040 does not adequately promote the satisfaction of the human needs of Ugandans, yet the satisfaction of these needs is a prerequisite for achieving genuine development. Using a human needs framework in general, and Doyal and Gough's intermediate needs in particular, I show that the Vision's strategies adequately promote the satisfaction of only three intermediate needs of Ugandans, partially promote the satisfaction of seven intermediate needs of Ugandans, and that there is no single strategy to promote the satisfaction of one of the intermediate needs. This is because some of the Vision strategies do not adequately tackle the current and likely future challenges and bottlenecks to the satisfaction of the human needs of Ugandans. This is mainly due to the central role placed on the private capital (sector) in Vision 2040. I argue that in order for Vision 2040 to adequately promote the satisfaction of the human needs of Ugandans, all and not just some of the needs must be adequately satisfied since human needs are interrelated and interdependent. In addition, Vision 2040 should also be in position to satisfy the human needs of all Ugandans and not just some.

Résumé

En 2013, le président de l'Ouganda, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, a lancé la Vision 2040 de l'Ouganda, un plan directeur de développement de trente ans qui a reçu des éloges mais aussi des critiques de la part des Ougandais. Bien que la Vision 2040 ait reçu des éloges et des critiques à parts presque égales, je soutiens dans cet article que la Vision 2040 ne favorise pas suffisamment

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la satisfaction des besoins humains des Ougandais. Cependant, la satisfaction de ces besoins est une condition préalable à la réalisation d'un véritable développement. En utilisant le cadre des besoins humains en général, et les besoins intermédiaires de Doyal et Gough en particulier, je montre que les stratégies de la vision promeuvent de manière adéquate la satisfaction de seulement trois besoins intermédiaires des Ougandais, promeuvent partiellement la satisfaction des sept besoins intermédiaires des Ougandais, et qu'il n'y a aucune stratégie pour promouvoir la satisfaction de l'un de ces besoins intermédiaires. C'est parce que certaines des stratégies de la Vision n'abordent pas de manière adéquate les actuels et éventuels défis et goulets d'étranglement liés à la satisfaction des besoins humains des Ougandais. Ceci est principalement dû au rôle central placé sur le capital (secteur) privé dans la Vision 2040. Je soutiens que, pour une promotion adéquate par la Vision 2040 de la satisfaction des besoins humains des Ougandais, tous les besoins, et pas seulement quelques-uns, doivent être satisfaits adéquatement, puisque les besoins humains sont interdépendants. En outre, la Vision 2040 devrait également être en mesure de satisfaire les besoins humains de tous les Ougandais mais pas seulement ceux de quelques-uns.

Introduction

'"Development" is a seductive term which has had connotations historically of the unfolding of a necessary path of progress. Its usage has often combined ideas of a necessity, influenceable change and fundamental improvement' (Gasper 2004: 25). Gasper's statement clearly explains why individuals, groups, governments and intergovernmental organizations engage in development agenda setting, which includes formulation of policies and plans. Development agenda-setting is all about achieving progress. In the same breath, the government of Uganda has designed and plans to implement Vision 2040 as a strategic master plan for Uganda's development and progress. The master plan will guide the government's investment actions, decisions and priorities. It contains strategies and interventions that target the physical, economic, political and social development of Uganda.

Although achieving progress/development is a good thing in itself, Streeten et al. (1981) remind us in their work on the basic needs approach that the main objective of any development undertaking is to offer opportunity for a full life to all human beings. This means that meeting human needs is a prerequisite for achieving human well-being and development. The government of Uganda, through Vision 2040, elaborates on what it intends to do in order to achieve development in Uganda. However, it is not clear how adequately the Vision promotes the satisfaction of the human needs of Ugandans. The objective of this article is to assess whether the Vision's

proposed strategies adequately promote the satisfaction of human needs of Ugandans. Put differently, do the Vision's strategies promote the meeting of the human needs of all Ugandans? This will be judged based on whether the proposed strategies can adequately tackle the current and likely future challenges and bottlenecks to meeting the human needs of Ugandans.

I start by giving a brief summary of Vision 2040, where the Vision's statement, challenges to Uganda's development, aspirations, targets, fundamentals and opportunities, social transformation, and governance strategies are discussed. The justification for using the human needs framework in general, and a theory of human need in particular, in analysing the adequacy of the Vision's strategies in terms of meeting the human needs of Ugandans is given. Here, the meaning of human needs and reasons for choosing the needs framework are presented. In addition, a theory of human need is discussed, including the meaning of needs, primary and intermediate needs. This is followed by the analysis of adequacy of the Vision's strategies to meet the human needs of Ugandans using the satisfaction of intermediate needs as a yardstick. The conclusion shows that the Vision does not adequately promote the meeting of human needs of all Ugandans because it only partially promotes the satisfaction of most of the intermediate needs of Ugandans.

Summary of Vision 2040

The National Planning Authority, in line with its mandate of designing comprehensive, visionary and integrated plans for the country, developed Uganda's Vision 2040 (Republic of Uganda (ROU) 2002). As earlier indicated, the Vision is a thirty-year strategic development plan for Uganda. It was launched by the President of Uganda in 2013; meaning that by the time of its launch, its implementation had already commenced. The Vision has many attributes but the key ones are the Vision statement, aspirations, targets, Vision fundamentals and opportunities, social transformation and governance (ROU n.d.). The Vision statement, which is its overall objective is 'a transformed Ugandan society from a peasant to a modern and prosperous country within 30 years' (ROU n.d.: 4). According to the Vision, this statement means transforming Uganda from a predominantly low income country to a competitive upper middle income country (ROU n.d.).

In order for the Vision statement to become a reality, Vision 2040 has to tackle ten challenges to Uganda's development. These are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Challenges to Uganda's Development

	Challenges to Uganda's development
1	Slow accumulation of modern infrastructure
2	Low industrialization and value addition on (GDP is dominated by primary products)
3	Inadequate properly skilled and educated human resource
4	High rates of corruption which increases the cost of doing business and service delivery
5	Limited government investment in strategic industries which stimulate establishment of secondary and tertiary industries
6	Low level of saving and inadequate revenue collection which have hindered government's ability to finance public investments and availability of cheap investment capital
7	Unfavourable demographic profile where half of the population is below 15 years. Since they are dependants, they cannot work and use a bulk of the public services
8	Low competitiveness of Uganda's goods and services on the global market
9	Weak public sector management and administration (weak policy, legal and regulatory frameworks, inadequate civic participation, overlapping mandates, oversized public administration, etc.)
10	Lack of a clear and well defined national ideology to guide the country's development.

Source: adapted from Vision 2040, pp. 5–7.

Through nationwide consultations with Ugandans, the agreed upon Vision aspirations concerning the development of Uganda are: living and working in a peaceful, secure and harmonious country; having access to affordable quality health care and education, clean environment and green economy; world class infrastructure and services; unity in diversity and equal opportunities; a highly moral and ethical society; and a resourceful and prosperous population (ROU n.d.). Pages 13–15 spell out the Vision's targets, which are also considered as the development indicators. These will be used to assess and measure progress in achieving the Vision. These are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Vision targets

No	Vision target	Baseline status: 2010	Target 2040
1	Increase per capita income	US$ 506	US$ 9,500
2	Reduce the percentage of population below the poverty line	24.5	5
3	Reduce GINI coefficient (income distribution)	0.43	0.32
4	Increase the percentage share of national labour force employed	70.9	94
5	Reduce population growth rate	3.2	2.4
6	Increase the percentage of population accessing safe piped water	15	100
7	Increase the percentage of population having access to electricity	11	80
8	Increase the percentage of population in planned settlements	0 rural 51 urban	100
9	Increase life expectancy at birth	51.5 years	85 years
10	Reduce infant mortality rate per 1000 live births	63	4
11	Reduce maternal mortality rate per 100,000 live births	438	15
12	Reduce under 5 mortality rate per 1000	96	8
13	Reduce the percentage of under 5 child stunting	33	0
14	Increase literacy rate	73%	95%
15	Increase electricity consumption (kWh per capital)	75	3668
16	Increase water consumption (cubic meters per capita)	26	600
17	Increase innovations as measured by patents registered per year	3	6000
18	Increase the percentage of standard paved roads to total road network	4	80
19	Increase labour productivity (GDP per worker)	USD 1017	USD 19770
20	Increase forest cover (percentage land area)	15	24
21	Increase wetland cover – percentage of total area	8	13

Source: adapted from Vision 2040, pp. 13–15.

In order to achieve the above Vision targets, the government plans to strengthen the fundamentals so as to harness opportunities. The fundamentals are resources with capacity to maximize benefits and returns from the economy. The fundamentals to be strengthened include science, technology, engineering and innovation, peace, security and defence, the country's human resource, transport infrastructure and services, energy, urbanization, and land use and management. The opportunities to be harnessed as a result of strengthening of the fundamentals are tourism potential, an abundant labour force, potential growth of ICT services, abundant water resources, industrialization potential, the availability of a variety of minerals, the availability of commercially viable oil and gas deposits, strategic geographical location within Africa and trade opportunities, and agriculture potential (ROU n.d.).

In terms of social transformation, the Vision aspires to improve the health and nutrition of the population, education and literacy, housing, care and protection of vulnerable groups, develop a national culture, promote gender equality and women's empowerment, protect the environment and natural resources, and tackle climate change and its challenges. These will ensure that Ugandans enjoy a high quality standard of living. On the side of governance, the government plans to consolidate good governance by promoting constitutional democracy, the protection of human rights, rule of law, free and fair electoral and political processes, transparency and accountability, citizen participation in the development processes, and peace, defence and security of citizens and the country (ROU n.d.).

The summary of the Vision shows that it is comprehensive, having aspirations in the physical, political, economic and social aspects of development. It also shows that it has clear targets to be achieved, and a well laid down strategy (strengthening the fundamentals to harness the opportunities) of achieving the targets. However, what remains to be understood is whether implementation and achieving of the Vision automatically translate into adequate satisfaction of the human needs of all Ugandans. This puzzle is solved by using the needs framework in general and a theory of human need in particular to analyse the adequacy of the Vision's strategies. The analysis will show whether the Vision's strategies adequately address the present and likely future challenges and bottlenecks to meeting of the human needs of Ugandans.

Justification for Using the Human Needs Framework

There is substantial literature (Alkire 2005; Doyal and Gough 1991; Gasper 2004; International Labour Organization (ILO) 1976; Max-Neef 1991; Stewart 1996; 2006; Streeten et al. 1981) discussing the role of human

needs in societies' development. Although this is the case, it is a very hard task to define the term 'needs'. This is because the term is used variously in everyday life and academic fields (philosophy, psychology, sociology, anthropology, economics and development studies). However, this article adopts Gasper's (2004: 134) definition of needs as 'requisites for meeting a given end'. This is because, as Gasper argues, this definition leads to policy-oriented definitions which focus on specified justified requisites. Since this paper is analysing a development policy document, this definition serves the purpose. Important to note is that the term 'needs' is used in both dispositional (needing by virtue of being human) and occurrent (needing as a state of lack) senses in this article (Reader 2006).

The reason for using this framework is that human needs focus on the real concerns of people for guaranteeing their quality of life (Doyal and Gough 1991; ILO 1976; Max-Neef 1991; Streeten et al. 1981). In order to achieve an acceptable quality of life of a particular society, the human needs of its population must be adequately satisfied (Doyal and Gough 1991). This means that it is only through the satisfaction of human needs that human well-being can be promoted and guaranteed. I maintain that to assess how developed a particular society is, one has to look at the level of satisfaction of the needs of its population. Satisfaction of needs in a particular society, as Clarke and Langan (1998) argue, reveals much about the nature of that particular society. Apart from the satisfaction of human needs ensuring human survival, it also ensures that human beings are healthy (physically, mentally, socially and emotionally) and function normally (flourish). Secondly, if people are to genuinely participate in the development process of their country, their basic needs must be adequately satisfied. This is because it is only the healthy who can optimally participate in any form of activity (Doyal and Gough 1991). Non-satisfaction of human needs or inadequately meeting human needs implies denying some people the opportunity to optimally participate in development. Such a situation undermines development since, as Max-Neef (1991: 16) argues: 'development is about people and not about objects'.

If development is about people, as Max-Neef (1991) argues, then there should be adequate satisfaction of the human needs of a concerned population if development is to take place. I argue that satisfaction of human needs is both an end and a means to development. A means to development in that it ensures that members of a particular society have health, which is a prerequisite for optimally participating in any activity and normal functioning. As I have already noted, it is only the healthy who can genuinely participate in the development process. Genuine development is development that ensures mutual benefits and opportunities to all

members of a particular society. Development should be for all regardless of age, gender, level of education, location/place of residence and family background, etc. and not only for some members of society. It is an end in itself in that adequate satisfaction of human needs in a particular society is an indicator of development since it guarantees people's well-being and quality of life. This understanding is shared by Doyal and Gough (1991) in their theory of human need.

A Theory of Human Need

Although there are a number of needs theories such as Abraham Maslow's hierarchical theory (Maslow 1970), Manfred Max-Neef's matrix (Max-Neef 1991) and the ILO's basic needs approach (ILO 1976), Len Doyal and Ian Gough's theory of human need (THN) (1991) is selected for the task of analysing the Vision's adequacy in promoting the satisfaction of the human needs of Ugandans. This is because THN looks at human needs as universal goals which apply to all human beings regardless of one's culture or society. Secondly, THN maintains that societies have an obligation to meet these human needs (Dean 2010; Doyal and Gough 1991; Phillip 2006; Scott 2012). This means that Uganda as a state and community has an obligation to meet the needs of all Ugandans.

In addition, THN conforms to Alkire's (2005) suggestion of framing needs in a general way, which allows both universal application and local specification and implementation. In line with Alkire's suggestion, THN needs are universal, but their satisfiers (actual goods and services) vary from one society to another (Gough 2000). This means that although the primary and intermediate needs apply to all cultures, their satisfiers are relative (applying to specific local contexts). Also, THN looks at these universal goals as prerequisites for a given end and not merely satisfying human biological desires. This is in line with Gasper's definition of needs adopted by this paper as earlier indicated. Lastly, the theory has a logical and relational four-step process of explaining human needs. This also fits well with Braybrooke's (1987) suggested relational formula to be followed while discussing human needs. The relational formula helps us to understand the importance of the claimed needs, and reduce the confusion that arises due to the various usages of the term needs (Braybrooke 1987).

According to THN, human needs are universal goals that every individual is pursuing. The universal goal is avoiding serious objective harm. Put differently, the objective harm is the impaired social participation of an individual. This is because individuals pursue their goals, whether private or public, with others. When human needs are not adequately satisfied,

individuals suffer from serious objective harm (impaired social participation). In order to void the serious objective harm, human beings have two primary needs, physical health and autonomy, which must be optimally satisfied. For any individual to successfully participate in the life of their society or any form of activity, s/he needs both physical health and autonomy. Physical health includes manual, mental and emotional abilities of an individual while autonomy refers to an individual's capability to initiate action by formulating and implementing aims and strategies to achieve his or her goals. In order to optimally satisfy primary needs, an individual should minimally satisfy universal intermediate needs (Doyal and Gough 1991; Scott 2012).

Doyal and Gough (1991) define intermediate needs as objects, activities, relationships, goods and services that satisfy the primary needs, physical health and autonomy. They are universal because they share universal satisfier characteristics in all cultures and societies. Intermediate needs include adequate nutritional food and safe water, protective housing, a non-hazardous work environment, a non-hazardous physical environment, adequate health care, appropriate education, security in childhood, physical security, economic security, safe birth control and child-bearing, and significant primary relationships. The specific satisfiers to the intermediate needs vary from one culture and society.

In addition, Doyal and Gough (1991) discuss four societal pre-conditions (production, reproduction, cultural transmission and authority) that must be satisfied in order for societies to survive and flourish. However, these pre-conditions are not useful for the current task. This article is assessing the adequacy of the Vision's strategies in promoting the meeting of intermediate needs of individual Ugandans. As earlier indicated, it is the satisfaction of intermediate needs that results in optimal satisfaction of the primary needs (physical health and autonomy), which leads to achieving the end of avoiding serious objective harm. When the harm is avoided, one can genuinely participate in development processes. However, avoidance of objective harm is also an indicator of one's well-being or quality of life. In the next section, the analysis of the adequacy of the Vision's strategies in promoting the satisfaction of human needs follows.

Analysis of the Vision's Adequacy Using THN

This article uses intermediate needs for the analysis because it is the intermediate needs which are the universal satisfiers of the two universal basic needs (physical health and autonomy). Again, satisfying the two universal basic needs leads to achievement of the universal goal of avoidance of serious objective harm (impaired participation). Important to note from

the onset of the analysis of the Vision is that the it makes a commitment to provide assistance to vulnerable groups based on age, social class, gender, location, disability, disaster and income so that these groups are able to meet their intermediate needs. The government plans to achieve this by establishing social welfare systems (ROU n.d.).

Adequate Nutritional Food and Safe Water

According to the THN, the first intermediate need is adequate nutritional food and water. Individuals need an adequate intake of energy and other nutrients such as proteins, vitamins and iodine if they are to have physical health and function normally (Doyal and Gough 1991). The Vision contains aspects that are promoting the satisfaction of this need, especially in the sections on strengthening the fundamentals for harnessing opportunities and social transformation. For instance, the Vision targets 10, 12 and 13 in Table 2 are related to nutritious food and safe water (ROU n.d.). It is inadequate nutritional food and unsafe water which are partly responsible for child stunting and infant mortality.

The government plans to achieve the above targets by improving the nutritional status of the population, especially of young children and women of reproductive age, and improving access to safe water. This will partly be achieved through the modernization of the country's agricultural sector from subsistence farming to commercial agriculture. The government plans to invest in the development of irrigation schemes, mechanization and improved technology especially in seed and animal breeding. Agricultural extension services will also be prioritized so that farmers have improved access to information, knowledge and technologies. Also, in order to reduce wastage and guarantee food security and livelihoods of Ugandans, agro-processing will be championed (ROU n.d.).

If the above strategies are implemented, food quantities and agricultural production may increase. However, it is not clear whether the likely increased agricultural production and food quantities will improve the nutritional status of Ugandans so as to achieve the above targets. It is one thing for the population to have plenty of food and another thing to have nutritious food. A country may produce a lot of food, but the population ends up not consuming the required nutrient combinations so as to have a balanced diet. For instance, the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) (2011) reports that child stunting was higher (42 per cent) among children with mothers with no education than among children with mothers with secondary or higher education (25 per cent). In addition, urban areas had lower levels (19 per cent) of child stunting than rural areas (36 per cent). This means that it

is mothers with good enough knowledge on food intake combinations that will avoid having stunted children while those, especially in the rural areas with little knowledge, will have stunted children even if food availability improves.

Also related to the availability of food not directly translating into having adequate nutritional food is that a country can produce a lot of food which is not consumed by those who produce it. This is likely to happen, especially with the expanding regional food market in South Sudan, Kenya and Rwanda. For instance, a report on fish production, supply and demand in eastern Africa and the Democratic Republic of Congo by Defaux and Hjort (2012) indicates an increase in demand for fish, a very important source of body building elements, in Burundi, Egypt, DRC, Kenya and Rwanda among other countries. Without a policy regulating trade in some important food items, most families or producers may choose to sell their food products to where demand and prices are highest. This will result in prices of these products being high in Uganda. This probably explains why it is only 27 per cent of children between 0 and 23 months who consumed meat, fish or poultry, and 8 per cent who consumed eggs (UBOS 2011).

One may argue that income from food sales can be used to meet other needs. This is however not likely to happen. Uganda is still a predominantly a patriarchal society, especially in rural areas, where money from food sales is likely to be spent on meeting men's (family heads') wants rather than the needs of family members. For instance, UBOS (2011: 217) notes that 'only 38 percent of currently married women participate in all three decisions pertaining to their health care, major household purchases, and visits to their family or relatives'. Such a situation does not guarantee that the finances from sales will be used to meet other human family needs.

Although the government plans to increase food security and the livelihood of Ugandans, it seems this is not its main focus. For instance, the Vision in relation to food production indicates:

> The opportunity for value addition through agro-processing is enormous. This will enhance Uganda's competitiveness on the world market, boost foreign exchange earnings and employment. It can also reduce wastage, enhance food security, improve livelihoods for low-income groups of society like rural women, youth and the disabled (ROU n.d.: 45).

From the quote, it is clear that food security is secondary while the primary objective is to improve the performance of the economy. In any case, as earlier indicated, food security does not necessarily mean improvement in one's nutritional status. One can have food security but that food may not offer all the required or recommended food nutrients.

It also remains to be seen whether the stated strategies to transform the agricultural sector will be implemented. The government has invested very few resources in the agriculture sector. For instance, in the budget of the financial year 2012/13 the agricultural sector was allocated 585.3 billion shillings, and this figure went down to 394.4 billion shillings in the budget of 2013/14 (GOU 2012; 2013). This is because, in the words of the finance minister: 'agriculture is a private sector activity, for which Government will continue to provide targeted support towards its further development in research, seed multiplication and certification, extension services and disease control' (GOU 2013: 32). It is however a known fact that private capital, whether local or foreign, only invests where it anticipates quick and high profits. The private sector, as is the case currently, may be reluctant to invest in the agricultural sector which is affected by multiple uncertainties and where it is hard to accurately predict likely profits.

In terms of access to safe water, the government plans to extend piped water to all regions of the country and also engage in the bulk treatment of water as Vision targets 6 and 16 in Table 2 indicate (ROU n.d.). According to the Vision, access to safe water will reduce hygiene- and sanitation-related diseases, and hence improve the health status of the population. Although the Vision says a lot on water consumption and development, it seems commercial consumption (that is water for irrigation, livestock rearing, fisheries and aqua-culture, water transport and tourism) rather than human consumption is the primary objective. This is because, the Vision states, 'the water related economic activities are expected to generate revenue for the country over the vision period. It is projected that it will provide employment and more jobs are expected in the secondary and tertiary industries associated to this' (ROU n.d.: 65).

It may be argued that the revenue mentioned in the above quote can also accrue from domestic consumption rather than commercial consumption. Granted, however, we should not ignore the fact that if the goal is revenue generation, water prices are likely to be high so as to achieve the goal. As such, some domestic consumers may be unable to pay, and resort to unsafe alternatives. It is also a known fact that in a market economy, goods and services go not only to where demand is highest, but also where prices are highest. And Uganda is a free market economy in practice. In support of this argument, the government in a bid to generate more revenue in the national budget proposals for the financial years 2012/13 and 2013/14 imposed 18 per cent Value Added Tax on piped water for domestic consumption (GOU 2012; 2013). Important to note is that all this is happening when the Vision is already in place and supposedly being implemented. The implication

of this tax is that safe piped water automatically becomes more costly to domestic consumers. This means that Ugandans in low income brackets previously using piped water may not be able to afford it, and thus resort to unsafe alternatives. This exposes them to water-borne infections and diseases which will negatively affect their health. Since the government's main concern is to generate revenue, priority to access safe water is likely to be given to commercial entities that are able to pay higher fees.

The government's total suggested strategies in terms of food and water production do not address the challenges to meeting adequately the need of nutritional food and safe water. This means that the nutritional and safe water needs of Ugandan mothers with less or no education and their children, of Ugandans in low income brackets and of less empowered women will not adequately be met. Therefore, health and autonomy will elude them, and they will end up not genuinely participating in the development process of the country.

Protective Housing

If the needs of physical health and autonomy are to be satisfied, human beings need adequate protective housing. According to Doyal and Gough (1991), a person's housing should be able to protect him or her from physical, social and environmental related dangers such as pests, dangerous animals, heat, rain, cold and interruptions from others. Housing should be of adequate space to guarantee privacy and avoid crowding, and of adequate quality to protect someone from dangerous animals and weather conditions (Doyal and Gough 1991). The Vision notes the problems associated with housing for Ugandans. Although 60 per cent of Ugandans live in relatively decent housing (iron sheet roofing and brick walls), most of the houses in Uganda have poor facilities. Only 12 per cent use electricity for lighting while 66 per cent use 'Tadooba'; 95 per cent use wood fuels (fire wood and charcoal) for cooking, and 86 per cent use a pit latrine. The use of wood fuels and 'Tadooba' pose health risks to the occupants due to the heat, smoke and dust emitted (ROU n.d.).

In order to address the housing challenges and promote satisfaction of the need of protective housing, the government has set out to achieve Vision targets 6, 7, 8 and 15 as shown in Table 2. In addition, all Ugandans will have access to modern toilet facilities by 2040. This will be achieved through a country-wide rural electrification programme. The government specifically plans to achieve the target of all Ugandans having decent housing by constructing 12.6 million new housing units through a public-private partnership. This will improve the sanitation status of households (ROU

n.d.). If all these strategies are implemented, Ugandans may have access to protective housing, especially from mosquitoes since malaria/fever was the second most reported illness (19 per cent) Ugandans suffered from in 2012/13 (UBOS 2013a). In addition, the reported cases of house break-ins (1,820 in 2012) (Uganda Police 2013) are likely to substantially decline.

Satisfying the need for protective housing may however remain a dream. The government of Uganda believes in private sector-led development as the President of Uganda has stressed over and over again. In fact, the Vision's strategy of constructing the 12.6 million housing units will be through a public-private partnership. However, private capital only invests where it will maximize profit. It is therefore unlikely that private capital will invest in the housing sector where most Ugandans will not be able to buy or rent houses at a desirable and competitive profit margin. Although 81.5 per cent of Uganda's working population are self-employed, most of them are engaged in subsistence activities such as fishing and crop farming. In fact, in 2012/13, the population of working poor (below the national poverty line of $1 per day) was 2.3 million (UBOS 2013a). These Ugandans may not be able to either buy or rent houses built through a public-private partnership. They may opt to continue residing in poor quality houses where they pay affordable rental fees or reside free of charge. In addition, they may not be able to pay the electricity and water bills, hence hindering the utilization of the two services. For instance, UBOS (2013a) reports a very big variance between the use of electricity for lighting (14 per cent) and cooking (1 per cent). It is only the one per cent who can afford to pay electricity bills for both lighting and cooking. The remaining 13 per cent resorts to wood fuels, as earlier indicated. This means achieving health will remain elusive to this segment of the population. And that this need will not be adequately met.

A Non-hazardous Work Environment

Adequate satisfaction of the need of a non-hazardous work environment promotes physical health and autonomy. Doyal and Gough (1991) argue that work can negatively affect health and autonomy in three ways: excessive working hours, occupational injury and illnesses, and excessively repetitive work. The government's Vision has targets 4 and 19 (in Table 2) and strategies of achieving the targets which are related to the population's work (ROU n.d.). Although the government does not have strategies specifically focusing on creating employment and labour productivity of the population, investment in all the identified Vision's opportunities save for two (abundant labour force, and geographical location and trade opportunities) will in one way or another create employment opportunities.

The Vision's employment opportunities include tourism, agriculture, oil and gas, mineral, industrialization, ICT sector and water resources. For instance, in relation to the creation of employment through agriculture development, the Vision states:

> Uganda aspires to transform the agriculture sector from subsistence farming to commercial agriculture. This will make agriculture profitable, competitive and sustainable to provide food and income security to all the people of Uganda. It will also create employment opportunities along the entire commodity value chain of production, processing and marketing (ROU n.d.: 45).

Development in the above sectors in general and the agriculture sector in particular, as indicated by the above quote, if implemented, may stem the high youth unemployment rate which is around 61.6 per cent (Action Aid International Uganda 2012). This is because the agricultural, forestry and fishing sectors in their current subsistence state employ a majority (73 per cent) of Ugandans (UBOS 2013a). This means that its commercial transformation will create more employment opportunities that will absorb the un- and under-employed youth.

Although the Vision aspires to create employment opportunities by developing the above seven sectors, the Vision is silent about whether the employment opportunities to be created will be non-hazardous. As earlier indicated, development in Uganda is private sector-led, and the government only plays the role of guaranteeing a conducive investment environment. Because the government's objective is to create employment opportunities, it may not be bothered about ensuring that private companies guarantee a non-hazardous work environment to their workers. Private capital in a bid to maximize profits, since that is its main goal, may attempt to avoid incurring costs that would guarantee a non-hazardous work environment.

In such a situation, workers may work for long hours, without adequate safety gear and equipment and in an unhygienic environment. For instance, the government of Uganda has resisted demands by workers to establish a realistic minimum wage. This is on account that doing so will scare away private investors who are creating employment opportunities. The government argues that when jobs become plenty, wages will automatically rise. Uganda's minimum wage was last set in 1984 and fixed at 6,000 shillings (= $2.4) per month. This minimum wage is outdated and cannot guarantee a decent living. Although only 18.5 per cent of Uganda's working population is in paid employment (UBOS 2013a), this population is at the mercy of employers over matters of remuneration. It is employers who decide how much and when wages will be paid. For instance, the monthly median pay for secondary teachers is 140,000 shillings (= $56) (UBOS

n.d.). This means that there are teachers who receive monthly pay below 140,000 shillings. In addition, there is a huge difference in the monthly average pay for secondary school teachers in private (209,658 shillings = $84) and public (340,000 shillings = $136) sectors (UBOS n.d.). These two examples illustrate my point of workers being at the mercy of employers in a situation of the absence of a realistic minimum wage.

These low wages may force workers to work for long hours or take on an extra job so as to earn extra income. In addition, a person paid low wages will always be thinking about how to make ends meet. Although not identifying it as the cause, UBOS (n.d.) indicates that the lowest paid occupation had the highest number of hours worked per week. For instance, school matrons and waitress/waiters with a median monthly pay of 80,000 shillings (= $32) worked for 74.5 and 62.7 hours per week respectively. Security guards and cooks/chefs with a median monthly pay of 65,000 shillings (= $26) and 70,000 shillings (= $28) worked for 72 and 61.3 hours per week respectively. The hours worked in each of these four occupations are far above the average hours worked (53 per week) by all the occupations considered in the study, and the statutory maximum hours (48) per week (GOU 2006). This is detrimental to one's health. In a country where the majority of the country's labour force are ignorant of existing labour and employment laws, both physical and emotional abuse is inevitable. All this is likely to continue to happen because the main focus of the Vision is creating employment opportunities rather than creating non-hazardous employment opportunities which guarantee employees' physical, economic, social and emotional well-being. This means that the need of a non-hazardous work environment for some Ugandans will not be adequately met, and thus some Ugandans will not be able to genuinely participate in the country's development processes.

A Non-hazardous Physical Environment

This need focuses on a community's physical environment. The environment (air, water and land) must be free from pollution (Doyal and Gough 1991). Pollution of the environment can negatively affect one's health. The Vision has some targets (20 and 21) in Table 2 and strategies that relate to improvement of the physical environment. The Vision also aims to create a green and clean environment, where water and air pollution will be non-existent. The government will achieve this through ensuring compliance with the existing environment and laws and policies on natural resources such as the National Environment Act and the National Forestry and Tree Planting Act (ROU n.d.).

Still, the government aims at ensuring sustainable environment utilization by making a commitment to adhering to the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and implementing the resolutions of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Efforts to restore and add value to the eco-system (wetlands, forests, range lands and catchments) will be implemented. This will mainly include re-forestation and afforestation on both private and public land. The population's participation will be promoted. In addition, gazetting of vital wetlands will be implemented so as to increase their protection. The government will also adopt patterns of production, consumption and reproduction that safeguard the environment. There will also be development, adoption and transfer of environmentally sound technologies. It will also engage in partnership and cooperation with the international community on environmental sustainability. In all these, the engagement and role of civil society will be championed (ROU n.d.). If all these strategies are implemented, the need of a non-hazardous physical environment is likely to be adequately satisfied.

Appropriate Health Care

In addition to the above intermediate needs, one needs health care in order to satisfy the need of physical health and autonomy. The health care need focuses on preventive, curative and palliative medical services (Doyal and Gough 1991). In order for this need to be adequately satisfied, health care must be available, accessible and utilized. The Vision has targets (9, 10, 11, 12 and 13) in Table 2 and achieving them one way or another means improvements in meeting health care needs.

In order to achieve the above targets, the Vision has clear strategies in the health sector. The government plans to move away from the facility-based health service delivery system to a household one, where healthy practices and lifestyles will be promoted. The government will also move away from a public-centred to a public-private partnership system. This new system will prioritize preventive services over curative ones. The Vision maintains that preventive services are cheaper and sustainable since they are rarely delivered by highly skilled professionals. These services will be provided at a community level. In addition, the government plans to roll out a universal health insurance system, which will guarantee easy access to health care services. The government, in partnership with the private sector, also plans to build specialist health care centres to treat specialized health conditions that are currently treated outside the country. Specialized training and increasing remuneration for health workers are integral to this strategy (ROU n.d.).

The proposed strategies, if implemented, may address current health care availability, access and utilization challenges. For instance, only one in every ten people who were sick (40 per cent) consulted a health provider. The reasons for not seeking health care are indicated in Table 3.

Table 3: Reasons for not seeking health care

Reason	**Percentage**
Illness was mild	42
Available health facilities being costly	17
Health facility being far	10
Health facility being inaccessible	4
Health facility having no drugs	8
Staff related reasons	3
Other reasons	15

Source: adapted from UBOS 2013a: 78.

In fact, 17 and 33 per cent of health centres II and III respectively experienced staff absenteeism in the twelve months preceding the study. On the side of drugs, 32.6, 33.4 and 32.4 per cent of health centres IIs, IIIs and IVs respectively experienced drug stock out of the six tracer drugs in the two months preceding the study (UBOS 2013a). Implementation of these strategies is likely also to reduce health facility-based mortality from malaria (21.5 per cent), pneumonia (9.7 per cent), anaemia (5.9 per cent), and respiratory infections (5.3 per cent) (UBOS 2013b). This will ensure that the population's need for physical health is satisfied and hence they will genuinely participate in the development process of the country.

However, what is not clear is whether the government will subsidize universal health insurance for the poor. As earlier indicated, the population of Uganda's working poor is 2.3 million and 7.5 million are below the poverty line (UBOS 2013a). It is possible these were among the 17 per cent who could not utilize health care services because they were perceived to be costly.

Security in Childhood

Unlike the other intermediate needs that apply to all human beings, this applies only to children. This is because of the length and centrality of the childhood development phase. Secondly, its satisfaction has an impact on human autonomy in adulthood. In order to adequately satisfy this need, children should have a dependable and strong relationship with parents or parent substitutes, opportunities for new experiences to foster emotional,

cognitive and social development, praise, recognition and positive feedback, and parents gradually extending responsibilities to children (Doyal and Gough 1991). The Vision has three targets (10, 12 and 13) in Table 2 that relate to security in childhood.

The government plans to achieve the above targets through food security and improvement in the nutritional status of children and women of reproductive age, formulating and implementing a school feeding policy, and a preventive health services delivery system (ROU n.d.). In addition, adoption and implementation of gender-based policies will allow women with young children to have flexible working conditions (working from home and flexible working hours) which will also contribute to the satisfaction of the need of security in childhood. This is because these mothers will be able to engage in longer periods of breast feeding, have time to play with the children, and also develop emotional attachment with their children.

In addition, the commitment by the government to eliminate gender-based violence will aid the satisfaction of this need. This is because children will be protected from the physical and psychological effects of gender-based violence. The effects include physical bodily harm, mental breakdown and trauma, poor performance at school, and children learning violent behaviours which they may practice in adulthood. The government, in collaboration with social, cultural and community groups, will also put emphasis on ensuring that girls stay in school by removing institutional, gender and cultural barriers. It will also eliminate early marriage and child sacrifice (ROU n.d.). If all these strategies are implemented, problems such as girl or child marriages, child labour, malnutrition, etc. may be reduced, and thus the need of security in childhood adequately satisfied. This will ensure that children will genuinely participate in the country's development process in their adulthood.

Significant Primary Relationships

According to Doyal and Gough (1991), in order for human beings to have their need for autonomy satisfied, they should have adequate significant primary relationships. These relationships (networks of individuals and friends) provide an educative and emotionally secure environment to an individual. The relationships are made up of both primary support groups (moral networks/normative reference groups) and close and confiding groups. These networks are very crucial, especially since they are a source of support when one has problems. Since human beings are social beings (live and do things with others), isolation or loneliness negatively affect their physical health, particularly mental and emotional health. Relationships act

as buffers against the negative effects of loneliness and isolation. Doyal and Gough (1991) argue that people in developed and industrialized countries are more affected by the absence of strong primary support groups than those in the developing countries.

Apart from the strategy of granting nursing mothers flexible working hours and working from home so that they can spend more time with their children, the Vision has nothing more that relates to the satisfaction of this need. This could be because this need is currently adequately satisfied since in most developing countries, residents or citizens still have relatively strong primary relationships. However, the Vision should have spelt out strategies to ensure that the continued meeting of this need is not compromised in future.

Economic Security

In order to ensure that an individual has both physical health and autonomy, s/he has to have acceptable economic security. Economic security is about having financial, income or other resources to guarantee acceptable standards of living. This includes having an adequate diet or meals, amenities and other services that enable human beings to play their roles in society (Doyal and Gough 1991). This seems to be the main goal of the Vision. The government explains that transforming Uganda 'involves changing from a predominantly low income country to a competitive upper middle income country within 30 years' (ROU n.d.: 4). As such, the Vision has targets 1 to 4 in Table 2 aimed at achieving upper middle income status.

The government plans to achieve these targets by harnessing the identified opportunities presented above. The government will financially invest in these sectors by developing the infrastructure (roads, rail, water and air transport, hotels and energy) needed to accelerate investment in these opportunities. In addition, the government will invest in the training and development of Uganda's human resource so that it can take up the employment opportunities created in the above sectors. Easy access to land for investment purposes will also be prioritized and promoted. In addition, the country's stability in terms of peace and security will be promoted. In essence, the government will try to create a conducive investment environment which will attract both private and public-private investments in the above opportunities. In the case of the agriculture and mineral sectors, the government will develop processing industries so as to add value to the products from the two sectors. Apart from developments in these sectors bringing direct revenue to the government through taxation, they will also create employment opportunities for Ugandans. This way, Ugandans will earn incomes which will guarantee their economic security.

Developments in these sectors are likely to increase Ugandans' incomes. However, apart from the Vision having a target of reducing income inequality among Ugandans, it has no strategy aimed at ensuring equitable distribution of incomes from these sectors among Ugandans. It is likely that the incomes of the working poor (2.3 million) or the 7.5 million below the poverty line will not substantially change. It is possible for Uganda to achieve a per capita income of $9,500 by 2040. However, this does not mean that each Ugandan will be earning $9,500. This figure is a mere mean income, combining together Ugandans in high income brackets with those in low income brackets. For instance, although the average monthly household real income for Uganda is 223,000 shillings (= $89.2), there is a huge difference between the real income of urban households at 392,000 shillings (= $156.8) and rural households with 163,000 shillings (= $65.2). In fact, there are also differences between households headed by males (243,000 shillings = $97.2) and those headed by females (176,000 shillings = $70.4) respectively. In addition, there are also differences between households headed by literate people (278,000 shillings = $111.2) and those headed by illiterate people (117,000 shillings = $46.8) respectively (UBOS 2013a).

To further illustrate my point, although urban households have a higher real income (392,000 shillings) than the rural households (163,000 shillings), there is higher income inequality among urban Ugandans (GINI co-efficient of 0.45) than among rural Ugandans (GINI co-efficient of 0.38) (UBSO 2013a). In a country with a private sector-led economy, it is the individual Ugandans who invest in strategic opportunities whose incomes will significantly increase. Without the government coming up with a clear strategy of ensuring equable income distribution, the $9,500 may well be the income of a small proportion of Ugandans. Income inequality, instead of reducing as aimed at by the Vision, may end up increasing.

As indicated earlier, the government may be able to create employment opportunities when it invests in the above sectors. However, having the availability of employment does not necessarily mean being paid decent wages comparable to the cost of living. A case in point is the 2.3 million working poor Ugandans. They are working but their income is below the national poverty line of one US dollar. As already pointed out, in a country where the government has resisted any demands for fixing a realistic minimum wage, it is possible that employees will be exploited by employers, especially in the private sector whose main aim is profit maximization. This means that this population segment will not be able to meet their daily necessities such as nutritional food, safe water and decent housing. Failure to meet these necessities means that this population cannot adequately

satisfy the need of economic security. This implies that they will not be able to genuinely participate in the country's development process.

Physical Security

In order for one's physical health and autonomy to be guaranteed, one needs physical security. This includes an environment free from criminality and generalized violence. This criminality and violence could be perpetuated by individuals, organized groups or state agencies (Doyal and Gough 1991) such as the police and military. Unlike most of the needs discussed above, the Vision has no outlined target to achieve the needs of physical security. However, the Vision has strategies that will ensure the security of individuals, their property and the country at large. At all levels, the government will promote good governance, peace building and conflict management. This will entail practising principles of justice, equality and the rule of law, democracy, equal representation, tolerance, equity and constructive dialogues and openness to others at local, national and international levels (ROU n.d.).

At a national level, the Vision plans to secure the country from any form of aggression by strengthening defence systems and having a professional army. Peaceful co-existence with neighbouring countries and the international community will also be prioritized. Measures to combat terrorism acts will also be adopted and promoted. On the side of securing people's security and their property, the Vision outlines strategies of promoting public-private cooperation and civil/community involvement in security matters, national and inter-community dialogue among ethnic groups and other interest groups as a way of conflict resolution, carrying out policy, legal and institutional reforms to ensure effective enforcement of law and order and reconciliation through increased access to information by the population (ROU n.d.). All these strategies are likely to ensure Ugandans' physical security. For instance, the involvement of all stakeholders (public, private and community sectors) in security matters means that physical security in any community is everybody's responsibility. This will increase community members' vigilance over security matters and ensure that criminality and physical violence are detected early and preventive measures taken.

It is important to point out that the Vision makes special mention of gender-based violence and criminality. The Vision makes a commitment to tackle it so as to ensure the physical security of all Ugandans currently suffering from it. The Vision states:

> The total elimination of harmful and non-progressive practices that affect the health, wellbeing and progress of both men and women will be tackled

> during the 30 year period to allow and give opportunity to every Ugandan to fulfil their desired potential and live a life of dignity. These include among others; the elimination of practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM), Gender based violence, early marriages, child sacrifice, denial of right to education and participation in employment (ROU n.d.: 97).

Although the Vision makes the above commitment, it is silent about the specific actions or strategies that will be undertaken to ensure that gender-based violence is eliminated. For instance, Uganda passed laws prohibiting female genital mutilation and domestic violence (ROU 2010a; 2010b), but the practices are still carried out in Uganda. According to UBOS (2011), 26.4 per cent of women and 21.4 per cent of men between the ages of fifteen and forty-nine had often or sometimes experienced physical violence in the twelve months preceding the study. In terms of sexual violence, 16.3 per cent of women and 3.95 per cent of men between ages fifteen and forty-nine had experienced it in the twelve months preceding the study. This shows that gender-based violence is still a challenge in the country and that the Vision needed to come up with clear strategies of tackling it.

In addition, the Vision's strategies that relate to counteracting physical violence and criminality are silent about road accidents, yet all police crime reports (2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013) indicate that the leading causes of these accidents are human factors (careless and reckless driving, careless pedestrians, speeding, driving under the influence of alcohol, etc.). Most, if not all, of these causes should fall under criminality. Road accidents create a situation where Ugandans are physically insecure while using roads in Uganda. In 2012 alone, there were 2,611 fatal road accidents as opposed to 9,030 which were serious; 3,124 people died while 13,137 were seriously injured in these accidents. Out of the 3,124 killed in the road accidents, 1,143 were pedestrians while 3,401 pedestrians were seriously injured (Uganda Police 2013). These figures show the magnitude of physical insecurity on Uganda's roads. Since the leading causes of road accidents are human factors, this means that even if the road infrastructure is improved as planned by the government, road accidents will continue to be a threat to the physical security of Ugandans.

The continued existence of gender-based violence and road accidents means that some members of the population will not be guaranteed physical security, and thus the need of physical security will not be adequately satisfied. This will result in this segment of the population not genuinely participating in the development process of the country. This is because those seriously injured will have impaired health (manual, mental and emotional), and therefore be unable to genuinely participate in the development process. On

the other hand, some of the relatives of the injured will lose valued time while taking care of their seriously injured loved ones in hospitals. They will also suffer from both psychological and emotional problems because of seeing their loved ones seriously physically deformed and unable to support themselves.

Appropriate Education

This need focuses on formal learning and literacy which lead to changes in, or development of, behaviours, knowledge, attitudes, skills, capacities, information and understanding, which do not depend on physical growth or instinctive inherence. It looks at content and how it is delivered during the process of learning. This means that it does not only focus on the curriculum but also on the environment in which the curriculum is delivered. Providing an appropriate education is crucial for an individual's active participation in any activity. Appropriate education develops and expands one's autonomy (Doyal and Gough 1991). The Vision target 14 in Table 2 relates to this need. In addition to this target, the Vision has strategies in the sections of strengthening the fundamentals and social transformation that will be implemented so as to improve the education status of Ugandans. The Vision also notes the achievements made so far and the challenges that still remain.

Among the achievements is the increase in literacy rates from 69 per cent in 2006 to 73 per cent in 2010 because of the implementation of universal primary and secondary education policies and programmes. Due to these policies and programmes, primary education enrolment has increased to 8.7 million over a fifteen year period. In the case of secondary education, enrolment increased to 1,088,744 in 2008 from 814,087 in 2006. However, the major challenge to these achievements is retention of students in schools. For instance, the primary education retention rate in 2006 was 53 per cent for boys as opposed to 42 per cent for girls (ROU n.d.). This means that a staggering 47 and 58 per cent of boys and girls respectively dropped out of primary schools in 2006.

In order to improve the education sector, the government plans to build a world class education system to provide first-rate education, compared to that offered in developed or emerging economies. Under this, the entire education system will be changed so that its main focus is to impart practical skills, aptitude and moral values. Through this change, primary and secondary education, to be known as basic education, is set to become a human right for all Ugandans. Basic education will focus on character formation and talent and skill identification whereas tertiary education will focus on skills development. All undergraduate students will be required to undertake a compulsory year of internship so as to develop the practical skills required in workplaces. In order to

develop a good work culture, a national service programme will be introduced to inculcate work ethics, patriotism and voluntarism. The curriculum, instruction and examinations will be changed to suit the proposed changes and market demands. Keeping girls in school by addressing institutional, gender and cultural barriers will be emphasised (ROU n.d.).

In areas of tertiary education, the government plans to attract the world's top-rated universities in specialist fields (engineering, human medicine, geosciences, management, space science, biotechnology, ICT etc.) from advanced countries to establish their campuses in Uganda. Virtual replicas of these universities will be established in different parts of the country by the government. Internationally relevant research will also be promoted by inviting private companies such as Shell, Exxon-Mobil and Microsoft to set up research centres in universities in Uganda. The government will also support promising and talented Ugandans to access education in priority areas from leading universities abroad. There will be partnerships with institutions specializing in business, technical and vocational education, and training (BTVET) in countries like Germany, Israel and Japan (ROU n.d.). All these actions will ensure that Ugandans have access to appropriate education.

Although the Vision has all these strategies about education, it seems they are aimed at ensuring that the country transitions from a low to a middle income country. For instance, in relation to human resource development the Vision states:

> Uganda will adopt a similar approach for it to take off and reach an upper middle income country level by 2040. This will help address the critical skills gap, technology deficiency, lack of creativity and innovativeness, low productivity and negative attitudes towards work, to spur faster development (ROU n.d.: 68).

This is likely to result in students studying programmes and courses, not of their choice and liking, but those perceived to have a high market demand that can lead to increased productivity of the economy. This is likely to happen because government resources will only support students taking programmes perceived to improve the productivity of the economy. From the above discussion, these seem to only include the natural sciences (biological, chemical and physical sciences), vocational and technical programmes. For instance, 70 per cent of the 4,000 government undergraduate university scholarships are awarded to science programmes or courses (natural sciences), and the arts and social sciences are excluded. Moreover, the President has repeatedly made clear that even the recently introduced loan financing scheme for university students will initially only cater for students studying natural science programmes. This does not

ensure equal opportunity to accessing appropriate education because not all human beings are natural scientists by gift or talent. This means that some children who are gifted in the social sciences and arts, especially those from financially poor families, may not have access to appropriate education due to a lack of access to government support. In the end, they will not be able to genuinely participate in the development process of the country since they will be lacking the required knowledge and skills.

It also remains doubtful whether the good and promising strategies in the education sector will materialize. In a country where teachers from primary to university levels are poorly remunerated, quality education will remain a wish or dream. Currently a grade three teacher is paid a gross monthly salary of between 270,000 and 280,000 Uganda shillings ($108–112). Because of the poor remuneration, teachers and university lecturers have always held strikes, and the students have been the victims of these strikes. It is the teachers' poor remuneration which is in part responsible for their absenteeism and poor quality of teaching. A report by Yiga and Wandega (2010) indicates that on the first day of their unexpected monitoring of the teachers' attendance in their respective (thirty) schools in Iganga district, a staggering 48.5 per cent were absent from their duty station. The government, as it has become a practice, can threaten and force poorly remunerated teachers to attend to their classes, but it will never be able to force them to provide quality teaching without addressing issues related to their remuneration. This can partly explain the low retention rate, especially at primary level. For instance, 46 and 15 per cent of the boys who dropped out of primary schools respectively cited lack of interest and search for jobs as reasons for doing so (UBOS 2013a). The lack of interest and the eventual dropping out could be due to the realization that they were not receiving appropriate education.

This situation means that as long as the issue of teacher remuneration is not adequately addressed, some students, especially those from poor families, will never access appropriate education. This will negatively affect their health and autonomy, which will in turn affect their participation in the development process of the country. Without strategies that support all fields of study and teachers' remuneration, this need is not adequately promoted by the Vision.

Safe Birth Control and Child-bearing

This need does not apply to all human beings, like all the above discussed intermediate needs. Safe birth control and child-bearing applies only to women/mothers of reproductive age and probably their babies. Adequately satisfying this need ensures the physical health and autonomy of women of

child-bearing age. This need is about women of reproductive age having safe control over their reproductive lives. This is because unsafe child birth conditions involve risks of contracting infectious diseases and mortality to both mothers and their babies. In addition, not having control over one's reproductive life, that is, choosing when to have children, how many, which contraceptives to use and child spacing, can negatively affect one's autonomy. Decisions about these matters should be taken by a mother, and not by the state, social group or her husband (Doyal and Gough 1991).

Vision targets 10 and 11 in Table 2 relate to this need. The government plans to achieve these targets and also promote safe birth control and childbearing by changing the health care delivery system from being curative and facility-based to a preventive one, where healthy practices and lifestyles will be promoted at the household level. This will empower households to have control over their health. The benefits of the proposed delivery system were discussed in the above section on appropriate health care. In addition, in a bid to reduce both maternal and child deaths, the government plans to improve the nutritional status of children and women of reproductive age. For instance, the Vision states:

> It is projected that that this strategy will reduce the number of maternal deaths by over 6,000 and child deaths by over 16,000 every year; and increase national economic productivity, both physical and intellectual, by an estimated UGX 130 billion (USD 65 million) per year at present values; and provide a strong return on public investment – for every one thousand shillings invested, an estimated six thousand shillings worth of increased productivity will result from reduced child stunting, improved maternal health, enhanced micronutrient intake, and improved nutritional care (ROU n.d.: 90).

However, from the above quote, the government's plan to improve the nutritional status of children and women of reproductive age is not only aimed to reduce maternal and child deaths, but also to improve the productivity of the economy.

As a way of improving the quality of the population by reducing the proportion of the population under 15 years, currently 51.2 per cent of 33.9 million (UBOS 2013a), the Vision plans to increase access to quality reproductive health services. Through this, the current fertility rate of 6.7 children per woman will reduce to 4 children per woman (ROU n.d.). Although this strategy is being implemented in order to improve the quality of the population, it directly promotes the satisfaction of safe birth control and child-bearing needs since reproductive health services for improving the quality of the population are in part the same services used for ensuring safe birth control and child-bearing. If all the above strategies are implemented,

the need for safe birth control and child-bearing may be adequately promoted and this segment of the population will be guaranteed physical health and autonomy. Thus, it will be able to participate genuinely in the development process of the country.

Conclusion

This article has shown that Vision 2040 is a comprehensive master plan with several sections looking at different development aspects. However, it is the sections on the targets, fundamentals, opportunities and social transformation which spell out where Uganda aspires to be in terms of development and how to get there. The article has shown that for development to be achieved, human needs must be adequately satisfied because it is through their satisfaction that human beings are able to have health, which is a prerequisite for their participation in development processes. In addition, satisfaction of human needs is an indicator of development since it is a determinant of one's quality of life, which is the ultimate goal of any development processes and strategies. This is the kind of development which can be termed as genuine development since it guarantees mutual benefits and opportunities to all members of a given society.

Specifically the THN was discussed and adopted for analysing the adequacy of the Vision's strategies in meeting the human needs of Ugandans. This is because THN spells out universal primary and intermediate needs. According to its main purpose, the article has analysed the adequacy of the Vision's strategies in meeting the eleven intermediate needs of Ugandans. The Vision strategies are likely, if implemented, to adequately meet safe birth control and child-bearing, security in childhood and a non-hazardous physical environment while inadequately meeting appropriate education, physical security, economic security, health care, a non-hazardous work environment, protective housing and adequate nutritional food and safe water needs. Where needs will be adequately met, the strategies will tackle the current and likely future challenges and bottlenecks to meeting these needs; the opposite is true for the needs that will be inadequately satisfied. One of the challenges to meeting some of these needs is the central role placed on the private sector and capital, yet its main objective is profit maximization and not the satisfaction of needs. The Vision has no strategy aimed at meeting the need for significant primary relationships.

The guiding question of this paper is whether Vision 2040 adequately promotes the satisfaction of the human needs of Ugandans? The answer is no. The Vision's strategies only adequately promote the satisfaction of three intermediate needs, inadequately promote the satisfaction of seven needs, while

there are no strategies to promote the satisfaction of one need. In addition, as Max-Neef (1991) argues, human needs are interrelated, interactive and interdependent. This means that all of them have to be adequately satisfied if people are to have health and are to genuinely participate in development. Additionally, human needs for all members of a given society have to be adequately satisfied if genuine development is to take place.

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Exploring Thought Leadership, Thought Liberation and Critical Consciousness for Africa's Development

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Abstract

It is argued that any discussion of Africa's social and economic development has to take into account the three critical issues that remain pressing constraints for the further advancement of well-being in Africa: thought leadership, thought liberation and critical consciousness. These three 'ingredients' should anchor aspects of the socio-economic development model. As I have discussed elsewhere, the twenty-first century will most likely be remembered as the Asian century fundamentally, and secondarily as a South American century. Africa will most likely miss the twenty-first century as its own and should be putting in place what is needed to ensure that Africa indeed captures the twenty-second century.

It is in this context that this article argues that thought leadership, thought liberation and critical consciousness should ensure that Africa robustly addresses whatever constraints that limit Africa's progress. The three 'instruments' – *the trio* – should be pursued concurrently, for thought leadership without critical consciousness is useless. Thought leadership without a liberated mind is futile. Higher levels of consciousness, based on comprehensive understanding of phenomena, make for a better thought leader. It is also argued that African thought leadership must be able to produce not only a critical but also a conscious African citizenry that is grounded in pan-Africanist philosophies and driven to implement the African renaissance agenda. To do this and to successfully pursue other pertinent issues, Africa should build on its glorious past. The article also demonstrates the importance of knowledge production, its dissemination, organization and the implementation of revolutionary praxis.

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Résumé

Il a été soutenu que tous les débats sur le développement social et économique de l'Afrique doivent prendre en compte les trois questions essentielles qui restent les contraintes urgentes pour améliorer le bien-être en Afrique :le leadership éclairé, la libération de la pensée et la conscience critique. Le modèle de développement socio-économique devrait s'ancrer dans ces trois « ingrédients ». Comme je l'ai souligné ailleurs, on se souviendra très probablement du XXIe siècle comme du siècle de l'Asie d'abord, et ensuite comme celui de l'Amérique du Sud. L'Afrique manquera très probablement d'en faire son propre siècle alors qu'elle devrait mettre en place tout le mécanisme nécessaire afin de saisir le vingt-deuxième siècle.

Dans ce contexte, le présent article soutient que le leadership éclairé, la libération de la pensée et la conscience critique devraient permettre à l'Afrique de faire face de façon vigoureuse à toute contrainte limitant son progrès. La mise en œuvre de ces trois « instruments », le trio, devrait se faire en même temps, car le leadership éclairé sans conscience critique est inutile. De plus, le leadership éclairé sans un esprit libéré est futile. Une meilleure prise de conscience, fondée sur la compréhension globale des phénomènes, permet d'avoir des leaders plus éclairés. Il a également été soutenu que le leadership éclairé en Afrique doit pouvoir produire une citoyenneté africaine non seulement critique mais aussi consciente, ancrée dans les philosophies panafricanistes et orientée vers la mise en œuvre de l'agenda de la renaissance africaine. Pour ce faire et traiter avec succès d'autres questions pertinentes, l'Afrique devrait tirer parti de son passé glorieux. L'article montre également l'importance de la production et la diffusion de connaissances, l'organisation et la mise en œuvre de la praxis révolutionnaire.

Introduction

The paper contends that the much vaunted socio-economic transformation of certain African states will not be able to monumentally move the continent forward. Essentially, the socio-economic development that the African continent needs should be informed by *thought leadership, thought liberation, and critical consciousness*. The three 'instruments'– the trio – should be pursued jointly, for thought leadership without critical consciousness is not helpful.

The central importance of thought leadership to Africa's renewal and development is arguably compelling, especially in view of the low and peripheral position that the African continent occupies in the global political, social and economic order. The dominance of foreign thought in the conceptualization and implementation of developmental and other policies, the inevitable abysmal failure of such thoughts to bring about

the much needed transformation in Africa and the world at large, the entrapment of African leadership and citizenry by said foreign thoughts make thought liberation an inescapable overdue imperative. The low levels of (critical) consciousness ensure, sadly, that Africa and Africans remain in chains, hence the case for higher levels of critical consciousness.

As argued elsewhere, thought leadership connotes a leadership orientation underpinned by unconventional ideology that is historically nuanced, culturally sensitive and contextually grounded. Thought leadership – distant from and more critical than other forms of leadership – has to be about 'leadership that is based on progressive ideologies, beliefs, orientations with significant pragmatic and impact appeal' (Gumede 2015: 9). To be sure, thought leadership is different and encompasses intellectualism. Ali Mazrui (2005: 56) defined an intellectual as 'a person who has the capacity to be fascinated by ideas and has acquired the skill to handle many of them effectively'. There are, of course, other interpretations of the role of thinkers. For instance, Souleymane Diagne (2008) writes that Ahmed Baba, one of the early greatest African thinkers, made a point that 'the ink of the scholar is more precious than the blood of the martyr'.

Thought liberation, on the other hand, and as I have argued elsewhere, is a complementary requirement for thought leaders who are encumbered with the responsibilities of bringing about transformative changes in their environments. Thought liberation, unlike 'liberation thought', is a call for the rediscovery of a *self* as an able and capable being that can produce progressive thought, actions and achievements. For critical consciousness, I draw on what the Brazilian educator and philosopher Paulo Freire termed *conscientizaçáo* – referring to 'learning to perceive social, political and economic contradictions and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality' (1970: 35). Thought leadership, thought liberation and critical consciousness should assist also in ensuring that Africa pursues its own development path which is ideal for obtaining conditions and given the history of the continent, and in order to avoid dominant powers interfering with Africa's development processes – Thandika Mkandawire (2011: 6) makes the point that as and when Africa pursues development, the dominant powers disrupt the process of development in Africa, and in the world, at worst by 'bombing countries back to the stone age'.

Conceptual Reflections

To start with, the debate about the definition or the idea of what came to be known as 'Africa' has been going on for decades. Some have argued that the name 'Africa' comes from 'Afrui-ka', an Egyptian language referring to

birthplace, hence some use Afrika (instead of Africa). Valentine Mudimbe, for instance, made the point that 'the very name of the continent is itself a major problem because the Greeks had named the continent as Libya' (1994). There are many also who have viewed the African continent essentially in terms of 'geographical expression'. Simphiwe Sesanti details this conundrum and takes a position that embraces 'the term "Africa" as an African creation, not an imposed one' (2015: 355) given the history of what we now know as 'Africa'. I associate myself with Sesanti's position. With regards to Africans, I have in mind those of African descent whose generations have endured the various unpleasant experiences of slave trade, colonialism, imperialism and neo-colonialism – and coloniality[1] of late – which have combined to condition the minds of Africans to feel inferior and seemingly incapable of creative endeavours.

As Karl Polanyi (1944) argued, experiences of slavery dehumanize and disempower the victims, even to succeeding generations. Frantz Fanon has more to say about this[2] – that colonialism did not only distort African history but it truncated and destroyed it. The various works of Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (1986), among other thinkers, address this issue.[3] The naivety and/or stupidity of the colonialists, if not their ignorance and arrogance, allowed them to believe that Africa had no history and/or were sub-human (Davidson 1992) Walter Rodney (1972), on the other hand, explained how Africa was systematically underdeveloped through colonialism and imperialism. As Molefi Kete Asante (2007), among others, has argued, the totality of the historical experience of the African continent and peoples of African descent should be taken into account when dealing with the challenges and solutions pertaining to the further renewal of the African continent and for the advancement of the well-being of Africans wherever they are.

Raising critical consciousness among Africans involves a deliberate effort to deconstruct and reconstruct their sense of being – away from political apathy, collusion with the domestic and transnational elites in perpetuating the current unequal and unjust disorder, satisfaction with mediocrity, gullibility to vague political promises and leaders fanning the ember of nationalism, ethnicity and xenophobia, dependency on the West, or the East (lately), for development assistance, uncritical acceptance of exogenously scripted development strategies and general acquiescence-cum-susceptibility to neo-imperial designs. It is in this context – and also because imperialism remains unabated – that various scholars have argued that experiences of slave trade, colonialism and contemporary patterns of relations of Africa with the West have been informed by the notion that the continent is a

dark continent in need of civilisation, enlightenment and assistance (Mpofu 2013). In addition, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013: 338) argues that 'the idea of race was deployed to justify such inimical processes as slave trade, mercantilism, imperialism, colonialism, apartheid as well as authoritarian and brutal colonial governance systems and styles'. It is in this context that thought leadership, thought liberation and critical consciousness are critical for the further renewal of the African continent.

The dominant approach has been the neoliberal (economic) doctrine in which socio-economic development is defined by the West and in Western terms. By following this paradigm, Africa has failed to grasp the salience of ideological dominance, historical trajectories of the political economies of the dependent and colonially created 'micro-states' that make up the continent and the reality of power relations that continue to define the way in which the West relates to the African continent. As Gumede (2015) puts it, the 'neoliberal economic agenda or dogma is mainly based on market fundamentalism that has been prone to crises'. It should also be noted that, as various scholars have argued, the historical processes of state formation in Africa are different from those of the West, especially Europe. Differences are manifest in the capacity or lack of capacity of the state to bring about the development of endogenous capitalism and its transformative effects on the society (see for instance, Robinson 2004; Ake 1981). Differences are also manifest in the ability of the state to mobilize capital through the development of its productive capacity. In the main, the states in Africa were created for extractive purposes, domination, exploitation and violence, as many have argued. To a very significant extent, states in Africa have been 'successful' in serving the interest of the metropole and not the peoples of Africa.

Post-independence African leaders have surreptitiously and possibly also inadvertently formed alliances with global capital in what William Robinson (2004) calls the 'transnational capitalist class'. Susan Strange (1994) discusses the internationalization of production networks as an inevitable outcome of global capitalism in which corporations seek outlets for cheap labour, higher returns on investments and freer trade, investment and capital regimes. Adebayo Adedeji (2002) talks of *Development Merchant System*: a deliberate design by the global capitalist order to perpetuate a socio-economic and political system that advances interests of the West and maintains the peripheralization of the African continent. It is not by chance that Africa finds itself in the shackles it is in and that there is always an external agenda that interferes with whatever Africa pursues in the interest of the further renewal of the African continent.

It is in this context that the development process in Africa cannot make sense until there is a conscious effort to decolonize the process itself, among the many aspects of Africa that need complete liberation. The envisaged decolonization process must involve deconstruction of the mentality of African leaders, despatialization of the arbitrary and artificial boundaries that the colonialists bequeathed on Africa and intellectual redirection of the orientation of citizens from waiting to act by holding governments accountable at all levels. Political leadership in Africa, however, cannot be exonerated from its glaring failures. As George Ayittey puts it:

> The nationalist leaders, with few exceptions, adopted the wrong political systems, the wrong economic system, the wrong ideology and took the wrong path. Equally grievous, perhaps, was the low calibre of leadership… the leadership lacked basic understanding of the development process. (2005: 92)

With regards to a decolonial epistemic perspective in a nutshell, this

> …aims to critique and possibly overcome the epistemic injustices put in place by imperial global designs, and questions and challenges the long standing claims of Euro-American epistemology to be universal, neutral, objective, disembodied, as well as being the only mode of knowing. It is 'an-other thought' that seeks to inaugurate 'an-other language,' and 'an-other thinking' that has the potential to liberate ex-colonised people's minds from Euro-American hegemony (see for instance Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013: 396; Riberio 2011; Grosfoguel 2007).

Unlike other theories which seek to interpret the African conditions within the superstructure created by the colonialists, decolonial epistemic theory offers a profound interrogation of these conditions, their causative elements in form of structures and institutions, human agency, and importantly, the continuity of colonial legacies and inherent contradictions in this system that obscure any possibility for transformation and development in its current form. Scholars of the decolonial epistemic perspective have located their theory around four main pillars or concepts vis-à-vis the past and present relations of Africa with the West. These concepts are: coloniality of power, coloniality of knowledge, coloniality of being and coloniality of nature.

As alluded to earlier, the decolonial epistemic perspective finds currency in Susan Strange's idea of 'the internationalisation of production networks'. Also, in tandem with William Robinson's idea of a transnational capitalist class, the notion of coloniality of power enables us to further understand the power dimension of the relations of the West with Africa in respect of the continuing domination, exploitation and imperial control of the supposedly independent states. With this understanding then comes the

challenge for progressive forces in Africa to seek to reclaim the pursuit of Africa's development through another perspective – African renaissance and pan-Africanism,[4] reconceptualized and made practical.

Political Leadership

It is important to indicate that I am not discussing (African) political leadership as a concept that operates as a 'top down approach'. Rather the notion of African political leadership that I am concerned with is one that ultimately shepherds citizen's socio-economic interests through governmental structures and nuanced socio-economic policies. This complex and challenging responsibility has not always been executed in the manner required by the African political leadership. Rather than taking fundamental decisions that can alter the balance of power in favour of the peoples of the continent, post-colonial African leaders, with very few exceptions, have not only betrayed the hopes and aspirations of the people but played to the gallery of foreign powers, who have no other interest in Africa than exploitation, subjugation and peripherilization of the African continent and its peoples.

It is for this reason that I argue for a new breed of African political leadership to be formed and encouraged to come to the fore. While I acknowledge past and present African political leaders I contend that the need has arrived for a new generation of African political leadership to vigorously advance a new African agenda for the twenty-second century and steer the requisite socio-economic discourses needed to transform the socio-economic and material conditions of the majority of African citizens. However, this new agenda cannot flourish or fully come to the fore under the current paradigm of thinking and operation. The African Union's Agenda 2063, for instance, though a step in the right direction, falls short because it would seem that Africa hopes for assistance by others in advancing well-being of its people. Put differently, Agenda 2063 should have been anchored on an overarching philosophical framework that should assist in shaping Africa's developmental efforts, and policy issues should have been sufficiently elaborated. In addition, there are other issues that would impact on how Agenda 2063 would be achieved (e.g. how we are to interface with the rest of the world). Also, 2063 is too far off and it is already very late for Africa to have its own 'development agenda' (that is cognisant of global power dynamics, to put it simplistically).

This article addresses the need for the continent to claim the twenty-second century, taking forward the argument made in Gumede and Pooe (2014), not out of chance but rather from a realization that the twenty-

first century is slowly drawing to a close (and is about eighty years away). The current and subsequent African political leadership needs to start planning for the subsequent century. Africa might have already missed the twenty-first century – for the twenty-first century would be, socio-economically, remembered as one that firmly established the ascent of the Asian sub-continent and economies like the People's Republic of China, Republic of Korea, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and also, secondarily, the rise of South American and Latin nations (e.g. Federative Republic of Brazil, Republic of Chile and United Mexican States). Social and economic indicators suggest that Africa remains far behind South America and Asia, at least as far as human development is concerned.

Therefore, African political leadership, along with local communities and citizens, needs to engage and where possible explore the means to transform policy structures and institutions that benefit society. While it is acknowledged that certain problems plaguing the continent need long term solutions, the first step towards achieving lasting solutions entails a deliberate programme of action to unlearn, relearn, un-think and rethink dominant thought patterns which Africans and their leaders have acquired in the process of their encounters with the imperial powers over the last 500 years or so. The new African development narrative needs to occur within a firm framework that acknowledges that African political leadership, much like African society, has suffered from learning and thinking incorrectly concerning firstly itself and secondly socio-economic development. The devastating ramifications of colonialism and imperialism should never be taken for granted.

It is further argued that through being able to achieve this unlearning and unthinking the African continent would be able to more constructively deal with the already highlighted problems of orthodox economic planning and development. Without a doubt, Africa needs more thought leaders who will dig into the archives of history, explore the diverse and rich cultural landscapes of the continent before colonial intrusion and adapt with contemporary scholarship and ideas that have been championed by Africans to get the continent out of the current socio-economic doldrums as well as the political quagmires. I must hasten to indicate that the debate about what has limited development in Africa continues and how we interpret the state of affairs regarding Africa should not use the narrative of the West. The most recent appraisal by Thandika Mkandawire (2015) of various perspectives that have claimed to identify the 'African problem' is a case in point.

In arguing for the process of unlearning and unthinking, this article is highlighting the fact that African political leadership needs to firstly

understand what its historical mission is and secondly be courageous enough to lead a new form of socio-economic narrative for development. The argument of utilizing history to shape the development and future of Africa has been discussed by others. Thandika Mkandawire (2011), for instance, argues that

> The idea of 'catching up' entails learning not only about ideas from abroad but also about one's capacities and weaknesses. 'Catching up' requires that countries know themselves and their own history that has set the 'initial conditions' for any future progress. They need a deep understanding of their culture, not only for self-reaffirmation, but in order to capture the strong points of their culture and institutions that will see their societies through rapid social change.

Thought Leadership

As indicated earlier, thought leadership is of paramount importance in the pursuit of Africa's development. Part of the challenge that Africa faces, as reflected above, has to do with an inability to fully appreciate the underlying or fundamental causes for Africa's continued underdevelopment. To be clear, when I talk of development, I have in mind Claude Ake's definition of development: development as 'the process by which people create and recreate themselves and their life circumstances to realise higher levels of civilisation in accordance with their own choices and values – development is something that people must do for themselves' (1996: 125). A similar perspective on development, among others, is that 'development is a process. The process is resistance – relentless opposition to the imperial system… until liberation' (Tandon 2015: 145). Yash Tandon concludes that 'all development under conditions of exploitation and oppression is RESISTANCE…resistance against imperial domination is the first law of motion of development' (*ibid*.: 158).

With regards to underdevelopment, I am guided by Walter Rodney's conceptualization. As Walter Rodney put it 'at all times, therefore, one of the ideas behind underdevelopment is a comparative one. It is possible to compare the conditions at two different periods for the same country and determine whether or not it had developed; and (more importantly) it is possible to compare the economies of any two countries or sets of countries at any given period in time' (1972: 14). This would contrast with perspectives of development such as those espoused by Amartya Sen (1999). For Sen, the people should be able to guide the development process and also have choices for their livelihoods. Then there are what could be termed Fanonian perspectives on development. Frantz Fanon viewed development

as associated with socio-economic freedom. Fanon went a step further because he also approached development from a psychosocial perspective. At issue, effectively, is inclusive development.

In the context of thought leadership, it would be incorrect to lay the blame for Africa's underdevelopment solely at the hands of Western imperialist forces. There is need for deep introspection and learning from the mistakes committed by African leaders, particularly since political independence. African political leadership has to deal with its shortcomings (e.g. lack of willingness to accept correction or criticism from people that occupy 'lower echelons' and even from electorates and pride of position which leads to alienation of others). While these vices are not unique to African societies and political leadership, as many have argued, at a policy and institutional levels such vices and other human failure have held back the continent's socio-economic progress and development (Edigheji 2004). Indeed, for the most part of the post-independence period, African leaders have adopted cosmetic approaches to addressing the problems that the continent faces. Rather than taking fundamental decisions that can alter the balance of power in favour of the peoples of the continent, most post-colonial African leaders, with very few exceptions, have not only betrayed the hopes and aspirations of the people but played to the gallery of so-called foreign powers.

The lack of vision and short-sighted approaches to development have resulted in African economies not being able to fully progress, and more worryingly created an unhealthy dependency on foreign products and assistance (Jerven 2010). As indicated above, the predicament the continent finds itself in is not thus solely due to foreign forces who only exploit African weaknesses and lack of planning, but is also the fault of African political leadership itself (as George Ayittey (2005), among others, has argued). Further compounding the leadership question is the precarious situation the global economy finds itself in. As Joseph Stiglitz et al. (2013) put it:

> It took the 2008 Great Recession to bring about a wider understanding of the deficiencies in the conventional wisdom and in the standard models upon which they rested. Those models failed, by all the most important tests of scientific theory. They did not predict that the financial crisis would happen; and when it did, they understated its effects. Monetary authorities allowed bubbles to grow and focused on keeping inflation low, partly because the standard models suggested that low inflation was necessary and almost sufficient for efficiency, growth, and prosperity.

At a more practical level, perhaps, there is a need to utilize and engage with thought leadership. It did not have to take the global recession, or Joseph

Stiglitz and his disciples for that matter, for Africa to realize that a different socio-economic development paradigm was necessary. Essentially, we require praxis of ideas that are contextually sensitive and environmentally adaptable and relevant, not just an inspirational or transformational leadership, as many have suggested, but a critically conscious and mentally free leadership. It is this approach to African leadership[5] that is a critical first step towards not only dealing with the numerous continental socio-economic failures such as poverty, poor resource management and the like but also the poverty of ideas emanating from neoliberal dogma.

In the pursuit of thought leadership, we need to tap into the as yet unmined riches of Africa's past leadership experiences. Although there were challenges in early Africa, we must learn from the glorious past such as the victories of the Ethiopian Adwa, Khoi resistance against Portuguese colonialists, Impi yaseSandlwana and many others,[6] which prove that African societies long engaged with the process of thought leadership during trying times. Even much earlier, as epitomised by what is captured in *The Egyptian Book of the Dead*,[7] Africa had thought leaders. Molefi Kete Asante (2000) has also discussed the very early thinkers (i.e. Imhotep, Amenemhat, Amenhotep, Akhenaton and many others) in ancient Kemet, demonstrating beyond doubt that Africa is not only the originator of civilization but also that the ancient African thinkers were very advanced. Talking about Imhotep, for instance, Asante (ibid.: 24) explains that 'as vizier, Imhotep was the King's Prime Minister. He was responsible for the daily running of the administration of the country'. However, as indicated at the very onset, *thought leadership* alone is not enough; it needs to be aided by thought liberation and *critical consciousness*.

Thought Liberation

Thought leadership is intertwined with thought liberation. Thought leadership, in the main, has to do with better understanding of the fundamental challenges confronting humanity. For Africa, it involves understanding the socio-political and economic issues and possibilities or options for the further advancement of the human condition in Africa. Essentially, thought leaders are change agents who rigorously advance intellectualism for a better Africa, in our context. Thought leadership has always been priced higher in Africa, even much earlier as indicated above. Souleymane Diagne (2008), for instance, tells us that 'Ahmed Baba insists [insisted] on the value of knowledge with the precision that knowledge is authentic and complete only when it is a way of life'. Diagne indicates that Baba argued that 'one hour of a scholar laying on his bed but meditating on

his knowledge is more valuable than the worship of a devout person during seventy years' (*ibid*.). Our great thinkers, such as Cheikh Anta Diop and Theophile Obenga, among many others, are testimony to the importance of knowledge that becomes a way of life – these two greatest African thought leaders worked tirelessly to demonstrate, as an example, the African origin of civilization.

The process of thought liberation, similarly, involves the very process of unlearning, relearning, unthinking and rethinking dominant thought patterns which Africans and their leaders have acquired in the process of their encounters with the imperial powers over the last 500 years or so (as indicated earlier). Thought liberation should assist the rest of the world, too, to come to an understanding that socio-economic development cannot be left to the market alone. Recently, Mkandawire (2015) and Nzau (2010), among others, have made this point. The many works of Samir Amin and of Claude Ake discuss the trouble that market fundamentalism causes in Africa, and the world at large. Amin (1997: 95), for instance, argued that 'contemporary society is manifestly in crisis, if we define crisis as a situation in which the expectations of the majority cannot be satisfied by the logic of the [capitalist] system'. Amin goes on to say that 'capitalism and crisis are not incompatible: far from it, because the logic of capital necessarily generates crisis. The solution implies a modification of the rules of the game…an alternative social project'.

Of late, Joseph Stiglitz et al. have reiterated what many African economists and political scientists have been saying, that 'the global financial and economic crisis has also brought to light the fact that market forces do not exist in a vacuum, and that they are all shaped by laws, rules, and regulations, each of which is never truly neutral, as it explicitly or implicitly favours or discourages particular industries, sectors, firms, and social players' (2013: 7). Over and above merely wanting African governments and political leaders to move beyond believing in global financial and economic neoliberalism, thought liberation should help Africans (and those of African descent) deal with the long running negative psychological effects of colonialism and apartheid rule. The ramifications of colonialism makes many Africans feel inferior to their white counterparts, thus necessitating various attempts to look, speak and act European, by way of example. At the policy level, the psychological legacy is manifested in the infantile deference of African leaders to so-called experts from the West on various issues that concern the continent even today. As Issa Shivji (2009) and others have demonstrated, colonialism and imperialism were very significant in Africa and not comparable to any other region. It is therefore imperative that

we deal with the challenge of 'mental slavery', as Biko (1978) and others argued. Essentially, many Africans find themselves valuing the wrong things (e.g. what represents the standard of success in life).

Critical Consciousness

As and when thought leadership occurs and thought liberation plays the necessary role, critical consciousness must be prioritized in order to, among other things, manifest and reshape the socio-political and economic trajectory of the new African agenda for the twenty-second century. It is through critical consciousness that leaders in Africa can truly serve the citizenry and the people can hold leaders accountable. Raising critical consciousness involves sensitization of the citizens to be self-aware of the rights that nature and the constitutions confer on them as free born citizens. As the saying goes, a people deserves the kind of leaders that they have. For too long, African citizens have been the victim of power-play and unholy alliance between the indigenous comprador bourgeoisie and their international counterparts.

It must also be mentioned that critical consciousness should be raised to redirect the attention of progressive forces in Africa to reclaim the lost glory of the continent (Mbeki 2014). Through having an African citizenry that is imbued with critical consciousness, questions about neoliberal policies and agendas will come to be understood and stopped where necessary by not only African political leaders but by the citizens – of course the African intelligentsia and other role players are equally important. This most perplexing situation, where African interests are held ransom by foreign interest through an unthoughtful leadership and unliberated thought class of African political leaders, would come to an end (Adedeji 2002). The citizenry has a critical role to play because the elite becomes distant from the real issues and often gets co-opted by capital if not directly becoming agents of global capital in the context of obtaining and sustaining a capitalist-imperialist world disorder. It is in this context that other forms of ideological struggles, such as African feminism, could be an answer to the post-colonial development project in contemporary Africa – the neo-colonial state is failing, if it has not already, and liberation movements seem to have failed to transform themselves into vibrant political parties that are capable of pursuing autonomous development paths.

As Paulo Freire (1970: 35) argued, we need to be 'learning to perceive social, political and economic contradictions and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality'. Critical consciousness implies that the citizenry should act as change agents – once contradictions have been identified, action must be taken to address them. This also means that

the citizenry is in a position to change the elite that is not addressing core developmental challenges faced by the African continent. By implication also, the citizenry needs to rid itself of inappropriate thought patterns and borrowed improper behavioural patterns. Too often, what Africans see as a good standard of progress is what comes from the North, and most of the behaviours that are problematic are learnt from the Euro-American consumerist world. Critical consciousness should ensure that Africans liberate themselves from the various destructive thought patterns.[8]

Knowledge Production

Colonialism pursued an education policy that distorted African history, de-emphasised creativity, ossified critical thinking thereby emasculating the consciousness of an African in identifying who s/he is, his or her intellectual acumen, cultural pedigree and capacity for good. A psychological warfare, which reified the colonialists as superiors and better human beings, was relentlessly waged against Africans, the result of which is the prevalence of a sense of inferiorization in tastes, ideas, consumption and the general world view of an average African today. That systemic and psychological warfare was more pronounced in education and curricula. As Simphiwe Sesanti puts it, 'through colonial education, Africans have been alienated from, and reduced to being strangers to their own selves. In the process, Africans were made to feel worthless by being told that they had no history, culture and philosophy' (2015: 356).

The various colonial policies were centred on building cadres and officers that could serve as clerks to colonial officers or at best produce an elite cadre whose orientations were/are directed towards the satisfaction of the departing colonial masters, rather than the people (Falola 2004). Colonial education tried as much as possible to erase any sense of African history, thus privileging European history as the authentic history, as Simphiwe Sesanti (2015) and others explain. In addition, colonialists left a legacy of imposition of foreign languages as a means of communication on Africa. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, among others, has wrestled with this issue. The issue of language is extremely important, as many African thinkers have emphasised that Africa cannot develop while using someone else's language.[9]

Although the poverty of thought leadership and the deficit in consciousness are manifest in various areas and ways in contemporary Africa, one major concern relates to economic thought and economic policies. Since the end of the Second World War, the world has come under the dominance of a virulent form of neoliberal economic thought which prioritizes private accumulation at the expense of societal progress and stability. This neoliberal

brand of economics operates with a messianic zealotry, hegemonizes ideas, obliterates alternative reasoning and compartmentalizes itself against other disciplines. It is what Ben Fine (2009) *calls Zombie Economics* and Samir Amin (1990) calls *Vulgar Economics*. The overarching influence of this economic thought on policy in Africa, its failure, as well as micro and macro implications on the continent, warrant thought liberation and critical consciousness.

Economics is arguably one of the academic disciplines whose rethink is long overdue. Even so-called leading economists such as Joseph Stiglitz have somersaulted of late, discarding the neoliberal dogma that they fed the world for decades; the neoliberal dogma that finds the world we live in today a worse place than the place our grandparents before colonialism lived in – surely the worse place that our children and their children will live in if we are unable to change the status quo. As Yash Tandon (2015) puts it, 'all economic theories, without exception, are ideologies. As such, they have a certain descriptive content based on social, economic and political realities on the ground, and also a normative content – on how society or economy should be organised'.

In the context of pan-Africanism and African renaissance, education, or knowledge production broadly, should be based on an Afrocentric paradigm[10] – African thought leadership must be able to produce not only a critical but a conscious African citizenry that is grounded in pan-Africanist philosophies and driven to implement the African renaissance agenda.[11] The curriculum, put differently, has to be shaped by the lived experiences of Africans and must be about what Africans want or would like to be as well as how they would like to live. The content knowledge of the subject should arguably take into account *African economic renaissance*.[12]

The packaging and delivery of content should be about raising critical consciousness and should be forward looking. There is also a need to re-write economic theory or to come up with better applications of economic theory in the context of Africa's development – we must, more importantly, question existing imported theories and develop new ones which are more relevant for our contexts. Even though many leading economists, such as Amartya Sen, are aware of the constraints of economics as a social science, not much has been done to re-think economics. There has, for instance, been a heated debate of late regarding Gross Domestic Product but no alternative has been put forward as far as a better measure of well-being is concerned. It is therefore no surprise that we still predominantly use the outdated macro-economic framework[13] – national income identity – which excludes many important variables for socio-economic development. As Lansana

Keita (2014) puts it, 'in its present dominant configuration as "neoclassical economics", [economics] presents itself as a species of engineering thereby ignoring its evolutionary history'. Economics, as a field, has to be rescued.

Foundations for a Glorious Future

Essentially, Africa needs more thought leaders who will dig into the archives of history, explore the diverse and rich cultural landscapes of the continent before colonial intrusion and adapt with contemporary scholarship and ideas that have been championed by Africans to take the continent and peoples of Africa forward. Such thought leaders must be able to combine theory with praxis of ideas that are contextually sensitive and environmentally adaptable and relevant. The challenges confronting Africa are significant and historical, and require not just an inspirational or transformational leadership, as many have suggested, but critically conscious and mentally-free thought leaders.

Another important task for African thought leaders is to better understand the history of the evolution of Africa as a continent where humankind originates and great thinkers that have existed (see, for instance, Cheikh Anta Diop 1955) – early African thought leaders such as Al-Umari, Ibn Battuta and Leo Africanus, among others, and prominent later Kings/Emperors such as Senzangakhona kaJama, Moshoeshoe, Sobhuza II, Haile Selassie I, among others, developed ideas that guided the governance of ancient kingdoms and empires such as (in) Egypt, Kush/Nubia, Axum, Lesotho, Ghana, Mali, KwaZulu, Songhai and Karnem-Borno (Martin 2012). Some of the thought leaders mentioned ensured that a handful of Africans who were poorly armed, compared to the Europeans, resisted occupation. In addition, the thought leaders in pre-colonial Africa also ensured that the continent administered an economy that was robust and advanced before the imperial intrusion and colonialists' distortions as Walter Rodney (1972) and others have written. Africans also had a way of life and philosophy that shaped the African economy and social interactions before colonialism interfered with it as Walter Rodney (*ibid.*) and Samir Amin (1972) have captured.

It is also worth highlighting that large and successful kingdoms and queendoms existed in Africa before the colonial intrusion. These kingdoms and queendoms related with one another on cordial terms, conducted relations peacefully and developed infrastructures and economic systems that ensured prosperity for the generality of the people. It is important to indicate though that as is a case for many states, African communities were also sites of dialectics or antagonistic contradictions which would get resolved using different means including diplomacy and wars. The pre-colonial

African thought leaders also advanced proverbs, mores, folklores, taboos and principles that ensured societal harmony, dignity, mutual trust, mutual care and the general well-being of the people (Polanyi 1944). Similarly, it should be remembered that in Walata and Timbuktu (Cleaveland 2008), Africa had advanced knowledge production institutions long before the arrival of colonialists – in fact, knowledge production dates very far back as, among other texts, *The Egyptian Book of the Dead* demonstrates. There have also been many great thought leaders in postcolonial Africa. These include (nationalist) leaders such as Africanus Horton, Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, Nnamdi Azikiwe, Amilcar Cabral, Thabo Mbeki and many others. The list is by no means exhaustive.

While the above chronicle may sound to some as a romanticization of history, I argue that it is perfectly in order to be conscious of one's past in order to confront present challenges – as many others have argued; we have to go back, way back, before we can move forward.[14] It is precisely on this score that thought leaders are needed today who will not only bask in the glory of the past but commit themselves to learning from the thoughts of past African heroes and heroines such that they can lead Africa to the true path of renaissance and complete liberation from external influence and domination in its various forms and guises.

Conclusion

This article has, rather briefly, argued for three ingredients for taking the African continent further forward: thought leadership, thought liberation and critical consciousness. These three critical necessities for the further renewal of the African continent – and the advancement of the human condition globally – would ensure that an appropriate socio-economic development approach is adopted and that a proper narrative of Africa's development is authored. For instance, the socio-economic development approach based on neoliberal dogma would be replaced by a contextually relevant and applicable approach.[15] The article also briefly revisits Africa's glorious past and makes a case that African thought leaders can make Africa's past a foundation, as part of endeavours for thought leadership, thought liberation and critical consciousness. Lastly, the article emphasised the importance of knowledge production, also its dissemination, organization and the implementation of revolutionary praxis.

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Notes

1. Nelson Maldonado-Torres (2007), cited in Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013: 332), explains coloniality as 'different from colonialism. Colonialism denotes a political and economic relation in which the sovereignty of a nation or a people rests on the power of another nation, which makes such a nation an empire. Coloniality, instead, refers to longstanding patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labour, intersubjectivity relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administrations. Thus, coloniality survives colonialism. It is maintained in books, in the criteria for academic performance, in cultural patterns, in common sense, in the self-image of peoples, in aspirations of self, and so many other aspects of our modern experience. In a way, as modern subjects we breathe coloniality all the time and every day'.
2. '[C]olonialism, by a kind of pervasive logic, it turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts it, disfigures and destroys it' (Fanon 1961: 67).
3. In the context of literature, for instance, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (1986: 93) argues that 'African children who encountered literature in colonial schools and universities were thus experiencing the world as defined and reflected in the European experience of history'.
4. See Gumede (2013) for a historical exposition of African renaissance and pan-Africanism.
5. By African leadership, I have in mind the type of leadership that is centred on Afrocentric histories, philosophies, epistemologies and other pan-Africanist orientations/ideologies as well as respect for evolving African cultures.
6. For instance, other victorious anti-colonial struggles include the Tanzanian one in Iringa where African forces led by King Mkwawa wiped out hundreds of German troops.
7. See Allen, T.G. 1960. *The Egyptian Book of the Dead*. Documents in the Oriental Institute Museum at the University of Chicago. Volume 82. University of Chicago. The Oriental Institute.
8. Some of the most disturbing thought patterns that Africans should extricate themselves from include over-indulgence in ceremonies of various kinds (this varies across cultures), lack of willingness to accept correction or criticism from people who occupy the 'lower echelons' and even from electorates, pride of position, poor team spirit, unnecessary envy and jealousy, preference for everything foreign, 'hero worship' and preference for mediocrity as against meritocracy.
9. Molefi Kete Asante (2007), for instance, indicates that Dame Babou said Cheikh Anta Diop argued that 'no nation ever developed using the language of other people'.

10. MolefiKete Asante (2007: 16–17) defines Afrocentricity 'as a consciousness, quality of thought, mode of analysis, and actionable perspective where Africans seek, from agency, to assert subject place within the context of African history'.
11. It should be noted though that there are some who feel that the word 'renaissance' is inappropriate because it is associated with a particular European experience. Indeed, some of the concepts we use needs revisiting and should be made more applicable in African contexts.
12. African economic renaissance implies that Africans should decide on the African economy and or the socio-economic system that works for them. The point of departure is that Africans had, prior to colonialism and imperialism, an economy and an economic system that worked well for them. See more in Gumede 2013.
13. The macro-economic framework, which is essentially, an account of what makes up an economy considers a few variables: consumption, investments, expenditure and net trade.
14 For instance, Africans should revisit, if not undo, the artificial borders drawn up by a handful of European countries in 1884/85 – what came to be known as the Berlin Conference.
15. I have proposed that a new socio-economic development approach for Africa could be anchored on communalism. Walter Rodney (1972: 7) defines communalism as a system where 'property [is] collectively owned, work done in common and goods shared equally'. This is in sharp contrast to capitalism, which came with colonialism, which, according to Rodney, resulted to 'concentration in a few hands of ownership of the means of producing wealth and by unequal distribution of the products of human labour'.

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The Role of Older Persons in Uganda: Assessing Socio-demographic Determinants of Older Persons' Value

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Abstract

Extensive research has been conducted on diverse socio-demographic issues such as child and maternal mortality in Uganda but the contribution of older persons to their households and communities has been comparatively under-investigated. This article bridges the gap by discussing prevalence and determinants of the value of persons aged sixty and above in the country. Four rural districts were randomly selected while one urban area was purposively chosen in a cross-sectional study conducted from March to April 2012. An interviewer-administered questionnaire was used to collect data on 605 older persons. Engagement in income-generating activities, possession of indigenous knowledge, advice on behaviour norms, role played in social organizations, propagation of cultural norms, dispensing local medicine and providing childcare were all aspects of value studied. Using scaling technique, these eight variables were aggregated into a single total indicator of value, operationally defined as aggregate value. The variable was then dichotomized into low aggregate value and high aggregate value. Binary logistic regression was used to analyse socio-demographic factors predicting high aggregate value. Findings indicate that nearly four in ten older persons had high aggregate value. In comparison with persons of no education, those having primary and secondary or higher education were more likely to have high aggregate value. In comparison with persons who did not own land, those who owned land were more likely to have high aggregate value. Results further indicate that having out-migrated children predicted high aggregate value. In comparison with the Central region of the country, older persons living in the Western, Northern and Kampala regions were more likely to have high aggregate value. The findings have several implications including for the design of later-life socio-economic programmes, establishment of a special old age fund and increasing learner access and retention rates in the national education system.

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Résumé

Des recherches approfondies ont été menées sur diverses questions sociodémographiques telles que la mortalité infantile et maternelle en Ouganda, mais la contribution des personnes âgées dans leurs foyers et leurs communautés a été relativement peu examinée. Cet article vient combler le fossé en traitant de la prévalence et des déterminants de la valeur des personnes âgées de soixante ans et plus dans le pays. Quatre districts ruraux ont été choisis au hasard contre une zone urbaine choisie à dessein dans une étude transversale menée de mars à avril 2012. Un questionnaire administré par l'intervieweur a été utilisé pour recueillir des données sur 605 personnes âgées L'engagement dans des activités génératrices de revenus, la possession de connaissances indigènes, les conseils en matière de normes de comportement, le rôle joué dans les organisations sociales, la propagation des normes culturelles, la dispensation de médicaments locaux et la fourniture de soins aux enfants ont été les aspects liés à la valeur qui ont fait l'objet de l'étude. En utilisant la technique de mise à l'échelle, ces huit variables ont été regroupées en un seul indicateur total de la valeur, défini sur le plan opérationnel comme *valeur globale*. La variable a ensuite été dichotomisée en *valeur globale faible* et en *valeur globale élevée*. La régression logistique binaire a été utilisée pour analyser les facteurs sociodémographiques prédisant une valeur globale élevée. Les résultats indiquent que près de quatre sur dix personnes âgées avaient une valeur globale élevée. Comparées aux individus non instruits, ceux qui avaient un niveau d'enseignement primaire et secondaire ou supérieur étaient plus susceptibles d'avoir une valeur globale élevée. Comparées aux personnes qui ne possédaient pas de terre, celles qui en possédaient étaient plus susceptibles d'avoir une valeur globale élevée. Les résultats indiquent en outre que le fait d'avoir des enfants ayant migré prédisait une valeur globale élevée. Comparées à celles qui vivaient dans la région centrale du pays, les personnes âgées vivant dans les régions occidentales, orientales et la région de Kampala étaient plus susceptibles d'avoir une valeur globale élevée. Les résultats ont plusieurs implications, notamment pour la conception de futurs programmes socio-économiques, la création d'un fonds spécial vieillesse et l'amélioration de l'accès pour les apprenants et du taux de rétention dans le système éducatif national.

Introduction

Recent estimates indicate that Uganda's population of older persons is approximately 1,304,500 (UBOS 2012) and that the number is projected to reach 5,420,000 by 2050 (UNFPA and HAI 2012). Although older persons tend to be associated with later-life challenges, ageing populations also have value and make substantial contributions to their households and communities. Many scholars have widely used the concept of value from

the point of view of children. For example, the value of children has been defined as that collection of good things which parents receive from having children (Espenshade 1977). Similarly, this value has been described as the benefits individuals expect to receive from a child (Fawcett 1985; Hoffman and Manis 1979). This perception of value is as relevant to children as it is to older persons. The value of older persons is operationally used in this study to refer to the benefits, merits or worth of older persons. It relates to the roles of older persons at individual, family and community levels. The term value thus evokes the image of contributions to households and communities that older persons make. The value takes several forms such as caregiving to vulnerable populations, engagement in income-generating activities, being members and leaders of social organizations, dispensing local medicines, mediation in conflicts, offering advice on behaviour norms as well as being custodians of indigenous knowledge and cultural information. Older persons in low-income countries do not stop contributing to their communities on retirement and many are willing to work well beyond retirement age (WHO 2007). Earnings from post-retirement income-generating activities make an important contribution to poverty avoidance (Barrientos, Gorman and Heslop 2003) .

Several factors influence older persons' involvement in socio-economic activities and education is one of the determinants of later-life engagement in income-generating activities. In selected Caribbean countries, well educated persons, particularly professionals, have been reported to have more income-earning opportunities in old age than their counterparts of lower education (Cloos et al. 2010). Education itself tends to vary by gender; with older women having lower levels of education than older men in many countries (UNFPA and HAI 2012). This is largely because, in comparison with boys, the girls had fewer opportunities to go to school and experienced higher drop-out rates. Lower educational levels seriously limit the ability of older women to obtain information, access services or take part in socio-economic activities.

Age is another variable that may influence later life income-generation. As WHO (2007) states, older people tend to be too frail to work, have difficulty getting to and from work or simply feel unsafe travelling to and from work places. Similarly, although labour force participation is relatively high in developing countries, older persons' employment opportunities and remuneration decline with age (Czaja 2007). Barrientos et al. (2003) posit, however, that contrary to some perceptions, assumptions regarding a decline in the average productivity of workers with age have not been confirmed by empirical studies. This is because although formal employment opportunities may decline with age, the incidence of self-employment may in fact rise.

Later-life income generation may be indirectly influenced by migration of household members. Having a migrant increases a household's income per capita by 8.5 to 13.1 per cent (Du, Park and Wang 2005). Older persons belonging to financially empowered households are more likely to engage in income-generating activities and thus experience less poverty than their less financially empowered counterparts. This resonates with the theory of the new economics of labour migration (Massey et al. 1993) which makes a case for the reduced risks and vulnerabilities through families and households that encourage emigration of their members. The authors posit that in circumstances where local economic activities fail to bring in sufficient income, the household can rely on migrant remittances for support.

Possession of indigenous knowledge is another hallmark of the value of older persons. For example, indigenous knowledge of medicinal plants has existed among inhabitants of the Iberian Peninsula and this knowledge has been propagated from generation to generation (Akerreta, Calvo and Cavero 2010). Some studies have shown that formal education negatively influences possession of this knowledge. Research carried out in Mexico indicated that school attendance implied less time to acquire empirical ecological knowledge (Giovannini et al. 2011). The authors argue that lower prevalence of indigenous knowledge among learned persons could be associated with increased exposure to global capitalist culture and decreased contact with the local environment owing to prolonged school attendance. Other studies have indicated that possession and propagation of indigenous knowledge appears to be gradually disappearing in some areas partly due to the adoption of what is perceived to be a modern culture. As De Albuquerque et al. (2011) have observed, the accelerated processes of globalization and economic development have, in recent years, threatened indigenous cultures such as traditional knowledge and practices.

The value of older persons can also be seen within the context of membership of social organizations. In a study of the social capital of older people in Britain, Gray (2009) identified several organizations in which older persons were active members. These included political parties, trade unions, environmental groups, parents' groups, tenants' groups, religious organization, voluntary service groups, social clubs and sports clubs. Similar social affiliation was reported by Perren, Arber and Davidson (2003) in a study conducted on men's organizational affiliations in later life. The study found that half of older men aged sixty-five and over reported membership of an informal organization. Study findings also indicated that a quarter were involved in civic groups, one in six belonged to a social club, one in seven belonged to a religious group, one in eight belonged to a sports club, while one in twenty reported membership of a pensioners' group.

Many older people are said to be pillars of the community in which they are actively involved including local clubs, societies, faith groups and democratic institutions such as Parish Councils and boards of school governors (WRVS 2011). They are also users of local services and have the propensity to be active users or customers of community-based facilities such as local shops, post offices, libraries, pubs and surgeries. It is argued that without their older users, many of these facilities would be less viable and could be lost to the community. Older people have also been said to provide leadership of many local organizations, groups and societies. The leadership expertise, skills and experience have been reported to be the driving force for local community-based organizations. WRVS (2011) further observes that older people are estimated to spend more time than any other age group in leadership roles, spending an average of five hours per month.

Studies have established association between social participation and health (Bath and Deeg 2005; Cloos et al. 2010; Gray 2009; McMunn et al. 2009). Active involvement in social organizations can be an important component of successful ageing. As Adams, Leibbrandt and Moon (2011) observe, many older adults with active participation in social and leisure activities report positive well-being in later life. Social organizations can also be instrumental in offering support to persons during later life (Wellman 1992).

Counselling and guidance is another indicator of the value of older persons who often counsel errant youths and guide them along the path of expected societal standards in circumstances of inappropriate behavioural patterns. As Oppong (2006) observes, in the past men and women were expected to play an important part in advising, guiding and supporting the young as they matured. Old age in years per se was not especially revered but rather the maturity and wisdom born of a lifetime's experience in raising new generations. Once in the elder category, a person was ideally considered to have wisdom and advisory skills and was consequently respected by the young. This role is still relevant in many Ugandan societies (MoGLSD 2009) though it is gradually being undermined by social transformation.

Erb (2008) has also identified advice and education as one of the roles played by older persons in post-civil war Northern Uganda who are reported to be advising grandchildren on a wide range of issues. These include discipline, traditional activities, household duties, traditional marriage customs, land boundaries and domestic animal care. They are also educating children and grandchildren through story-sharing, which is a source of great happiness and pride. Erb (2008) further indicates that repatriated older persons feel that they can now sit by the fire and teach the children traditional stories.

Older persons are caregivers, which is another aspect of their value. Orphans, other vulnerable children, the helpless, the needy and sometimes even fellow ageing individuals are some of the persons to whom older persons are caregivers (Schatz and Ogunmefun 2007). In Africa, older people are most likely to be heads of households in which they play diverse caregiving roles (Oppong 2006). In Uganda research on how the household copes with the AIDS epidemic indicates that the burden of orphan care falls on the oldest members of the family, usually the grandparents (Ntozi and Nakayiwa 1999). Young siblings who are caregiving do so only because adult relatives have died. These results are corroborated by findings from a study of the plight of older persons as caregivers to people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS (Ssengonzi 2007). The results of the study show that older persons provided care to patients with AIDS at the terminal stage of the illness. Demographic factors are some of the determinants of caregiving. For example McMunn et al. (2009) indicate that women are a little more likely than men to have cared for someone. The authors indicate further that participation in socially-productive activities declined with age, but often not until participants were in their late seventies or eighties.

In Uganda significant research effort on older persons has largely been placed on their challenges (Ntozi and Nakayiwa 1999; Scholten et al. 2011; Ssengonzi 2007). Many studies have yielded rich data on the adverse effects of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, but information on the value of older persons has hardly been considered. Prior studies on older persons in the country have also not gone beyond the traditional demographic factors to incorporate variables such as shelter conditions and ownership of household assets into models that predict value. Paucity of information regarding the prevalence and determinants of the aggregate value of older persons is particularly rife. This study therefore contributes to the current knowledge base on ageing by providing evidence for diverse factors of later-life aggregate value in Uganda. Knowledge of these factors could lead to formulation of appropriate policies and programmes that promote better and dignified ageing of the country's population.

Data and Methods

The paper uses primary data from a cross-sectional study entitled 'Determinants of value and challenges of older persons in Uganda' that was conducted in April 2012. Engagement in income-generating activities, possession of indigenous knowledge and advice on behaviour norms and roles played in social organizations were some of the indicators of value studied. Others were mediation in conflicts, propagation of cultural

norms, dispensing local medicine and caregiving for children. In the study, stratification was used to select four districts from four strata that comprise the major national zones of the country namely Central, Eastern, Northern and Western regions. Using simple random sampling, Mukono, Tororo, Lira and Kisoro districts were selected from the four regions respectively. In addition, Kampala City was purposively selected as the fifth regional stratum to represent the urban sector.

One sub-county was randomly selected from each of the four rural districts, and one municipality was similarly randomly chosen from the Kampala urban region. The randomly selected sub-counties were Nyakabande, Kisoko, Adekokwok and Goma from Kisoro, Tororo, Lira and Mukono districts respectively. Makindye municipality was the municipality randomly selected from the Kampala urban area. A probability sampling approach was adopted to ensure ultimate national representativeness of results. The *Kish method* of sample size determination (Kish 1965) was used to select 605 persons aged sixty and above. Working with local parish leaders, a sampling frame of households having older persons in the selected parishes was compiled. The desired number of households was selected at random from this listing. Age was the inclusion/exclusion criterion and sixty was the cut-off age mark. Any person aged sixty and above from the selected households was eligible for inclusion in the study while all those who proved to be below sixty, were excluded. Age sixty was adopted since this benchmark is widely used in defining older persons (UNFPA and HAI 2012).

An interviewer-administered questionnaire was used to collect data. To ensure uniformity of inquiry and comprehension across the ethnic-linguistic divide, questions were translated into Luo, Jophadhola, Urufumbira and Luganda, the four local languages commonly spoken in the selected districts. Eligible interviewers were recruited, trained and subsequently assigned zones from which to collect data. Each respondent was informed that participation in the study was purely voluntary and interviews were only conducted with older persons who consented. Quality control measures such as on-spot field checks on the interview process were taken to improve completeness and consistency of responses.

The EPIDATA software was used to capture quantitative data generated by the interviewer-administered questionnaire. The data was subsequently exported to STATA programme for univariate, bivariate and multivariate analysis. Univariate analysis involved running frequencies and computing percentage distributions of older persons by their socio-demographic characteristics as well as prevalence of value. Scaling technique was used

to combine the eight indicators of value into a single variable, *aggregate value*, which was a mark of totality of older persons' social and economic contributions to their households and communities. The created variable enabled measurement of older persons' overall importance on a scale ranging from 0 to 8. Aggregate value was subsequently recoded and dichotomized into 'low aggregate value' ranging from 0 to 4 and 'high aggregate value' varying from 5 to 8. The re-coded variable was then cross-tabulated with a number of independent variables to establish association in bivariate analysis.

Since aggregate value, the dependent variable, was dichotomous (low aggregate value or high aggregate value), the binary logistic regression model was used to predict high aggregate value at the multivariate data analysis level. This model is expressed as:

$$\text{logit}\,[p(X)] = \log\left[\frac{p(X)}{1-p(X)}\right] = \alpha + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \beta_3 x_3 + \ldots + \beta_x x_k;$$

where α is the intercept and β_1, β_2, β_3, are the regression coefficients of x_1, x_2, x_3 respectively. The independent variables, $x_1 \ldots x_k$, were age, gender, residence, education, marital status, child out-migration status, limb joint health status, radio set ownership, TV ownership, possession of a mobile phone, ownership of any means of transport, land ownership, possession of domestic animals, social protection status, type of fuel for cooking, material of shelter floor, material of shelter roof and material of shelter walls.

Limitations

One limitation of this study is that binary data was collected for each of the eight indicators of value. For each indicator, richer results could have been produced if a given question looked at a whole range of possible responses on a continuum from, say, 1 to 5. This would also have informed use of the likert scale rather than the summated scale which was used. Another limitation is focus on just eight indicators of value, yet these are not the only ways in which older persons make contributions to their households and communities. Consideration for other aspects such as later life tax contributions, bequests to charity and neighbourhood watch could have widened the spectrum of value. This points to the need for conducting studies with greater depth and breadth on the subject of the value of older persons in Uganda.

Results

Response Rate

During the field data collection process, interviewers physically moved to older persons' homes where face-to-face interviews were conducted with each selected respondent. Owing to a good rapport established between interviewers and community leaders on the one hand and older persons on the other, all eligible persons who were approached accepted to participate in the study. This universal acceptance compares with a similarly high 98 per cent household response rate observed in the 2005 Uganda Demographic and Health Survey (UBOS 2006). However, there were incidences where persons who responded to certain questions on value were slightly less than the sample size, giving an overall average response rate of 99.4 per cent. Interview fatigue could have put off the few older persons who did not respond to some questions. This phenomenon was similarly observed in the 2005 National Demographic and Health Survey in which the individual interview completion rate was 93.1 per cent (UBOS 2006).

Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1 displays the distribution of respondents by socio-demographic characteristics. This indicates that the proportion of older persons decreased with age. Almost two-thirds of the older persons found in the sampled households were females (65 per cent), leaving only 35 per cent as males perhaps because of the higher female life expectancy relative to males. Four-fifths of the respondents were living in rural areas while the rest were in the Kampala urban environment.

Table 1 further indicates that 50 per cent of the respondents did not have formal education. Just over one third (35 per cent) attained primary level of education, 10 per cent had secondary level education while the proportion of those with tertiary and higher level of education was only 5 per cent. Forty-four per cent of the respondents were married while slightly over two-fifths (41 per cent) were widowed. The high prevalence of widowed older persons is perhaps expected given that these people are in the age bracket that is well above fifty-eight, the average life expectancy of the country (PRB 2013), and hence many would have lost their spouses. Unexpectedly, close to 3 per cent of older persons interviewed belonged to the never-married category, which is contrary to what was expected of this overwhelmingly rural sample.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Selected Socio-demographic Characteristics

Characteristic	Number	Per cent
Age		
60–69	264	43.6
70–79	208	34.4
80–89	101	16.7
90+	32	5.3
Sex		
Male	211	34.9
Female	394	65.1
Residence		
Urban	120	19.8
Rural	485	80.2
Region		
Western	120	19.8
Central	125	20.7
Eastern	114	18.8
Northern	126	20.8
Kampala	120	19.8
Education level		
No education	301	49.8
Primary	212	35.0
Secondary	61	10.1
Tertiary+	31	5.1
Marital status		
Never married	18	3.0
Married	266	44.1
Cohabiting	3	0.5
Widowed	249	41.1
Divorced	29	4.8
Separated	40	6.6
Religion		
Catholic	333	55.0
Anglican	205	33.9
Muslim	25	4.1
Pentecostal	26	4.3
Seventh Day Adventist	5	0.8
Others	11	1.8
Living arrangement		
Alone	92	15.2
Spouse	62	10.2
Spouse and kids	89	14.7
Grandchildren	137	22.6
Other	225	37.2
Total	**605**	**100**

The largest proportion of respondents belonged to Catholic and Anglican religious affiliations (55 and 34 per cent respectively). Membership of other religions exists though in much smaller proportions. In comparison with living with a spouse (10 per cent), a higher proportion (15 per cent) of older persons were living alone. Over one-fifth of the older persons were living with grandchildren (23 per cent).

Value of Older Persons

Table 2 shows the percentage of the reported value of older persons by eight socio-economic indicators. Twenty seven per cent of them were engaged in income-generating activities. This finding was corroborated by focus group informants. One of them had this to say:

> We are able to make and sell items such as ibisobane (baskets), *imihini* (hoe-handles), *ibigega* (granaries), *imbehe* (wooden plate), *isekuro* (wooden mortars) *intara* (bamboo tray) *indiga* (knife), *umuhoro* (sickle/machete) and *inanga* (harp). (Key informant, Kisoro district)

Table 2 further indicates that just over two-fifths (45 per cent) possessed indigenous knowledge. Older persons cited several plant species that were being used to deal with basic health issues as one informant explained:

> In this community we get medicines through using a variety of indigenous plants such as *osore* and *otikidiel* for healing wounds, *alwi, ochuloga, thuloliki* and *atiko* for the treatment of measles, *omenyidiegi* for managing brain sickness and *Nyamukesi* for raising appetite. (FGD, Tororo district)

Four-fifths (81 per cent) were playing an advisory role on behaviour norms while just over a quarter of those who reported belonging to social organizations were in fact leaders in these. Some key informants pointed out the diverse roles that older persons were playing. The roles ranged from leadership of educational and cultural institutions to membership of statutory bodies. As one informant put it:

> An older person is an education secretary in the Diocese of Lango. Other older persons are on Board and Management Committees of primary and secondary schools while others are members of Commissions in district local government. Some older persons hold local council positions and are members of university councils. There are also those who are on district land boards. Some are opinion leaders and consultants while others are traditional chiefs and clergy. (Key informant, Lira district)

Eighty per cent of the older persons who reported possessing cultural information were propagating and passing on this knowledge to younger

people in their communities. Older persons indicated that prevalence of untraditional practices such as inter-clan marriages were on the rise, a situation that called for elderly intervention. As one participant put it:

> Today, there are rising levels of ignorance about principles and practices of *amoko* (clans) and *imiryango* (families). Consequently, there are rising cases of intra-clan marriages; something unheard of in the past. As older people, we try to educate the younger people about clan matters. (Women FGD, Kisoro district)

Table 2 further shows that 46 per cent of the respondents had at some point been consulted about conflict resolution while 37 per cent were dispensing local medicine. Half of the older persons (50 per cent) were caring for children.

Table 2: Level of the Reported Value of Older Persons by Socio-economic Indicators

Socio-economic value indicator	**Per cent**
Engagement in income-generating activities (n=605)	
Active in income-generating activities	27.1
Not active in income-generating activities	72.9
Possession of ethno-science knowledge (n=604)***	
Have ethno-science knowledge	45.0
No ethno-science knowledge	55.0
Advice on behaviour norms (n=600)***	
Offers advice on behaviour norms	81.3
No advice on behaviour norms	18.7
Role in social organizations (n=306)*	
Leader	26.5
Ordinary member	73.5
Mediation in conflicts (n=597)***	
Ever consulted for conflict mediation	45.7
Never consulted for conflict mediation	54.3
Propagation of cultural norms (n=287)**	
Propagating cultural norms	80.1
Not propagating cultural norms	19.9
Dispensing local medicine (n=591)***	
Dispenses local medicine	36.9
No dispensation of local medicine	63.1
General childcare (n=603)***	
Caring for children	49.6
Not caring for children	50.4

* Total of only older persons who reported belonging to social organizations.

** Total of only older persons who reported possessing cultural information.

***n< 605 owing to missing data.

Table 3 shows the distribution of respondents by score level on the scale of aggregate value. It is shown that 3 per cent scored 0 on this scale. This is the proportion that may be regarded as having 'no value' within the context of the indicators operationalized in this study. Results further show that 2 per cent obtained the maximum score of 8. These are the persons who may be regarded as having the 'highest value', in terms of the eight indicators. The largest proportion scored 5 on the scale (19 per cent). These findings indicate a fairly normal distribution of older persons on the scale of aggregate value.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Score Level on Scale of Aggregate Value

Score level	Frequency	Per cent
0	18	3.0
1	60	9.9
2	98	16.2
3	92	15.2
4	103	17.0
5	112	18.5
6	72	11.9
7	37	6.1
8	13	2.2
Total	**605**	**100**

Table 4 shows percentages of respondents by aggregate value and by selected variables. The proportion of older persons with high aggregate value decreased with age. Whereas 45 per cent of older persons aged sixty to sixty-nine had high aggregate value, this figure decreased to 29 per cent among those aged eighty and above. The higher proportion among relatively younger older persons is perhaps expected since overall they were likely to be more physically active. The association between age and aggregate value was statistically significant (p=0.007).

The proportion of older males with high aggregate value (45 per cent) was higher than that of older females (35 per cent). Past disproportionate access to opportunities could explain the observed gender disparity. Along the life course, males may have had better access to education, employment and leadership positions that contributed to their overall superiority on the scale of aggregate value. The association between sex and aggregate value was statistically significant (p=0.019).

Table 4: Percentages of Older Persons by Aggregate Value and Selected Variables*

Variable	Low aggregate value (%)	High aggregate value (%)	Number
Age	**61.3**	**38.7**	**605**
60-69	55.3	44.7	264
70-79	62.5	37.5	208
80+	71.4	28.6	133
X^2 =9.9, p=0.007			
Gender	**61.3**	**38.7**	**605**
Male	55.0	45.0	211
Female	64.7	35.3	394
X^2 =5.5, p=0.019			
Region	**61.3**	**38.7**	**605**
Western	55.8	44.2	120
Central	74.4	25.6	125
Eastern	63.2	36.8	114
Northern	58.7	41.3	126
Kampala	54.2	45.8	120
X^2 =13.6, p=0.009			
Education level	**61.3**	**38.7**	**605**
No education	68.1	31.9	301
Primary	56.1	43.9	212
Secondary+	51.1	48.9	92
X^2 =12.3, p=0.002			
Work environment before age 60	**61.7**	**38.3**	**600****
Public/private sector	51.1	48.9	90
Self employed	52.0	48.0	227
Unpaid employee	78.5	21.5	214
Casual worker	55.1	44.9	69
X^2 =40.2, p=0.000			
Ownership of means of transport	**61.5**	**38.5**	**597****
Owns any means of transport	52.5	47.5	99
No any means of transport	63.2	36.8	498
X^2 =4.0, p=0.045			
Land ownership	**61.5**	**38.5**	**597****
Owns land	56.2	43.8	441
No land	76.3	23.7	156
X^2 =19.6, p=0.000			

Ownership of domestic farm animals	**60.7**	**39.3**	**593****
Owns animals	54.5	45.5	268
No animals	65.9	34.1	325
X^2 =7.9, p=0.005			
Child out-migration status	**61.2**	**38.8**	**603****
Has out-migrated children	54.8	45.2	303
No out-migrated children	67.7	32.3	300
X^2 =10.5, p=0.001			
Limb joint health status	**61.9**	**38.1**	**444*****
Has joint pain/swelling/stiffness	59.0	41.0	383
No joint pain/swelling/stiffness	80.3	19.7	61
X^2=10.1, p=0.001			

*Non-statistically significant variables not shown in table.

**n< 605 owing to missing data.

*** Total of only older persons who reported having difficulty in moving.

Table 4 further shows that aggregate value varied by region of residence. The highest proportions of older persons with high aggregate value were those living in Kampala and Western regions (46 and 44 per cent respectively). This was followed by Northern, Eastern and Central regions (41, 37 and 26 per cent respectively). The association between aggregate value and region was statistically significant (p=0.009). High aggregate value increased with education. For example, whereas the proportion was 32 per cent among those who never attended school, the corresponding figures for those who attained primary and secondary or higher education were 44 and 49 per cent respectively. The skills acquired through life-long learning could have contributed to the higher level of aggregate value observed among older persons with primary level of education and above. The association between aggregate value and education was statistically significant (p=0.002).

The proportion of older persons with high aggregate value was highest among those who worked in the public/private sector as well and those who were self-employed before turning sixty (49 and 48 per cent respectively). This was followed by casual workers (45 per cent). The lowest proportion corresponded with older persons who were unpaid employees (22 per cent). Relatively better socio-economic positions among older persons who worked in the public/private sector or who were self-employed could explain the disparity in high aggregate value. The association between aggregate value and work done before turning sixty was statistically significant (p=0.000).

Forty seven per cent of the older persons who owned means of transport had high aggregate value while the corresponding figure among those who did not own any transport facility was 37 per cent. A transport facility such as vehicle, motorcycle or bicycle could have facilitated transportation and thus facilitated older persons' engagement in income generation. The association between ownership of means of transport and aggregate value was statistically significant (p=0.045). Aggregate value also varied by possession of land. The proportion of the older persons having high aggregate value (44 per cent) was higher among those who owned land than their landless counterparts (24 per cent). Land could have enabled older persons to engage in production activities; a process that may have influenced other socially desirable roles such as child caregiving. The association between ownership of land and aggregate value was statistically significant (p=0.000). Table 4 further indicates that aggregate value was also associated with ownership of domestic animals. The proportion of the older persons who possessed domestic farm animals (46 per cent) was higher than that of those without livestock (34 per cent). Ownership of domestic animals could have raised older persons' social and economic status at household and community levels. The association between ownership of domestic animals and aggregate value was statistically significant (p=0.005).

Forty five per cent of older persons whose children were living outside their parents' usual place of residence had high aggregate value while the corresponding proportion among those who did not have out-migrated children was only 32 per cent. Successful out-migrants could have remitted part of their earnings which enabled their parents to engage in activities such as income-generation. The association between child out-migration and aggregate value was statistically significant (p=0.001). Aggregate value was also associated with limb joint health status. Older persons with limb joint pain, stiffness or swelling had higher aggregate value (41 per cent) than those without such health challenges (20 per cent). Owing to their mobility limitations, disabled persons may have provided more home-based care to their household and community members than their non-disabled and more mobile counterparts who could have been away from home for longer periods.

Predictors of High Aggregate Value

Table 5 presents results of logistic regression analysis of factors predicting high aggregate value. It is shown that older persons aged sixty to sixty-nine were more likely to have high aggregate value than their counterparts aged eighty and above (OR=1.9; p=0.013). In comparison with the older persons without formal education, those having primary, secondary or higher levels

of education were more likely to have high aggregate value (OR=1.8; p=0.014 and OR=2.3; p=0.015 respectively).

Land ownership also predicted high aggregate value. The older persons who owned land were more likely to have high aggregate value than their counterparts who did not have any land (OR=2.0; p=0.004). Those who had out-migrated children were more likely to have high aggregate value than their counterparts without migrant children (OR=1.8; p=0.003).

Table 5: Results of Logistic Regression Analysis of Factors Influencing High Aggregate Value

Variable	**Coefficients**	**Odds Ratio**	**Std. Err.**	**p**
Age				
60–69	0.637	1.890	0.485	0.013
70–79	0.354	1.425	0.375	0.178
80+*		1.000		
Sex				
Male	0.368	1.445	0.339	0.117
Female*		1.00		
Education				
No education*		1.000		
Primary	0.562	1.754	0.400	0.014
Secondary+	0.852	2.344	0.820	0.015
Marital status				
Married	-0.092	0.912	0.305	0.783
widowed	0.400	1.492	0.471	0.205
Divorced/separated*		1.000		
Radio set ownership				
Radio	-0.151	0.860	0.187	0.489
No radio*		1.000		
TV set ownership				
Owns TV	-0.460	0.631	0.201	0.149
No TV*		1.000		
Mobile phone ownership				
Mobile phone	0.226	1.253	0.311	0.363
No mobile phone*		1.000		
Ownership of any means of transport				

Owns any means of transport	0.222	1.249	0.345	0.420
No means of transport*		1.000		
Land ownership				
Owns land	0.681	1.975	0.463	0.004
No land		1.000		
Ownership of domestic animals				
Owns domestic animals	0.375	1.455	0.284	0.055
No domestic animals*		1.000		
Child out-migration status				
Has out-migrated children	0.565	1.759	0.336	0.003
No out-migrated children*		1.000		
Social protection status				
Receives pension	0.503	1.654	0.693	0.230
No pension received*		1.000		
Limb joint health status				
Has joint pain/swelling/stiffness	0.441	1.555	0.308	0.026
No joint pain/swelling/stiffness*		1.000		
Region				
Central*		1.000		
Western	0.981	2.667	0.954	0.006
Eastern	0.641	1.898	0.702	0.083
Northern	0.873	2.393	0.823	0.011
Kampala	0.965	2.625	0.815	0.002

*= Reference category.

Limb joint health status also predicted high aggregate value. Interestingly, older persons who had joint pain, swelling or stiffness were more likely to have high aggregate value than their counterparts without such health challenge (OR=1.6; p=0.026). Lastly, the broad region in which older persons resided also predicted high aggregate value. In comparison with the Central region of Uganda, older persons living in Western, Northern and Kampala regions were more likely to have high aggregate value (OR=2.7; p=0.006, OR=2.4; p=0.011 and OR=2.6; p=0.002 respectively).

Discussion

The disparity in high aggregate value between younger older persons and the oldest persons could be attributed to the better state of physical health and, consequently, to more engagement in socio-economic activities among

the younger older persons. Decline in socio-economic participation as age increases is expected as biological changes that naturally accompany the ageing process translate into gradual decline in physiological functions and abilities. Decline in the proportion of older persons engaged in income-generating activities has also been established in Tanzania (Spitzer, Rwegoshora and Mabeyo 2009). Other studies have shown a decrease in productivity with age (Czaja 2007) and a decline of formal employment as age increases (Barrientos et al. 2003).

Education is likely to be associated with socio-economic well-being and thus account for the greater likelihood of high aggregate value among more educated older persons. This association resonates with results of a study carried out in selected Caribbean countries in which professional workers such as former teachers, nurses and consultants had more income-earning opportunities in old age than their counterparts of lower education (Cloos et al. 2010). Similar results have been found in other studies (Davey 2002; Hayward and Grady 1990). Higher level of education can help older persons develop the skills and confidence they need to adapt and stay independent as they grow older. On the contrary, a low level of education is associated with higher rates of unemployment (WHO 2002).

Variation in older persons' high aggregate value by possession of land may be related to the socio-economic and cultural value of land. Older persons who possessed land may have used it to engage in small business activities which contributed to their high aggregate value. Similarly, land may have presented older persons with the opportunity to interact with land-based flora and fauna and thus gradually acquire ecological knowledge. Conversely, the landless could have had less exposure to organisms in their environment; which limited their internalization of indigenous knowledge. Studies elsewhere have indicated existence of intimate relationships between local understanding of land and indigenous knowledge (Dudgeon and Berkes 2003). Ownership of domestic animals may also have raised older persons' social status which in turn placed them in a better position to play other roles in conflict mediation and leadership of social organizations. Links between household resources and civic involvement have been established in other studies where, for example, access to a car was associated with an increased likelihood of being involved in civic activities (Perren, Arber and Davidson 2004).

The link between child out-migration and high aggregate value could be associated with returns on child out-migration. It is probable that successful child out-migrants remitted some of their earnings which their parents invested in small businesses or spent on basic services, which in

turn raised older persons' socio-economic standing in the community. As UBOS (2008) observes, remittances supplement household income and are an alternative source of finance for other economic activities. This is particularly critical in rural areas where the dominance of subsistence economy limits people's capacity to afford basic necessities. Cash-strapped older persons consequently tend to rely on remittances from successful family out-migrants. Other studies have shown that the out-migration of children can have positive effects on places of origin (Alexis 2006).

Greater likelihood of high aggregate value among persons with limb joint pain, swelling and stiffness is intriguing; considering that limb difficulties would ordinarily be expected to work against socio-economic activity. This interesting result could probably be associated with the tendency for persons with limb difficulties to be more easily accessed at home by their community members than their healthier, more mobile counterparts. Persons with limb difficulties would thus be in a better position to play other domestically-based roles such as child caregiving, conflict resolution, dispensing local medicine and propagating cultural information. The childcare given, cultural information propagated and indigenous knowledge possessed, albeit from an indisposed position, may have contributed to higher scores on the scale of aggregate value. This may confirm the common adage that disability is not inability (WHO 2011).

Variation in high aggregate value by the region of the country in which older persons resided may be linked to regional disparities in older persons' value on indicators such as prevalence of indigenous knowledge, engagement in income-generation and advice on behaviour norms. Greater involvement in economic and social activities could explain the higher proportions in Kampala, Western and Northern regions in comparison with Central and Eastern regions. Regional disparities in socioeconomic activities have similarly been observed in national household surveys (UBOS 2010).

Conclusion and Recommendations

Overall, being a younger older person, having primary and higher levels of education, owning land, having child out-migrants and residing in Western, Northern and Kampala regions predicted high aggregate value. The lower likelihood of high aggregate value among the oldest old and landless older persons calls for the design of programmes that support later-life participation in social and economic activities. This can be achieved through the establishment of a special old age fund that would supplement the current donor-supported Social Assistance Grant for Empowerment (SAGE) and address regional disparities.

In the light of findings which indicate that education significantly determines later-life high aggregate value, the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sports is urged to increase learner access and retention rates in the national education system. This could translate into a higher proportion of educated persons who ultimately attain advanced age and, hence, experience active ageing. The long-term effect of this could be enhanced value in later life.

The greater likelihood of high aggregate value in Kampala, Northern and Western regions may call for the initiation of supportive programmes for older persons' roles in these regions. This may involve enabling older persons to have increased access to land and media assets which themselves have proved to be significant determinants of high aggregate value.

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Igilango Geesi in the Public Sphere: Soyinka's Intervention in Nigerian Political Discourse

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Abstract

The Nigerian writer, Wole Soyinka, is well known as a social critic and public intellectual. In his writings, which cover all genres, he has criticized all forms of misuse of power in Africa generally and his country, Nigeria, specifically. In his work, which he entitles *Intervention*s, Soyinka returns again to the criticism of the misuse of power in Africa and Nigeria. What inspired these writings was the annulment of the elections of 12 June 1993 in Nigeria. Abiola. These writings cover many themes, but what come out in all these texts are Soyinka's critical views of misuse of power in all its ramifications. This article takes a critical view of Soyinka's position. It is pointed out that Soyinka does not objectively come to grips with the Nigerian political situation. There is what we can call slippage and also surplus of meaning due to his *Igilango Geesi*. Besides this, Soyinka does not come to grips with the ideological and power configurations of the Nigerian political landscape. These flaws notwithstanding, Soyinka's writings have added a new dimension to the public sphere of Nigerian political discourse.

Résumé

L'écrivain nigérian, Wole Soyinka, est bien connu comme critique social et intellectuel public. Dans ses écrits qui couvrent tous les genres, il a dénoncé toutes les formes d'abus de pouvoir en Afrique en général, et dans son pays, le Nigeria, en particulier. Dans son œuvre, intitulée Interventions, Soyinka revient de nouveau sur la critique de l'abus de pouvoir en Afrique et au Nigeria. Ce recueil de textes a été inspiré par l'annulation des élections au Nigeria du 12 juin 1993. Abiola. Il traite de beaucoup de thèmes, mais tous les textes mettent surtout en exergue les points de vue critiques de Soyinka sur l'abus de pouvoir dans toutes ses ramifications. Le présent article jette un regard critique sur la position de Soyinka. Il convient de rappeler que cet auteur ne s'attaque pas objectivement à la situation politique nigériane. Ses écrits sont caractérisés par ce que nous pouvons appeler un glissement et aussi un surplus

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de sens en raison de son *Igilango Geesi*. En outre, Soyinka ne s'attaque pas aux configurations idéologiques et au pouvoir dans le paysage politique nigérian. Nonobstant ces manquements, les écrits de Soyinka ont ajouté une nouvelle dimension à la sphère publique du discours politique nigérian.

No serious reflection on Soyinka's work can fail to perceive the social dimension that runs through his work. Indeed, all the genres which his work transverses – novels, poetry, music and plays – reflect a determinate historical consciousness which chronicles the immense suffering and tragedy that have characterized the space of the African continent. The affective and cognitive experience of Soyinka has, therefore, largely been conditioned by the human condition in the continent. Thus, there is a close correspondence between our collective experience and the affective and cognitive experience of Soyinka to the extent that one could claim that his work presents itself as an imagistic transposition of our collective experience. Thus, his work is a textual response to a collective experience exemplifying, in a particularly remarkable way, what Edward Said (1980: 25) calls 'the situation of writing in history'.

In this article, my intention is not to engage in any form of practical criticism of his work (to go over ground that has already been well surveyed), but to highlight his intervention in the public sphere of some of his recent writings which deal explicitly with Nigerian politics (Soyinka 2005).

First let me clarify or map out the genealogy of these words: *Igilango Geesi*, 'public sphere' and 'discourse'. These words are very important in the context of this article.

First, then, *Igilango Geesi* a Yoruba word which connotes big English words. It is used by the Yoruba people when a person uses big English words in his/her utterances or enunciation (Jeyifo 2004a). *Igilango Geesi* contains two words – igilango means big tree and geesi means English. The two words signify that the enunciation either in the form of speaking or in the form of writing is couched in big English. The appellation of *Igilango Geesi* is for a person who has mastery of the English language, and whose command of the language goes beyond the competence or ability of the 'owners' of the language, the English themselves (Jeyifo 2004a: 9). Anybody who is an *Igilango Geesi* uses the English language in such an extremely competent or superlative way that people would recognize that the person has a mastery of the English language. However, there is a sort of puzzle attached to this word. It has both positive and negative colourings. It could be applied to both persons who have an extreme mastery of the language and those who do not but try to show off by using bombastic English in order to impress people that they have the mastery of the language. These sorts of people are the ones who have given the term its bad, negative, meaning. An example

of such bombastic, inflated, verbose English is this: 'those party people are rogues. They are an amalgamated gang of robbers, legalized fools'.[1] This sentence, uttered by an *Igilango Geesi*, is verbose and inflated English, but it is uttered to impress people that s/he has a mastery of the language (Jeyifo 2004a: 11). Yet the people the *Igilango Geesi* want to impress know that s/he does not have the mastery of English claimed (ibid.). The *Igilango Geesi* is a butt of jest and certainly not a model to copy. This person is viewed as a crude form of the real stuff of Igilango Geesi only meant for jest (ibid.).

Since a distinction has been made between a counterfeit '*Igilango Geesi*' and an original one, between one who is a pretender and one who imitates the original stuff. It should be pointed out that it is difficult to make a rigid distinction between the two, because the one is melded with the other. In his discussion of this aspect, Jeyifo points out that the reason for this is because of the 'enigmatic feature of language, not just English, but all languages' (Jeyifo 2004a). Jeyifo contends that those who have the mastery of language have the impulse 'to display that mastery, to play with all the potentialities of language, and more than this, to stretch these potentialities well beyond their limits' (2004: 12). He goes on to say that it is 'this aspect of masterful use of language which, in the case of "*Igilango Geesi*", brought the fake, exhibitionist variety close to the genuine, original stuff, to the point where to some people the two [cannot] be differentiated' (ibid.). He claims that in the specific case of Soyinka, we are in the presence of an original mind in the masterful use of the language. He contends that what is interesting about Soyinka's *Igilango Geesi* is that in some of his writings, he subjects the puzzlement between the original *Igilango Geesi* and the fake one to satire and parody (Jeyifo 2004a).

Jeyifo goes on to say that the impulse to stretch language by the masters of word (or Griots in the traditional setting) is the fact that language, following Martin Heidegger, is the house of being (ibid.). In the house of being, according to Jeyifo, there are many mansions, and language is the means through which one can get access into any of them. The wordsmith can enter any of these mansions or all of the mansions. The mastery of language gives a writer access to areas of Being which are only available to others in a limited form (*ibid.*).

Now, I shall explicate what I mean by 'public sphere'. I want to discuss this term from a Habermasian perspective, though I am conscious of the fact that some African writers and critics are suspicious of Eurocentric theories. Yet Habermas's notion of the public sphere offers a place to begin discussing the notion and then relate it to the intervention of Soyinka in the public sphere of Nigeria (Habermas 1989).

Habermas enunciates his notion of the public sphere in his text, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. According to Habermas, a critical public sphere sprang up in the eighteenth century with the rise of the independent area of society which mediated between the absolutist and the *bourgeois* class (Habermas 1989: 150). Habermas claimed that, though the public/private distinction could be traced to classical Greece, it was during the rise of the *bourgeoisie* that this distinction assumed a new dimension (Habermas 1989). The public sphere, according to Habermas, was clearly distinguished from the state and from private life (ibid.). Thus the public sphere inhabited the space between the realm of public authority on the one hand, and the domain of civil society and the intimate sphere of family relations on the other hand. It was the *bourgeois* public sphere comprising private individuals who had come together to debate among themselves the rules which should inform the conduct of the state and society at large (ibid.). The medium through which this debate was conducted was by the use of reason, articulated by private individuals engaged in a discussion which was open and unconstrained. The *bourgeois* public sphere, according to Habermas, initially came into being in the realm of literature and was subsequently supplanted by discussions that took place in the open terrain dealing directly with political issues (Eagleton 1978: 7). The salons, coffee houses and pubs of Paris and London all served as the centres where issues of general interests were discussed and debated.

An independent press also helped tremendously in intensifying the public discussion that took place in the public sphere (Downing 1990: 50–51). Whereas the early print media only disseminated information of various kinds, in the course of the eighteenth century they became actively engaged in the expression of political views. The print media became an avenue of critical political debates offering an ongoing commentary on, and criticism of, action of the authorities and putting forward alternative ideas in terms of the conduct of state authorities and mobilizing public opinion. Habermas put his point succinctly:

> The bourgeois public sphere (can) be understood as the sphere of private individuals assembled into a public body, which almost immediately laid down claim to … 'intellectual news – papers' for use against the public authority itself. In those newspapers, and in moralistic and critical journals, they debated that public authority on the general rules of social intercourse in their fundamentally privatized yet publicly relevant sphere of labour and commodity exchange (Habermas 1989: 142).

Thus the print media helped the development of ideological politics, nurtured the revolutionary ferment in eighteenth century Europe, as well as helping the self-conscious rise of the *bourgeoisie* (Gouldner 1976).

The *bourgeois* public sphere, according to Habermas, fizzled out in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries due to certain developments in Europe. The interventionist state, which increasingly assumed a wide range of welfare functions, and the growth of massive industrial organizations, which increasingly assumed a semi- public character, destroyed the bourgeois public sphere. Coupled with these two developments was the eclipse of the coffee houses and salons which provided the fora for critical debates of the state as well as civil society. The commercialization of the print media also contributed to the demise of the bourgeois public sphere since these media promoted the interests of certain groups rather than encouraged rational-critical debate, as was the case before. Thus commercialization of the mass media became another form of consumer good. As Habermas remarks:

> When the laws of the market governing the sphere of commodity exchange and of social labour also pervaded the sphere reserved for private people as a public, rational critical debate had a tendency to be replaced by consumption and the web of public communication unraveled into acts of individual reception, however uniform in mode (Habermas 1989: 161).

Habermas claims as well that the commercialization of the mass media gave rise to the technique of 'opinion management'. The mass media moulded the opinion of the public in favour of certain interest groups rather than promoting the public interest. The mass media promoted public authorities and parties, and this resembled, according to Habermas, the publicity given to feudal lords. Thus, there was a sort of refeudalization of the public spheres where private individuals were excluded from public discussions and decision-making processes. The critical principle of the bourgeois public sphere was completely eroded and what obtained was simply opinion management.

Although the ideas and principles embodied in the bourgeois public sphere were completely eroded by certain developments in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Habermas believes that these ideas and principles could still be recreated on a different basis. However, he does not spell this out in detail.

Habermas's notion of the public sphere has been criticized for presenting an inaccurate picture of that space of communication (Calhoun 1992). I cannot go over all of the critiques here but suffice to note that a number of critics have pointed out that participation in the public sphere did not occur on a universal basis, but was restricted to adult male members of the bourgeoisie; in other words, the public sphere was sexist and class-based in nature. Furthermore, doubts are raised concerning the actual extent and effectiveness of the public sphere, and the apparently idealized form in

which the notion is presented. Critics have also pointed out that the public sphere did not further the interest of the working class, but rather promoted the interest of the rising bourgeois class (Frazer 1989; 1995; Curran 1991).

In the foregoing, I have given something of the flavour of Habermas's notion of the public sphere, though my presentation of his idea is sketchy and in the process I have sacrificed much of the detailed analysis and profusion of illustration which characterizes his discussion of the bourgeois public sphere. However, what is of significance in his discussion of the notion is that it is a dialogical space characterized by discussion of issues that are of collective interest.

Now, what about discourse? How are we going to map it? What is implied by the word discourse in this article? Does it indicate that we shall be dealing with a particular discursive practice? Or does it mean that Soyinka's discursive practice or enunciations would be inscribed in a particular discursive practice in the public sphere? Discourse is a widely used term, but it is a vague term. However, it is still an important term in any discussion of modern political theory.

In order to have a proper understanding of how discourse would be put to use in this article, I intend to use it to emphasise the structures of Nigeria's political discourse, in all its ramifications, as well as the manifestations and Soyinka's relationship to this political discursive practice or formation. My own take on discourse analysis has been influenced by Foucault, Bakhtin, Laclau and Mouffe. Although their discourse analyses are in some points different, nonetheless they are ontologically and epistemologically compatible. Their methods in terms of discourse analysis lay emphasis on power in any political system. Although there are other secondary non-discursive realms, in the final analysis these collapse into the discursive realm, as Foucault reminds us. Following Sudipta Kaviraj, discourse means all that is uttered in the actual political world by people – the mere words, ideas and concepts in all their entirety, and the more multifarious mixture of these: speeches, official documents, ideologies, political rhetoric, political programmes (Kaviraj 1997). All these constitute political discourse, and they are what can be called discursive practice or formation in any political system. Politics is a public activity and is about power, and the discursive practice of politics is anchored on words, hence discourse analysis.

The analysis of discourse has been undertaken from many perspectives. The curiosities of these perspectives or traditions go in different directions. The first of these perspectives is the tradition of structuralism of various stripes with its origin in Saussurian structural linguistics (Saussure 1959; Laclau 1993; Howarth 2000). The basic idea behind structuralism is

that language constitutes a system anchored on relational and differential identities. The other vital aspect of structuralism is that language is a form and not a substance – that is, each unit of the system is exclusively defined by the rules of its combinations and substitutions with the other units. In this regard, language is concerned in a relational sense governed by formal rules underlying linguistic activity. Speakers of any language implicitly obey its grammatical rules without being aware of its formal rules and exact restrictions. These rules form a structure, and they restrain and regulate what can be said in any language without the speaker being aware of them. However, there is a Cartesian assertion of the omnipotence of the subject (Laclau 1993). I need not dwell on the difficulties of Saussurian structuralism here, but what I want to point out is that language is a system governed by certain formal rules. Derrida and Foucault critique Saussurian structuralism and go beyond it (Derrida 1976; Foucault 1972; 1973; 1980; 1984). I will briefly comment on their ideas on discourse. For Derrida, there is nothing outside the text. What he means by this is that nothing exists or is independent of the verbal signs of the language system that constitute the text. There is no meaning outside the texts or signs. Since meaning can be generated in multiple ways, because there is no independent objective world as a reference for it, it can never be fixed. The upshot of this is that meaning is inherently unstable, so that it constantly slides away. In other words, it is undecidable. Thus, there is what Derrida calls difference; that is, fixed meaning is constantly deferred and thus meaning is not stable.

For Foucault, discursive formation occurs within a particular historical condition and language develops and generates meanings under a specific material and historical condition. Any discursive formation is therefore conditioned by certain specific rules allowed by the dominant discourse of that historical epoch. The discursive practice regulates not only what can be said under determinate social and cultural conditions but also who can speak, what can be uttered and where. In other words, discourse is a matter of inclusion, exclusion, silence, and of what is utterable and also unutterable.

Another strand of study of discourse is that of Bakhtin (Volosinou) (Bakhtin 1981). In Bakhtin's analysis of discourse, language is a dialogical activity. Bakhtin also insists that language does not have a fixed meaning, but that meaning/sense is generated in a dialogical engagement between speaker and listener, addresser and addressee. Meaning becomes a site of contestation and is constantly wrenched in different directions under different social conditions in different social groups. The various groups negotiate their meanings in relation to the dominant ideology. Meaning is

therefore polysemic to some extent because the structured heterogeneity of the various groups requires a structured heterogeneity of meanings.

This polysemy is never a free floating thing but is confined and shaped, for it always exists against the dominant ideology which tries to shut off alternate meanings, and it weaves the preferred ones around its own ideological interests. Bakhtin analyses this phenomenon through his theory of heteroglossia. Heteroglossia or multi-tongued contains the many voices of the subaltern groups, and monoglossia carries the voice of the dominant group. An earlier version of this theory is that of Valentin N. Volosinov's multi-accentuality which claims that what determines meaning is the social context of its use and not, as structuralism argues, its relationship with other signs in the structure of a sign system (Volosinov 1973). In other words, structuralism cannot explain the social and historical dimension of meaning.

What emerges from the discussion of discourse is that despite the differences in the various analyses of discourse, there is a theme that consistently recurs in these discussions. This allows us to outline one characteristic topographical feature of the various discussions of discourse on which these otherwise disparate discussions stand. Perhaps the most obvious and important trope that recurs in these discussions is the stress on certain internal structures in any form of discourse which constrain what can be uttered and what cannot be uttered. In other words, there are certain internal rules which inform the discourse. 'Discourses', according to Howarth, 'constitute symbolic systems' and they function in any political system shaping the social and political world (Howarth 2000: 2, 5).

In political analysis, we can discern three strands in which the term discourse is used. The first is a broad use of the term which points to the fact that a body of ideas has internal coherence due to their linguistic and structural meaning and their correlation to external political events so that they are grouped together in history. These two strands of conferring coherence to ideas have two dimensions, internal and external The first, the conceptual grid, gives meaning to the political discourse as a whole, and the second, gives meaning (or force, to use Austin's 1975 phrase) to the act. All these aspects have their discursive practices which are tainted by ideology rooted in the concept of hegemony (Laclau 1993), which I will not dwell here since it is beyond the purview of this text.

In the context of Nigerian political discourse, there are four major phases of political discursive practice. We have the nationalist discursive practice. The narrative of this discursive practice is rooted in the nationalist struggle

against colonialist ideology. The second political discursive practice is the post-independence one where the practice is weaved around the three major political groups with attachment to the three major ethnic groups. The next phase is the civil war discourse, and the unity of the country was the focus of this discursive practice; the last phase is the 12 June 1993 presidential election which was won by Chief M.K. Abiola but which was annulled by General Babangida. This last phase of discursive formation or practice is still very much alive today, though it has become extended in some forms and directions.

In recent years, Soyinka has written on Nigerian politics. His essays range over many areas, but the focal trope is the Nigerian political crisis. These essays have been triggered by the events of 12 June 1993 which led to the death of Chief M.K.O. Abiola and the murder of Chief Bola Ige, the then Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice. There are five collected essays. They consist of enunciations – speeches in some gatherings and newspapers articles and also papers written specifically for the collections. They are collectively entitled Interventions. The objective of these Interventions, as Soyinka states, is to raise the tone of public discourse about the problems or predicament of the Nigerian nation. According to him,

> The themes of these series vary literally from the sublime to the ridiculous, from national foibles to the tragic face of nations existence, from citizen derelictions and delinquencies to government criminalities and betrayals of trust, from celebration of life and other enlogies to lamentations. Failed projects. Occasional triumphs (Soyinka 2005a: xiv).

He continues,

> They are narratives of the 'bad, the good, and the ugly' in encounters high and low. National questions, the quest for genuine federalism, the theocratic menace and the quest for parity in resources, and attachment to identity. The series are intended, basically, 'for the Records', handy reference pamphlets of what has been said in the past. Some will be relevant only to that very moment and place of delivery, and thus of value only as a piece of recollection and invitation to reflection…. While one cannot pretend that they will not reopen past debates – since this is totally beyond my polemicist's control – I would like to emphasise that the initiating purpose of the series is certainly not, in itself, to resurrect those debates. Indeed, the very opposite is the case. They are intended to act as triggers of memory…. (ibid.).

The series, according to Soyinka, may open up 'a new pamphletteering era, a resurrection of the "Onitsha Market literature" this time devoted essentially to current affairs' (ibid.).

The ideal to which Soyinka aspires for the series is that they should be affordable so that anybody can purchase any of the monographs in the series. In other words, he wants the monograph to reach as many people as possible.

One consistent thread runs through all these enunciations or tergiversations – Soyinka's abiding interest in justice. The first text in the series is an oration he delivered at the burial ceremony of Chief Bola Ige, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of the Nigerian Federation who was murdered by unknown people. He was Soyinka's friend. Soyinka's oration alludes to the fact that political assassinations have become an established norm of the Nigerian political terrain perpetrated by people who are immune to the politics of dialogue. The next enunciation is still on Chief Bola Ige where Soyinka laments the fact that the perpetrators of this crime are still free and that justice has not been done. In the next writing, Soyinka comments on electoral frauds that have become a normal phenomenon in Nigeria's political history. In these writings, Soyinka brings to the fore Nigerian national character whose psyche has been bruised. The negativities of this bruised psyche are revealed, according to him,

> In an ethical abandonment that trickles down from leadership, leading to the decay of social values and responsibility, and an embrace of the predatory ethic (Soyinka 2005a: 61).

He goes on to say,

> Nigeria … is yet an inchoate entity whose "national character" is at a critical stage of formation, but with a national psyche already ravaged from civil war, religious and ethnic strife and a pattern of conduct that panders to evil, encourages the cult of impunity and glorifies even potential criminality. It is a failure, at critical times, of the national character that bruises the collective psyche and may lead to an irreplaceable psychotic condition, manifesting itself in all acts - social anomie, a breakdown of law, norm and discipline (ibid.).

In his discussion of the constitution entitled, 'We, the people……!' Soyinka contends that the 'fundamental responsibility of a constitution is to ensure justice' (Soyinka 2005a: 49). He goes on to say that 'governance may sometimes appear to be the purpose of constitution making but, governance is only the process towards an end. And if the end of governance itself is not to establish social justice, then what on earth is its end?' (ibid.). He claims further that 'to deny that justice is one unavoidable answer to that question is to encourage every social unit to seek his or her own justice through whatever means, and that guarantees only one end: a state of anomie' (ibid.). Soyinka believes that any constitution should enthrone

social justice – 'justice as an ethical, cultural, political and economic given in society' (Soyinka 2005a: 50). According to him, 'Justice … is a project that cannot be made dependant on accident of circumstance, or a combination of circumstances that defines its elected custodian' (Soyinka 2005a: 51). He claims that no political system can be deemed to be perfect in all ramifications but the constitution must be structured in such a way that it anticipates all kinds of possibilities, 'and thus ensure that it circumscribes the ability of an unfortunate choice to inflict irreparable damages on society as a whole, or on its individual members' (Soyinka 2005a: 52).

He contends that the constitution of any nation should be fashioned in such a way that the tenure of representatives could be terminated before its allotted time if they constitute an 'immediate menace of such dimensions that 'we the people' are imperiled by the prospect of such an individual lasting his or her full incumbency' (Soyinka 2005a: 55–56). Soyinka believes that some moments may arise 'when extraordinary measures must be taken, and urgently, to protect a people from an immediate peril that stems from the zone of power' (Soyinka 2005a: 56). He says that 'this possibility must be recognized and addressed as an act of self defense, inseparable from the very being of any constitution and thus, of national will' (ibid.). In a continent that is coup-prone, a radical approach must be adopted to bring about 'the collapse of the state whenever unconstitutional means are used to terminate the tenure of an elected government that is whenever a new order is forced upon the people' (Soyinka 2005a: 61).

I cannot dwell on all the issues that Soyinka touches in this particular enunciation. However, of interest is his discourse on democracy and fundamental human rights. He claims that human rights are conferred on human beings because we are on a higher pedestal than animals and as such are a possessor of certain fundamental rights which are innate to us as human beings (ibid.). Soyinka claims that certain notions are presented as being antagonistic to fundamental human rights such as 'people's rights', though the existence of such rights cannot be disputed. However, a problem arises if such rights are touted as oppositional to individual human rights by ideologues of various ideological persuasions. Soyinka's discussion of democracy is anchored on the principle of choice. He believes that choice is a sort of consensus since it has to be exercised by many who are equal in dignity. Choice is also a sort of agreement as long as such agreement is made in complete freedom. An insertion in the provision of the constitution for alteration clearly demonstrates that the constitution is a living document, and that succeeding generations have their voices inscribed in it at the moment of its adoption. In other words, it is a social contract which is made

by all generations – past, present and future. It is an intergenerational pact. This pact if consented to by all represents our general will. Nevertheless, if this pact has not been consented to by the people or their representatives, then the people are relegated to 'the status of slaves, of mere puppets dancing to the will of a self-elect, a minority who have set the boundaries of choice' (Soyinka 2005b). However, our willingness to surrender some portion of our territory of choice does not diminish us.

The constitution, according to Soyinka, is an instrument of a people's dignity. If people's dignity is abridged, the innate response of the people is to reclaim their dignity back through resistance. Historical facts are there to corroborate this.

In the next text, *The Deceptive Silence of Stolen Voices*, Soyinka dwells on the 12 June 1993 presidential elections in Nigeria (Soyinka 2005b). He discusses the Babangida's charade called transition to democracy and the presidential elections which Babangida annulled. Soyinka's discussion gives us a vivid account of events before and after the 12 June 1993 presidential elections. I cannot dwell much on this, but suffice to say that 12 June remains a watershed in the political history of Nigeria. The significance and ripples of that historic event remain with us until today. Though the resistance of the people was crushed, as Soyinka rightly mentions, 'the spirit of protest was never killed because the people had recovered their voice' (Soyinka 2005c).

Soyinka's discussion of the degeneration of the university system in Nigeria touches on many issues (Soyinka 2005c: 32). He discusses the university system within the context of cultism which is a violent phenomenon on many university campuses. Soyinka believes that this is a reflection of the violence in the larger Nigerian society:

> In the degeneration of campus culture, the public is reaping the rewards of its own degenerate existence: the dishonesty, the political perfidities, the violence of military coup, the programs that led to the Civil War, the Civil War itself and its conduct, the marginalisation of millions both as individuals and as entities (Soyinka 2005c).

He goes on to say that

> Campus violence echoes the epidemic assassination that has turned the nation psychotic with terror, the religious fundamentalist insanities that laid siege even to the nation's capital, Abuja, oversaw resurgent massacres of innocent religious groups, a continuance of the politically inspired anomie that has resulted in ecumenical cities like Jos and Kaduna reduced to sacrificial altars of religious sectarianism….Campus violence is a reflection of the state implicated killings at Odi, the military massacres at Zaki Biam. The chickens have come

> home to roost, and the destruction of the collegiate life, is an echo of our failures, you the larger society with all the resources and the responsibilities of leadership (ibid.).

The text on 'Cults, Counter Culture and the Perils of Ignorance' deepens the discussion on campus violence (Soyinka 2005c). In this text, Soyinka makes a subtle distinction between the earlier confraternity which he co-founded and the later violent ones which have turned the various campuses into a universe of violence. He claims that the former was a radical movement intent on changing certain norms of the society, while the latter ones descended into barbarism. He claims that some people within the university have surrendered to this evil which is destroying the system. He contends that in doing this, people have abandoned ethical values, and this reflects the mood of the society in general.

The next intervention is entitled *In a Lighter Vein*. In this text, Soyinka discusses various topics ranging from the medical profession to globalization, Nelson Mandela and Adunni (Suzanne) Wenger, an Austrian woman artist who naturalized as a Nigerian (Yoruba). Soyinka brings out the humanism in Mandela, whom he claims symbolizes the culture of dialogue (Soyinka 2005d). The last intervention is entitled *Of Power*. In this last work, Soyinka discusses power structures within the African context. In this wide-ranging work, he claims that power has always remained a dominant trope in the African context since the colonial period, and has remained an important theme in post-colonial African states. Soyinka has this to say on power:

> The theme of power is one that remains all too pertinent to a continent, which, having freed itself from colonial tyranny, still finds itself obliged to contend with a renewed colonization, this time from within. Inevitably, its occupants, confronted with the bane of repetition, must take time off to ponder on the entire phenomenon of power, what it is that invests the human psyche with the need to dominate others, irrespective of race, state of development or environment, and with a continuing blindness to the lessons of history. … What is it about power, one continues to question, and its antithesis, Freedom, that locks both in such a seemingly unending struggle, making that struggle, in my estimation, a prime candidate for the motive force of history? (Soyinka 2005e :3–4).

This quotation encapsulates his entire discussion on power. What could be pointed out in his discussion of power is that the exercise of power in its banal or evil form stifles its victims and robs them of their freedom. Power, in all its banal manifestations, is an antithesis to freedom, free-will, free agency, and self-destination. The absence of these can be visited upon the whole community – collectively or individually. Soyinka has always written

on the theme of power in the various *genres* of his works, and he returns to it again in this work.

Soyinka's work embraces in its scope the African or Nigerian condition in its full ramifications – historical, social, political, moral and even metaphysical. All his work is predicated upon what he perceives as the function of the artists in their society:

> The artist has always functioned in African society (as one who) records the mores and experiences of his society and…. the voice of vision in his own time. It is time for the artists to respond to this essence of himself (Soyinka 1976: 70).

From his earlier satirical plays to the later ones, Soyinka has always been concerned with the problems of our collective existence and has remained outspoken, clear and consistent in his condemnation of evil in the continent. He has written extensively about the pervasive nature of evil as exemplified in his texts – *The Man Died* (Soyinka 1972), *A Shuttle in the Crypt* (Soyinka 1971), *Season of Anomy* (Soyinka 1973), *Madman and Specialists* (Soyinka 1971) and *A Play of Giants* (Soyinka 1984). These texts, despite their respective individual qualities, are preoccupied with the problem of evil in our continent as exemplified by the mindless authorities of unrepresentative governments. Soyinka has always been aware of man's capacity for evil, and it is this awareness that evokes, for the artist, the sense of 'the past and future evidence of the unchanging nature of humanity which sets in motion the worst moments of pessimism' (Soyinka 1971). Another dimension of his social awareness is the problem of social justice in the continent. In his commitment to the idea of a well-ordered society, Soyinka has always spoken against injustice in the African polity and the political indirection and misdirection which this has engendered.

In his book, *The Open Sore of a Continent*, Soyinka returns to the same issue of social justice (Soyinka 1995). I shall not dwell extensively on the book but suffice it to note that he believes that a nation must be predicated on the ideal of social justice. A nation, according to him, need not be a homogeneous ethnic unit, in the Herderian sense, before assuming the status of a nation but could be constituted by different ethnic units, provided that a sense of justice, to use Rawls' phrase, animates the political unit. Soyinka's social concern has the quality of an abiding, passionate commitment to the ideal of social justice. This has informed all his writings to date as well as his intervention in the public sphere. Witness what he says on this:

> I accept that entity, Nigeria, as a space into which I happen to have been born, and therefore a space within which I am bound to collaborate with fellow

> occupants in the pursuit of justice and ethical life, to establish a guaranteed access for all to the resources it produces, and to thwart every tendency in any group to act against that determined common denominator of a national existence (Soyinka 1996: 82).

Although this bears repetition, nonetheless it needs to be stressed that Soyinka has always been concerned with the idea of social justice and has always written and commented on the direction of our collective existence based on this ideal. Thus, he has forced this issue onto our collective consciousness in the public sphere.

These five texts range over many issues: the issues of power, constitution, the evil perpetrated by people in power, and the like. But the common thread that binds all these issues together is the notion of social justice. Again and again, Soyinka returns to this issue of justice. He believes that justice should animate any social community. Soyinka sees himself as a radical public intellectual who should be the conscience of the society. In his interesting book on intellectuals, Edward Said contends that the intellectual should be an agent of independent social criticism in society (Said 1994). An interpretation of Said's position on this is that the job of the intellectual is to combat dogma and delimit a space that does not answer to power. What Said's perspective points up is that the intellectual should intervene in the public sphere enunciating issues of public conscience, injustice and the misuse of power. Said does not agree with the traditional conservative notion of the intellectual as avatar of taste, standing aloof from the public because of his or her superior knowledge and greater cultural capital. On the contrary, Said conceives the independent intellectual as the highest public form, ready to articulate truths and positions which disrupt convention and intimidate power. Soyinka would recognize his reflection in Said's description of the public intellectual. Soyinka has been a scourge of those who misuse power to suppress the people. He has played a vital role in the public sphere by raising issues that have to do with the health of the community. He remains 'incorrigibly independent, answering to no one', an attribute which Russell Jacoby identified as the *sine qua non* of the intellectual (Jacoby 1987). Soyinka does not believe that intellectual labour can be divorced from politics. His oeuvre attests to this fact. His work has always been an engagement with the predicament that confronts his society.

Soyinka's recent intervention in the Nigerian public sphere has again confirmed him as the conscience of the society. He has raised some pertinent questions about the Nigerian project. These texts have veered from purely literary work to a more nuanced political enunciation. However, they do not strike us as providing a concrete analysis of the Nigerian situation.

Soyinka's interventions are free-floating without any footing in any of the four phases of the Nigerian discursive practices that I have identified. There is no reference to any body of ideas in the four phases of Nigerian political discourse except for an occasional fleeting reference to them. This reference is just alluded to without a solid analysis of the books he has referred to. In other words, certain bodies of ideas are ignored which would have deepened his analysis of the Nigerian situation he is dealing with. What this means is that Soyinka's texts stand as a lone voice, but the notion of text entails consideration of intertextuality. To use Julia Kristeva's words, 'text is a permutation of texts, an intertextuality in the space of a given text' (quoted in Allen 2000: 35). A text should be inscribed within other texts – it should be an intertext that refers to other texts within the discursive practice. Soyinka's texts are free-floating works without any footing in any of the discursive practice of Nigerian politics.

There is also the issue of slippage in these texts. His discussions of the issues are not clear enough to make one know where he stands. In other words, there are conceptual imprecision and analytical inconsistencies. This problem arises because Soyinka's narratives in these texts are over-poeticized to the extent that it is impossible to get the main message he is conveying to the reader. To put it in another way, the over-poeticized nature of the discourse blurs the ideas that the texts convey. The language or style in these texts draws 'attention to itself as énoncé or to its very process of enunciation' (Jeyifo 2004b). This also makes the texts obscure, and it difficult to extract a serviceable form of politics from them. Moreover, the style in these texts is very esoteric, and portrays an abstract, polysyllabic complicated language which is beyond the grasp of most readers to whom the texts are primarily addressed. In other words, the charge of making a fetish of abstract criticism could be levelled against Soyinka. There is, therefore, what one could call over-surplus meanings in these texts due to his igilango geesi.[2]

Moreover, Soyinka does not fully come to grips with the concrete issues of the Nigerian crisis. There is no systematic analysis of the issues involved in the Nigerian political crisis. The issues are discussed in a perfunctory way, and he does not think that his elusiveness on these issues could be a source of dissatisfaction on the part of some of the readers of these texts. Soyinka assumes that the readers of his texts would have the same viewpoint as his own. Soyinka does not analyse the various social forces in the Nigerian political landscape. The hegemonic social group which has held the reins of power in Nigeria is not fully analysed. What we have in the narratives of these texts are not close consideration of the crises which have engulfed Nigeria.3 In other words, his analysis of the Nigerian crisis rests on an

insufficient historical-material basis. Put differently, Soyinka does not pay sufficient attention to the concrete framework of events. '[H]is refusal of a clear sociological or ideological conception of the forces present in the Nigerian (crises) leaves one with the impression of insubstantiality' (Irele 1981: 205). This is clearly exemplified in his treatment of power structures in Nigeria, which is perfunctory. Power is an important concept in politics as it is everywhere in any political system. Any signifying practice involving relations of power, as Foucault reminds us, is 'a productive network which runs through the whole social body' (Foucault 1980: 109).

There is no form of social imaginary or 'narratives for a new beginning' in these texts. Or, to put it differently, a vision of an enriched social order (Taylor 2000). The texts do not give us any affirmative humane vision of social order. Besides this, his over-poeticized discursive strategy is 'in great tension with the theorist of radical democratic politics' since this discursive strategy does not give us any conception of a truly democratic polis (Jeyifo 2004b: 218).

Soyinka's attachment to the individuals he discusses in these texts is not based on any ideological ground, rather it is mostly a personalized, private one. Soyinka swings between the two ideological spectrums without any footing in either. If he has any ideological attachment, it seems this could be called radical romantic libertarianism which he has clothed in an *Ogun* form – the Yoruba god of iron. *Ogun* embodies both good and evil, creativity and destruction, and it is hard to see how this image of *Ogun* could be reconciled with his radical humanist politics.

To have pointed out these flaws in Soyinka's interventions is to acknowledge his importance as a radical public intellectual and as the conscience of the Nigerian nation. In the darkest moments of Nigerian history, Soyinka has stood up as a shining example whose activism bolsters the flagging spirit of the people. He has never 'abandoned his consuming need to expose and debunk the reactionary, selfserving terror and violence of corrupt tyrannical despots' (Jeyifo 2004b: 283). Soyinka's whole oeuvre stands out, according to Abiola Irele, 'as the most comprehensive exploration of the contemporary African situation and draws its overall meaning from the sustained application of a sensitive intelligence upon the African experience' (Irele 1981: 201). Soyinka is a strong poet who gives us a 'picture' of a new 'world' in an unfamiliar vocabulary (Bloom 1973; Rorty 1989). In this regard, he favours a rhetorical and aesthetically discursive strategy to push his ideas rather than the normal discursive strategy deployed by social theorists. His texts address issues about Nigeria's collective experience. He has pushed these issues for discussion in the Nigerian public sphere. He does not engage

these issues in a solipsist, privatized monological discourse, though he could be charged of this because of the over-literariness of his text, but, to use the Bakhtian phrase, in a dialogical way; in other words, his texts invite us into a conversation about Nigeria's predicament. If therefore Soyinka is a creator of the conversation of disquietude in our public sphere, this is as a means of arousing our collective sensibility to the paradise of misery in Nigeria. To the extent that this is the case, he is, to use a Rortyan phrase, an ironist and a strong-poet, in the sense that he opens up an edifying discourse in the Nigerian public sphere (Rorty 1989).

The difficulty that is encountered in these and his other texts in all the genres is because Soyinka is an avant-garde, modernist writer. He is like all modernist writers whose texts are always difficult to read because as T.S. Eliot puts it, 'poets in [this present civilization], as it exists at present, must be difficult. [This present civilization] comprehends great variety and complexity, and this variety and complexity, playing upon a refined sensibility, must produce various and complex results' (quoted in Dieperveen 2003: xi). The present situation in Africa, especially in Nigeria, has thrown up complex problems, and Soyinka's style of writing reflects this complexity. Modernist writers, as Dieperveen has put it, are difficult because 'difficulty [has] a social function as a cultural gatekeeper' (2003: xv). This social function reveals to us 'how we got where we are today and where that "where we are" actually is' (ibid.).

Soyinka's works also reflect the tensions and confusions pervading Africa, especially Nigeria. In any age literary and artistic figures have always carried the burden of articulating these problematic issues of their societies. This is what Soyinka has done for his society. Hacker has put this succinctly, though in another context which nevertheless applies to Soyinka:

> The lives of literary and artistic figures … are held to be of deeper significance than the mere fascination of their biography. Their travails and their intellectual and spiritual strivings are … sensed to incorporate and to represent the deepest tensions and conflicts within the culture of their times (Hacker quoted in Kanterian 2007: 204).

This is the case with Soyinka. The style of his writing springs from these tensions and conflicts which are expressed in a heightened form. We find this in some important writers and thinkers such as Heidegger, Benjamin, Adorno, James Joyce, Marcel Proust or Andre Gide (Kanteran 2007: 202). Besides, Soyinka traverses two traditions: Yoruba tradition and Western tradition (Irele 1981; Appiah 1992). Soyinka's consciousness in the philosophical sense has been shaped by his Yoruba culture; his mind has been moulded by his culture, and his thinking reflects this. But this thinking

has to be expressed in another linguistic framework, which is English. These two cultural backgrounds make his works interesting, as well as extremely difficult for readers to comprehend and interpret.

Let me conclude by saying that Soyinka has enriched and enlarged the Nigerian as well as the African public sphere through the ideas embedded in his texts. He has contributed to the formation of a new mood as well as a new distinctive constellation of ideas. This constellation of ideas has put ethical, political and economic issues on agenda of the Nigerian public sphere, forcing us to reflect on Nigeria's collective existence.[4]

Notes

1. This sentence is from an old man who resided in Ijebu-Jesha, Osun State, Nigeria, who liked to impress people with verbose English.
2. See Interventions I, II , III, IV and V for this point.
3. 12 June 1993 was not fully discussed from an ideological point of view by Soyinka.
4. This paper is dedicated to Professor Wole Soyinka on his eightieth birthday. I wish to thank the anonymous reader for comments and suggestions which have greatly improved the article.

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Political Uncertainty and its Impact on Social Service Delivery in Uganda

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Abstract

A growing body of scholarship has underscored the role of elite bargains and compromises in fostering or obstructing socio-economic transformation. This has been conceptualized in terms of *political settlement* – a combination of power and institutions that underpins an established socio-political order. The idea of political settlement, associated with the works of Douglas North (and his collaborators), and especially Mushtaq Khan, has gained currency as a key explanatory variable in accounting for the failure of African states to provide quality public goods and services. In the case of Uganda, some scholars have suggested that the country's current *political settlement* has failed to provide the basis for achieving structural transformation. This article questions the conceptual validity of political settlement, suggesting instead that a shift of the conceptual aperture reveals deep *political uncertainty* in Uganda, a key reason why the government of President Museveni and the state apparatus it presides over cannot undertake fundamental transformation. The article argues that political uncertainty in Uganda is manifest in at least four contentious issues: the constitution, electoral disagreements, the ambiguous role of the military and the unsettled question of presidential succession. In an environment of uncertainty, systematic and long-term planning is subordinated to short-term and ad hoc manoeuvres, thus obstructing the building of a firm foundation for structural transformation.

Résumé

Un nombre croissant de recherches a mis en évidence le rôle des négociations et des compromis des élites dans la promotion de la transformation socio-économique et l'entrave à celle-ci. Cela a été conceptualisé sous le terme *règlement politique*, une combinaison de pouvoirs et d'institutions qui sous-tend un ordre socio-politique établi. L'idée de règlement politique, associée aux

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travaux de Douglas North (et ses collaborateurs), et surtout Mushtaq Khan, s'est répandue comme une variable-clé explicative pour justifier l'échec des Etats africains à fournir des biens et des services publics de qualité. Dans le cas de l'Ouganda, certains chercheurs ont suggéré que le règlement politique actuel du pays n'a pas réussi à jeter les bases de la réalisation de la transformation structurelle. Cet article remet en question la validité conceptuelle du règlement politique, suggérant plutôt qu'un changement de l'ouverture conceptuelle révèle une profonde *incertitude politique*, un facteur-clé pour expliquer pourquoi le gouvernement du président Museveni et l'appareil d'Etat qu'il préside ne peuvent pas entreprendre une transformation fondamentale. L'article soutient que l'incertitude politique en Ouganda est manifeste dans au moins quatre questions non encore résolues : la constitution, le désaccord sur les élections, le rôle ambigu de l'armée et la question en suspens de la succession présidentielle. Dans un contexte d'incertitude politique, la planification systématique et à long terme a été subordonnée aux manœuvres à court terme et ad-hoc, entravant ainsi la construction d'une base solide pour la transformation structurelle.

Introduction

A growing body of scholarship underscores the role of elite negotiations, bargains and compromises in facilitating or obstructing socio-economic development (Golooba-Mutebi and Hickey 2013); Khan 2010; Lindemann 2010; North, Wallis and Weingast 2009; Bates 2008). The underlying assumption is that both political and economic elite players are central to processes of socio-economic transformation. So to understand growth and development trends, we need to pay attention to underlying power distribution and configurations. Accordingly, the concept *political settlement* has gained currency in debates on institutions and development. It is used to depict elite bargains and compromises, and the extent to which powerful individuals and groups in society adhere to a minimum set of rules. By agreeing to some minimum rules, elites and interest groups engender an enduring settlement which is reproduced over time unless interrupted by internal contradictions or external shocks. At its core, therefore, a political settlement produces a social order that is reproducible and characterized by stability, viability and predictability.

This article conceptualizes *political settlement* as an established and relatively stable socio-political order. Such an order insures society against social violence and political uncertainty, but also provides the requisite enabling environment for sustained growth and long-term socio-economic transformation. A key factor in attaining a political settlement is when political and economic elites arrive at a minimum consensus on the key political questions and collectively invest in a system underpinned by laws, rules and procedures – that is,

institutions. Khan underscores economic viability as equally critical for a political settlement in the sense that basic economic activities should be at least reproducible, if not growing (2010: 21).

Scholarly interest in political settlements has grown following Khan's theorization and the appearance, in 2009, of an influential work by economic historian Douglas North and his collaborators, John Wallis and Barry Weingast. Recently, African scholars working with foreign collaborators on a project at the University of Manchester have made a case for understanding the relationship between existing political settlements and inclusive development (Golooba-Mutebi and Hickey 2013; Hickey et al. 2014; Oduro, Awal and Ashon 2014). In Uganda's political settlement, according to Golooba-Mutebi and Hickey (2013), there are at least four key characteristics: deepening levels of competitive clientelism, highly personalized forms of public bureaucracy, collusive state–business relations, and a ruling coalition that is (expensively) inclusive at the lower levels while becoming narrower and more nepotistic at the pinnacle. Owing to these characteristics, the two scholars further argue, the Ugandan political settlement has failed to provide the basis for structural transformation and provision of high quality public services. Beyond modest economic growth, macroeconomic stability and what Golooba-Mutebi and Hickey (2013) call 'pockets of bureaucratic excellence', Uganda's political settlement has not delivered on the substantive needs of the country: provision of critical public goods and services, and overall structural transformation (see also Kjaer and Katusiimeh 2012).

The broad research question for this article is framed as follows: *how does the interplay between power and institutions impact on the quality of government and provision of public goods and services?* This article contributes to the debate on understanding how the underlying power dynamics in Uganda impact on social service delivery. The article takes up the concept of political settlement and assesses its applicability and analytical value to the Ugandan case. Is there a political settlement in Uganda? If yes, why is it not conducive to structural transformation and the provision of high quality public goods and services? Or could it be that if we adjust the conceptual aperture, we find no political settlement, but uncertainty, precisely the Ugandan state's inability to provide high quality public services? This article suggests that the characteristics that Golooba-Mutebi and Hickey allude to are features of political *uncertainty* and not *settlement*.

The Argument

It is the contention of this article that instead of a clientelist political settlement, Uganda is mired in significant *political uncertainty*, manifested

in at least four key contentious issues: contention over the constitution, disagreement over elections, the ambiguous role of the military and the unsettled question of presidential succession. The latter came to the fore again with the fallout between President Museveni and his former Prime Minister, Amama Mbabazi, long believed to be the heir apparent. I argue that *political uncertainty* has undermined long-term planning, obstructed rationalization of resource allocation and, accordingly, negatively affected the efficient provision of critical public goods and services. Because of an uncertain political environment, the ruling group works with a short-time horizon as it is urgently concerned with fending off challenges to its power. The exigencies of political survival in an uncertain political environment have taken precedence over long-term planning and investing in building quality governance systems. In the context of high political uncertainty, the subordination of systematic and long-term planning to short-term and ad hoc manoeuvres has obstructed building the fundamentals for structural transformation.

Conceptual Contours of Political Settlement and Political Uncertainty

Political Settlement

Political settlement refers to 'the "social order" based on political compromises between powerful groups in society that sets the context for institutions and other policies' (Khan 2010: 4). That is, institutions and policies undergirding a political system are a result of power bargains between different sets of actors, thus to fully grasp a political settlement requires analysis of the power structure. Formal institutions, which are the laid down rules and procedures or the rules of the game (North 1990), represent the nature of actual power distribution (Moe 2005). Formal rules are underpinned by informal norms and actual power, so they work or fail depending on unwritten codes, but also on the underlying power structure. This has been an important intervention of the 'new institutionalist' literature (Hall and Taylor 1996), which led to more appreciation that institutions are sticky and enduring devices that shape long-term development (North 1981; 1990; Acemoglu and Robinson 2012; Acemoglu, Johnson and Robinson 2001; 2005; Haber, Razo and Maurer 2003).

Khan (2010: 20) proposed what he calls a more precise definition of political settlement as '*a combination of power and institutions that is mutually compatible and also sustainable in terms of economic and political viability*' (original italics). Power and institutions have to be both compatible and sustainable because

a) if not compatible, powerful players who do not get their due will want to change the existing institutional setup, and b) if not economically viable, then reproducing the system is not possible. But power and institutions, the two pillars of Khan's definition, are notoriously difficult to measure. To define political settlement in terms of compatibility between power and institutions requires a rigorous and sophisticated conceptual measurement. One way around this is to define political settlement in terms of the actors. Thus I define political settlement as *a viable and stable social-political order based on minimum and broad elite consensus*. This definition retains one aspect of Khan's definition – viability – but also emphasizes minimum political consensus, with elites believing that through mobilisation and organisation they can ascend to political power and gain access to national (economic) opportunities.

Central to political settlement is the attainment of minimum inter/intra-elite consensus based on either consultative processes or hegemonic imposition. When elite players and interest groups settle for a specific politico-economic system, a relatively enduring social-political order is created until punctured by external shocks or internal contradictions. Broad consensus on democratic principles, for example, entails acceptable rules of engagement for all political actors, making democracy the 'only game in town' (Przeworski 1991). When this happens, democratic consolidation takes shape and the principle of democratic governance becomes sacrosanct. Under a genuinely democratic political order, the obtaining institutional landscape makes it possible for actors to engage in predictable and repeated interactions. For example, actors who lose elections will plan to have another try at the next cycle because of the predictability that another contest will take place within a strictly defined time-frame.

As an African case-study, since 1992 Ghana has evolved 'a broad elite consensus to seek power only through competitive democratic multi-party elections' (Oduro, Awal and Ashon 2014: 6), thus no major political player has espoused the use of any other method to attain power and no significant political group has seriously attempted to overthrow the democratic regime. Ghana's political settlement has not aided fundamental structural economic transformation of the country's economy as imperatives of stiff competition to retain power between the two main political parties tends to foster short-term calculations at the expense of developing productive sectors (Whitfield 2011a; 2011b). But the further deepening of democracy and expansion of the political space holds the potential for incentivizing focus on long-term and sustainable structural transformation (Oduro, Awal and Ashon 2014).

In the modern world, North et al. (2009) identified at least two forms of social orders or political settlements. First, the natural state order, where

elites agree to respect each other's privileges including property rights and access to resources. These elites may be specialists in violence (Bates 2008), or warlords. They realize that fighting each other is perilous, thus they create credible commitments and engage in mutually rewarding cooperation. If they fight, they all lose; if they cooperate, they extract and all benefit. The incentive to cooperate derives from the consensus to form organizations for rent extraction, but also to restrict access and provide protection against existential threats from the masses (Bates 2010; Slater 2010). Second, the *open access order*, where the state approximates the Weberian ideal: the legal-rational and bureaucratic model. This compares with Khan's (2010) capitalist political settlements. At its core, an *open access* order has three key features: the consolidated organization of the military and police forces is subject to the control of the political system; the political system must be constrained by a set of institutions and incentives; and for a political faction or party to remain in power, it must enjoy the support of economic and social interests (North et al. 2009: 22). Two conditions are both necessary and sufficient for establishing and maintaining order. First, the basic, existing economic activities should be reproducible or growing, notwithstanding the varying expectations of powerful groups (Khan 2010: 21). Second, there has to be substantial political viability to keep dissent and conflict at a minimum and not unravel the core institutional and political arrangements.

Political Uncertainty

By contrast, political uncertainty denotes several aspects of a system that run counter to the basic outlines of a political settlement discussed above. Let me start with what political uncertainty is not, then turn to what it is or can be. First, *political uncertainty* is not necessarily a direct opposite of s*ettlement*. It is possible to have political uncertainty for a limited period of time within an existing *political settlement*. This is *ephemeral uncertainty,* which can happen in established democracies when faced with economic downturns, for example in the US in 2008 and in the Euro-zone in recent years. It can also happen during and after natural calamities. So, political uncertainty is not necessarily the converse of political settlement although a sustained and long period of the former can negatively impact on, and undo, the latter.

Second, political uncertainty is not about the unpredictability of outcomes because uncertainty can be an integral part of a viable system in the sense that outcomes are not easily predictable yet the processes are known. This is *embedded uncertainty* or procedural/institutionalized uncertainty (Shedler 2013; Przeworski 1991). In democratic competition, for example, rules of engagement are clear and certain but outcomes remain

considerably uncertain. Rules and procedures must be explicitly clear and known to all players, but a credible and acceptable outcome must be relatively unpredictable and uncertain.

By political uncertainty I mean *the absence of minimum and broad elite consensus on the overall framework for political engagement and economic management*. Political scientists have often conceptualized uncertainty in game-theoretic terms, as referring to information asymmetry that makes it difficult for actors to predict interactions and therefore the need for institutions. For example, Lupu and Riedl (2012: 1344) define uncertainty as the 'imprecision with which actors are able to predict future interactions'. This definition conceptualizes uncertainty in terms of the future. But an unpredictable future logically starts with an uncertain present. The future can be unpredictable precisely because the present is uncertain, thus uncertainty can be about both the present and future.

Under political uncertainty, the key elite players have fundamental disagreements over the type of government, the procedure through which political leaders assume office and the overarching economic policy framework/approach for the country. Thus, the ruling elites govern with a legitimacy deficit. To compensate for this, they resort to short-term manoeuvres, including dispensing patronage and winning over influential elite power brokers to mitigate the dangers posed by challengers from within or without. Due to the absence of minimum elite consensus, and owing to exigencies of immediate political survival, the ruling group has no incentive to invest in securing legitimacy through long-term planning and substantive performance. The temptation rather is to buy support, directly through material handouts and indirectly by allowing avenues for elite corruption and rent-seeking.

Post-independent African political systems have generally been associated with uncertainty, leading to cycles of hope and disappointment (Young 2012). The embrace of electoral politics during the 'third wave' of democratization (Huntington 1991) at once contributed to institutionalizing state power but also created uncertainty due to the relative newness of electoral politics, weak party systems and fiscal incapacity (Bleck and van de Walle 201; Bates 2008). However, in the last two decades, there has been a growing trend of institutionalizing power, especially with respect to how incumbent presidents have left power (Posner and Young 2007), leading to significant shifts in the existing political systems. But unlike contemporary Asia and medieval/early-modern Europe where regimes were held together for a long time by strong leviathans, African states have been mostly rather weak and susceptible to challenges from politically excluded groups, making minimum elite consensus paramount.

Is there a Political Settlement in Uganda Today?

The Problem of Concept Stretching

Following the work of Khan (2010; 2005), and building on the new institutionalist literature, especially the *rational choice* variant, scholars of political economy in the Global South have used the idea of political settlement to explain the consequences of the interplay between politics, power and institutions. In the case of Uganda, some working papers have recently appeared under the auspices of the *Effective States and Inclusive Development* (ESID) research project at the University of Manchester (see Hickey et al. 2014; Golooba-Mutebi and Hickey 2013; and Oduro, Awal and Ashon 2014 on Ghana). Khan's conceptual framework appears to suggest that the idea of 'political settlement' can somehow be tweaked to apply to just about all developing countries since they all have variants of 'clientelist political settlements'.

There is a danger, however, of committing concept stretching or straining, something Giovanni Sartori cautioned against more than four decades ago (Sartori 1970; Collier and Mahon 1993; Collier and Levitsky 1997; Collier and Gerring 2009). If a concept becomes a sort of 'catch-all', then we run the danger of compromising productive empirical differentiation and commit gross, if misleading, generalization (Collier and Gerring 2009: 3). The *intension* of a concept, that is the meaning it calls forth, has to be reconciled with its *extension* – the range of cases to which it can appropriately be applied (Collier and Gerring 2009: 3, 22). The intension of a concept can also be understood as the connotation – the characteristics of an object the concept refers to and which anything must possess to be in the denotation. By contrast, the extension of a concept can be understood as the denotation – the range or totality of objects (or cases) to which the concept can be applied. Thus, there is a danger of extending the applicability of a concept, its denotation, while ignoring its original intension – the connotation.

A close examination of the Ugandan case suggests possible concept stretching in using the concept of political settlement. I wish to suggest that the empirical realities of Ugandan politics today lend little credence to the conclusion that there is a political settlement. After capturing power in Uganda in 1986, the new National Resistance Movement worked out an elite bargain that produced a broad elite consensus through which the country was governed, at least up to 1996 (see Khisa 2014; Lindemann 2011; Carbone 2008; Rubongoya 2007). During that ten-year period, there was a semblance of a 'political settlement' under the rubric of a 'broad-based' government that brought together different political shades under the so-called no-party

'Movement' system. The major political players were part of this arrangement either as individuals (members of the recently overthrown Uganda People's Congress Party) or organizationally (leaders of the Democratic Party).[1]

Four Manifestations of Political Uncertainty

Constitutional Contention

The 1986 elite bargain held firm up to at least 1996. Although disparate fighting groups sprung up in different parts of the country, mostly in the north and north-east, there was near unanimous acceptance of the 'Movement' political system especially by southern elites and constituencies. The NRM administration was able to marshal a minimum national consensus about an inclusive transitional governing mechanism coupled with popular grassroots and national representation. The NRM government had both the local good will and the international support to rebuild the state and transform society.[2] Armed insurgency in the north, north-east and parts of the west showed that complete national consensus had not been achieved; but, on the whole, there was limited fundamental political disagreement. The insurgencies in the north and north-east neither represented a persuasive political alternative nor significantly threatened the extant order.

However, by 1995 disagreements had started to emerge mainly over a new constitutional order. Two key contentious political questions stood out: the continued ban on political party and the form of government – federal versus unitary, to which I return below. The year 1996 was critical as it marked the beginning of the end of the 1986 elite-bargain with the DP President General, Paul Sssemogerere, a key minister in the transitional government, resigning from the government to contest for president under a still no-party system. The continued ban on political parties was construed as a deliberate strategy by Museveni to muzzle organized opposition as he consolidated his power.[3] While other players co-opted into the 'Movement' government thought of it as an interim government of national unity, Museveni's ultimate objective was 'to integrate everyone into a national movement and create a one party state'.[4]

From 1996 to 2001, there was mounting political tension under the 'Movement' system, the key issue being the entrenchment of 'no-party' politics against protests, especially from the DP (Oloka-Onyango 2000). This was compounded by the gulf between the theory and practice of the Movement system as a 'non-partisan' political system. The NRM/ Movement acted and behaved like a real political party even as it purported otherwise. The growing contention over the existing political system led to

a series of legal battles that included Constitutional Petition No. 2 of 1999 (Ssemogerere and Another versus the Attorney General) and Constitutional Petition No. 3 of 2000 (Ssemogerere and Another versus the Attorney General). These court battles were primarily about the constitutionality and legitimacy of maintaining a contradictory system that was no-party in theory but one-party in practice.

The 1995 constitution provided for the holding of a national referendum five years later, which was held in June 2000, consequent to which the DP took the matter to the Constitutional Court, challenging the legality of the law under which it was held. In a unanimous decision on 25 June 2004, the Constitutional Court annulled the Referendum Act 2000, triggering a constitutional crisis (*Monitor* 2004a). A day after the ruling, and in total disregard of the inviolable right of appeal, which in any event the government would pursue, President Museveni reacted angrily in a televised speech, denouncing the ruling and accusing the Constitutional Court judges of attempting to usurp the power of the people (*Monitor* 2004b). This was followed by pro-government demonstrators storming the High Court in Kampala, causing the closure of court business and subjecting judicial officers to undue intimidation on 29 June 2004 (*Monitor* 2004c).

The legal and political contestations regarding the status of multi-party politics continued to plague Uganda's body politic after the second general elections in 2001. A combination of court victories, outright political agitation, pressure from external actors, especially the donor community, and, perhaps most importantly, political prudence on the part of the ruling party, produced a formal return to multi-party politics in 2005 after a twenty-year official ban. Yet, this development happened contemporaneously with a sweeping overhaul of the ten-year-old 1995 constitution, which among other changes led to the deletion of presidential term limits, setting the stage for a possible life-presidency (Okuku 2005). Thus, along with constitutional uncertainty came the old and enduringly sticky question of presidential succession. While the 1995 constitution had set out to resolve this question by placing a cap on the number of terms for a president, the 2005 amendments set in motion a new round of uncertainty.

In 2005, barely ten years after its promulgation, a large chunk of the 1995 constitution was amended following a constitutional review process chaired by an eminent legal scholar, Professor Frederick Sempembwa. Although removing presidential term limits became the central focus of public debate, a much bigger constitutional re-engineering was underway, as, political scientist, Juma Okuku (2005) aptly pointed out, the upshot of which was a more insidious democratic reversal.[5] That a constitution

barely ten years old could be subjected to sweeping amendments bespoke of a defective 1995 constitutional order. Some critics, such as the eminent Makerere University law Professor, Joe Oloka-Onyango, have characterized the 2005 overhaul of the constitution and the many acts by the government in the years that followed, in violation of the constitution, as amounting to 'constituicide'. In other words, the fate of the 1995 constitution can be likened to infanticide or suicide; that is, the founding parents of the constitution have systematically killed their own child (Oloka-Onyango 2013).

During the 2004/05 constitutional review process, at least three key constituencies and political players were interested in amending the constitution. First, opposition parties, some sections of the ruling party, foreign donors and civil society groups wanted a return to party politics.[6] This was concluded through a national referendum on 28 July 2005. Second, advocates for a federal system of government, especially members and leaders of the Buganda kingdom, campaigned for a federal system of government. They lobbied, advocated and presented their views to the Constitutional Review Commission. This demand was a carry-on from the failed attempt during the 1993/94 constitution-making process. To date, it remains lurking and a key source of contention. Last, the ruling party had an interest in changing the constitution to realize several provisions including granting dual-citizenship and, arguably the most important amendment, the deletion of presidential terms limits.

The first and third group of players got what they wanted. The second did not. Instead of federalism, the government proposed a 'regional-tier' system whereby a group of districts would come together to form a regional government. Advocates of federalism roundly denounced the regional tier system which, not surprisingly, has never taken off since July 2006 when it was supposed to start functioning. This issue of the form of government remains an unresolved question, a source of constitutional uncertainty and key component of what is called the 'Buganda Factor' (Mutibwa 2008). Ultra-Buganda loyalists have insisted that without a federal system of government, the Buganda kingdom regards the central government as some sort of occupying force.

What is more, critics like former MP and leader of the Uganda Federal Alliance, Olive Betty Kamya, have argued that the 1995 constitution grants the president excessive and unlimited powers. This, they argue, has inevitably bred dictatorship and bad governance. Article 99 vests all executive authority in the President. Kamya has spiritedly made the case for holding a national referendum to trim the powers of the President,

arguing that the constitution grants the President appointive powers for just about every public office that matters, and that this makes all sectors and departments of the state beholden and subservient to the president. This has aided personalization of power and undermined institutional growth. So, the problem is not Museveni; it is the constitution. With unchecked power, any other president would similarly behave like Museveni. Thus, Kamya and other critics argue that the solution should therefore be found in a sweeping constitutional amendment, which in effect calls for nothing short of replacing the 1995 constitution with an altogether new constitution. Two objections are in order.

First, it is not accurate to say that the constitution does not provide for checks and balances against executive power. In fact it does. The president exercises appointive power with the approval of parliament. There is not a single critical appointment that the president makes, exclusively, without the explicit approval of parliament or tacit role of another independent body. Different commissions and agencies oversee search processes for important public appointments with the president coming in towards the end to appoint from a shortlist or a lone recommended candidate. Also, the constitution grants security of tenure for public servants including judges against summary dismissal. It provides for the independence of the Directorate of Public Prosecutions, the Inspectorate of Government, the Electoral Commission, the Central Bank and the Treasury, among other bodies.

The problem is that the oversight provisions of the constitution are not consistently respected. Both the letter and the spirit of the constitution have suffered flagrant violation. For the most part, parliament has been rather supine and unable to perform its oversight functions satisfactorily. So the problem is not so much what the constitution stipulates, it is rather the extent to which constitutional provisions are either respected or disregarded. In getting his way around parliamentary oversight for example, President Museveni has employed his huge patronage power and the majoritarianism of his party to stampede through otherwise objectionable appointments. Even then, parliament has on some occasions, albeit few and far in-between, rejected ministerial nominees, notably Nasser Ssebagala, Flavia Munaba, Saleh Kamba and James Kakooza in 2011. Also, the former government Ombudsman, Faith Mwondha, could not get re-appointed to the same office as she refused to appear before parliament for vetting.

The recent controversy over the appointment of a new Chief Justice (CJ) is quite instructive. Although the constitution provides for the CJ's appointment on the advice of the Judicial Service Commission, on 9 July 2013 Museveni disregarded the JSC's nominees and re-appointed outgoing

Chief Justice, Benjamin Odoki, who had already reached retirement age. This created a stand-off. An MP, Gerald Karuhanga, took the matter to the Constitutional Court. On 4 August 2014, in a 4-1 majority decision, the Court declared as unconstitutional the re-appointment of Justice Odoki. This litigation and relentless public criticism of the President's disregard for the law eventually compelled him to heed the advice of the JSC. Thus on 5 March 2015, he appointed the JSC nominee, Justice Bart Katureebe, and parliament duly approved him.

Second, the constitution is not necessarily the primary source of President Museveni's power. At best, it is a reflection of his actual power. If the constitution grants enormous powers to the President, it may well be that at the time of its making and subsequent amendment, he wielded actual substantive power and influence which only received a constitutional stamp. For example, during its amendment in 2005, Museveni used resources under his control to get his preferred change. Therefore one cannot locate the problem of bad governance in the constitution. Museveni's power lies in the control of the military, a legacy of the bush-war, which in turn enabled him to gain vast financial and other material resources. He uses his coercive power to intimidate opponents, and material inducements to compromise or mollify different constituencies.[7] His control over material resources has also won him social power and with it deference from sections of the population.

Contention over Electioneering

On the eve of the 2016 general elections, there was contention over the need to undertake electoral reforms before the polls, with some actors suggesting that the elections be postponed.[8] A constitutional amendment bill brought before parliament in late 2015 was roundly denounced by the opposition and civil society activists as shallow and devoid of any substance (*Daily Monitor* 2015; *The Observer* 2015). The bill flatly ignored the wide-range of proposals contained in the 'Citizen's Compact', a set of proposals by civil society organizations and opposition political leaders/activists. In the face of an intransigent ruling-party leadership, sections of the political opposition similarly issued an intransigent declaration: that there would be no election without electoral reforms.

Key players, like four-time opposition presidential candidate Kizza Besigye, insisted that theirs was not a boycott position. But it was not yet clear what the 'no reforms no elections' message actually meant. In the end, no electoral reforms were undertaken and the general elections went ahead as scheduled. The outcome of the polls held on 18 February 2016, with incumbent President Museveni as the winner, was swiftly rejected by

the main opposition party, the FDC, insisting that its candidate, Besigye, and not Museveni, had won the election. The post-election standoff led to the house arrest of Besigye for more than a month and his subsequent incarceration on treason charges. Besigye has consistently made a case for acts of civic defiance against the NRM government and for making the country ungovernable. Upon his nomination as presidential candidate on 4 November 2015, he declared that he would run a campaign of 'defiance not compliance'. Previously, in the aftermath of the 2011 elections, he rallied civic insurrection and an Arab Spring-like uprising in the form of the Walk-to-Work protests (W2W) ostensibly to 'give power back to the people'. Although systematically defeated, through ruthless and brutally clamp-down, for Besigye and his supporters the W2W approach had proved a possible alternative to the ballot box.

Clearly, Besigye and followers had no faith in the existing electoral regime, insisting on a sweeping overhaul of the entire political system but most especially the electoral legal regime to make possible a free, transparent and credible election. Yet, by appealing to parliament for reforms, Besigye was dragging a dead horse. By definition, elections in non-democratic regimes are neither free nor fair nor transparent, meaning the opposition wins in spite of the unfree and unfair environment. An undemocratic regime cannot democratize out of good will and through legal fiat; rather, it has to be forced into any form of reform measures. It is therefore a trifle naïve to expect Museveni to reform or democratize his way out of power. At any rate, the NRM may well undertake reforms which may not necessarily translate into change of behaviour and the actual conduct of politics.[9] Relatedly, within the opposition some actors do not fully agree with Besigye's position. Although they supported the campaign for free and fair elections, they insist that a well-organized and united opposition could defeat the NRM in spite of the unlevelled and skewed environment. According to the FDC party president, Mugisha Muntu, the opposition can 'overwhelm Museveni'.[10] This further complicates matters. On the one hand, there is no consensus between those in power and those in opposition, yet there is equally no consensus within the opposition. This lack of consensus makes the whole current political set-up unviable and the country's political future even more uncertain.

In sum, two decades after a new constitutional order was established in 1995, constitutionalism and political certainty still elude Uganda. As such, the quest for constitutional stability remains elusive. The elite political players have not found common ground and consensus on the broad pillars of constitutional governance. Although there is minimum agreement on the need for constitutional rule, as opposed to, say, military rule, the frequent

clamours for constitutional amendments bespeak the absence of consensus on key constitutional provisions relating to the form of government, checks and balances between different branches of government, electoral processes, representation in parliament, etc. There is no stable, acceptable and predictable constitutional order. The 1993/94 Constituent Assembly achieved consensus on several key constitutional provisions but with strong disagreements on reintroducing multi-party politics and the form of government, federal versus unitary.

Uncertainty Over Presidential-succession

Peaceful change of political leadership has been Uganda's foremost jinx since independence in 1962. The solution had been found in article 105(2) of the 1995 constitution, which provided for two five-year presidential terms. But this provision was never tested and got deleted from the constitution in 2005, paving the way for indefinite eligibility save for the age limit, set at 75 years, but which too has recently been earmarked for removal. Although the constitution provides for the position of a Vice-president, who can take-over in the absence of a president, this provision also is yet to be tested and there is scepticism as to whether the provision can be respected as and when the need arises.

Unlike other political organizations that similarly emerged out of guerrilla movements, the NRM has failed to establish a tradition of leadership succession. For more than thirty years, Yoweri Museveni and Moses Kigongo have been in place as NRM Chairman and Vice-chairman respectively. Without a clear and acceptable plan of succession, routinized and rooted in the party, and with the party chairman not indicating when he will retire, speculation is rife on the possibility that Museveni will hand power to his son, Major General Muhoozi Kainerugaba, Commander of the Special Forces. This is what the former coordinator of intelligence services, General David Sejusa, referred to as the 'Muhoozi project' (*Daily Monitor* 2013b). Be that as it may, the key question is not whether Muhoozi succeeds his father, however important this is; the real concern is whether there will be a peaceful transition from Museveni to anyone, even to Muhoozi. This question is especially critical considering that Museveni's rule has been built on security, and on him as the unquestionable guarantor of a stable, sustainable and secure Uganda. Beyond the apprehension over peaceful transfer of power, there is also concern over whether whoever takes over can maintain discipline among the armed forces, so things do not lapse into the situation of the 1970s and 1980s when the men in uniform were above the law.[11]

In the absence of a predictable and tested mechanism for leadership change, and with Museveni's indefinitely remaining in power, there recently emerged intra-elite struggles and fissures within the ruling core. Although Museveni's political shrewdness and huge patronage resources have saved the ruling party from possible major splits, incessant tensions and internal bickering have nevertheless been in play. The fallout involving former Prime Minister and party Secretary General, Amama Mbabazi, was by far the most important pointer to the extent of the schism. Long seen as heir apparent, Mbabazi was dramatically upstaged in February 2014, in quick succession sacked as Prime Minister in September and booted out of his elected position as Secretary General in December.

Friction between the two reportedly started back in 2012, less than two years into Museveni's term in office after the 2011 elections with *The Observer* newspaper reporting deepening fallout (*The Observer* 2012a). However, it was during a retreat of the ruling party MPs in February 2014 that the fallout became fully manifest. After months of speculation, on the morning of June 15, 2015, Mbabazi announced that he would vie for the position of party chairman, setting himself up for a possible showdown with his erstwhile boss. Mbabazi strongly believed that time was ripe for 'change of leadership as well as direction',[12] pointing out in a letter to Museveni on 13 June 2015, that 'time has come for Uganda to go forward in pursuit of a radical system change based on the principles of good governance'.

While the jury was still out on how this Museveni–Mbabazi fallout would impact on the 2016 presidential outcome, it became quickly evident that Museveni had spent enormous resources on forestalling Mbabazi's presidential bid. Between March and December 2014, Museveni reportedly spent more than 76 billion shillings (c. US$ 30 million) on activities aimed at neutralizing Mbabazi, including bailing-out indebted MPs who, it was reported at the time, were about to get a bailout from Mbabazi, and more than 20 billion shillings (c. US$8 million) spent on convening a national delegates' conference to boot out Mbabazi from being NRM Secretary General. Mbabazi's challenge also opened up a scramble to win over the country's youth, as disparate, if 'desperate', youth groups went in and out of State House to be dissuaded from supporting Mbabazi. The President feted them and dispensed largesse ranging from heifers to hard cash, including a sack of 250 million shillings (c. US$75,000) in cash that Museveni publicly gave to Busoga Youth Trust (*The Observer* 2013b). A cabinet reshuffle in early 2015 brought in youthful ministers as a reward to relatively young apparatchiks working enthusiastically for Museveni remaining in power.

Related to the succession question is the cost of keeping Museveni in power, which itself is rationalized in terms of potential chaos in his absence. Since the

deletion of term limits, securing Museveni in power has become more and more expensive, at least going by the ever growing budget for State House and Office of the President. Worse, funding elections has become very costly in part due to constituency/district gerrymandering. In August 2015, parliament approved the creation of fifty-six new constituencies/counties bringing the number of MPs to more than 430 in a geographically small country of 35 million people. In between elections, public expenditure keeps soring to oil the patronage network. The upshot is runaway patronage inflation. In sum, the longer Museveni has stayed in power the more physical security he has required as evident in an increasingly long motorcade, including a fleet of expensive cars, among them two German tailored-made armoured limousines procured in controversial circumstances. Media reports put the cost at 6 billion shillings (c. US$2.5 million) but unnamed intelligence sources quoted twice the official figure (*The Observer* 2012c; *Daily Monitor* 2012).

The Ambivalent and Controversial Role of the Military

The military has historically been the foremost player in Ugandan politics. Independence Prime Minister and later President Milton Obote, set the track-record of inviting the military into otherwise civilian politics when he faced mounting internal party rebellion and virulent hostility from Buganda kingdom ultra-nationalists between 1964 and 1966 (Mutibwa 2008; 1992; Karugire 1988). The use of military-might to silence internal political disharmony within the then ruling Uganda People's Congress and quell Buganda's intransigency became a key defining feature of the first independence government, which ultimately climaxed in the Idi Amin coup of 25 January 1971 and the onset of a fascist military dictatorship. The short-lived return to civilian politics between 1979 and 1980 turned out to be no more than a lull, for after the disputed 1980s' elections the country became ensnared in a bloody civil war for the next five years, culminating in an internal military coup in July 1985 and Museveni's guerrilla takeover in January 1986 (see ori Amaza 1998 for a synthesis; also Sjogren 2013). Since 1986, Uganda politics has remained largely militarized and only remotely quasi-civilian.

Let us consider a few vignettes. First, although President Museveni is officially a retired army general, he is wont to don his military fatigues whenever he wants to prove that he is in charge. Although he formally retired from the army, General Museveni continues to conduct himself as a military ruler. Following the 2004 Constitutional Court annulment of the Referendum Act 2000 (mentioned above) he appeared on state television, clad in full military fatigues. Faulting the judges for ruling that

the Referendum Act 2000 was passed unconstitutionally, thus that no constitutional referendum was legally held in 2000, which in turn meant that the Movement systems had ceased to exist, the President told the nation that the judges were playing with fire. He said, 'For someone to say the people of Uganda had no right to choose their destiny, you are getting out of your depth. You are going too far to a no-go area' (*Daily Monitor* 2004b). He made similar threats against parliament in December 2013 at the height of a stand-off between parliament and the executive over the death of a woman MP, Celina Nebanda. With a group of MPs holding firm, on separate occasions, the President, then Chief of Defence Forces General Aronda Nyakairima, and the Minister of Defence Dr Crispus Kiyonga, threatened respectively that the army would takeover 'if the confusion in parliament persists', that 'the army would not allow bad politics to take Uganda back into turmoil' and that 'there was an option for the army to intervene if MPs continue not showing seriousness that they can solve the country's problems' (*The Observer* 2013; *Daily Monitor* 2013a).

Secondly, the army has ten representatives in parliament with an unclear role under a multi-party system. For example, how are they to vote especially on contentious political issues in a partisan parliament when they are supposed to be nonpartisan? Their continued stay in parliament is justified on the rather vague argument that they are 'listening posts'. Third, serving army officers have been appointed to Cabinet positions, the most recent and controversial case being that of former Chief of Defence Forces, the late General Aronda, appointed Internal Affairs Minister in 2013. The Police Force has since 2001 been headed by army generals, first General Katumba Wamala, succeeded by General Kale Kayihura. Fourth, army officers have been put in charge of civilian programmes, most recently taking over agricultural advisory services under 'Operation Wealth Creation', a supposed anti-poverty programme headed by Museveni's brother, General Salim Saleh.

The point is that the military has maintained a pronounced yet controversial role in national politics. Military power and influence have not been fully subordinated to civilian authority, thus hampering a full return to civilian and genuine democratic politics. Serving army officers like David Sejusa, Henry Tumukunde, the late Noble Mayombo, and others, have been involved in partisan activities on behalf of the incumbent. More generally, there is a palpable sense that having someone with a military background is what guarantees peace and stability. Thus while General Museveni has held the presidency for three decades, his main political challenger for fifteen years now, is a retired army colonel in Kizza Besigye, who was succeeded as president of the main opposition political party by retired Major General

Mugisha Muntu, a former army commander. Museveni has deliberately maintained the military at the top of Uganda's politics, and with recent spates of reported fallout within the army and intelligence establishment, there is growing trepidation as to how the military will impact on politics in the short to mid-term.[13]

Implications for Public Management and Social Service Delivery

The Argument

The absence of elite consensus on the basic building blocks to underpin a viable and acceptable political system in Uganda negatively impacts on the capacity of the state and government to satisfactorily provide quality public goods and services. The absence of minimum national elite political consensus undermines building a functional state apparatus for long-term planning that compromises socio-economic transformation. And because key political questions remain unsettled, rationalized allocation of public resources is undermined. The whirling vortex of political uncertainty in Uganda today has therefore fuelled competitive clientelism, rent-seeking and patronage-based legitimacy. These are hallmarks of political *uncertainty* and *not settlement*.

Amidst a cloud of uncertainty, Uganda's ruling elites inevitably operate with short-time horizons and a high discount rate about the future. By discounting the future, they focus on overcoming immediate threats through short-term manoeuvres like dispensing private patronage to individuals at the cost of public goods. This is because regime political uncertainty is such that political actors are compelled to discount future interactions in favour of short-term gains or pay-offs (Lupu and Riedl 2012: 1346). Political uncertainty has a cyclical effect: it breads insecurity on the part of those in power, which propels short-term responses to otherwise long-term problems, and piecemeal solutions to arguably complex national problems. Uncertainty also leads to less-rationalized and ill-prioritized utilization of public resources, with a bulk of public spending channelled towards countering both actual and perceived political threats. Let us look at a few illustrative examples.

Tinkering with National Development Programmes and Resorting to Clientelism

Over the last decade, government has produced national development blueprints aimed at transforming the country. These have been both sector-specific but also general national development plans. More focus has been on the agriculture sector, with the now defunct Plan for the Modernization

of Agriculture (PMA) followed by National Agriculture Advisory Services (NAADs). More recently, the President expressed indignation at the dismal failure of NAADs saying it should be disbanded. The President unilaterally decreed the abolition of NAADs and its replacement with a loosely conceived programme called 'Operation Wealth Creation' under army officers headed by his brother, General Salim Saleh. In addition to these national agriculture-transformation programmes, the NRM has also had election-time programmes such as *entandikwa* (literally meaning 'start-up capital') and *prosperity for all* (the 2011 election campaign mantra). Both programmes were premised on access to government-guaranteed micro-finance for individual enterprise and wealth creation. These plans and programmes have delivered very little substantive change and one is replaced by the other without any long-term and systematic plan. For example, there was never a thorough evaluation of PMA before NAADs were brought in and there was no value for money audit of NAADs before the President brought in army officers.

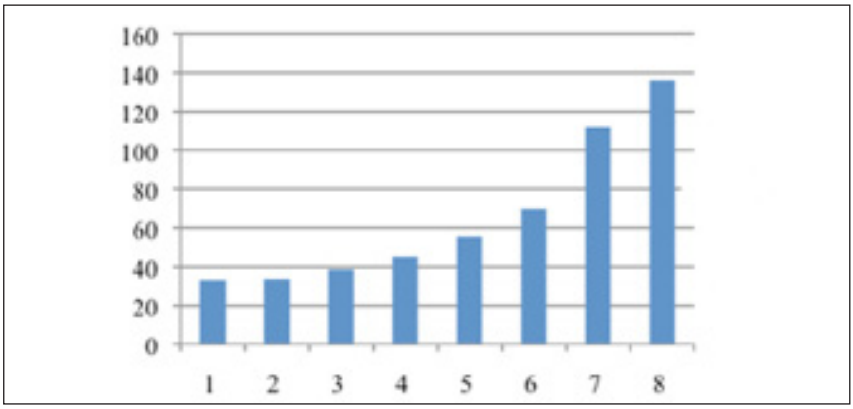
While national development plans have tended to flounder, Museveni has mostly resorted to clientelism and patronage to please different sections and appease a range of constituencies. Pressured by electoral politics, he has turned to short-term and populist responses to popular demands for basic social services and public goods, in effect undermining institutional processes and the evolution of a culture of long-term, impersonal and bureaucratic planning. The upshot of this, as a recent study has noted, is that 'there are growing signs that erstwhile "islands of effectiveness" are being undermined, in part as a result of the need to finance the increasingly expensive patronage machine' (Hickey et al. 2014: 8).

With the central government unable to meet varied local demands countrywide, the populist policy of the creation of small but unviable district enclaves has played an appeasement role, and serves as a key source of elite patronage (Green 2010). While there has been genuine local popular demand for new districts, a great deal of that demand is fuelled by elites who opportunistically want new political offices. The local masses too find 'intrinsic' satisfaction in new districts even without substantive improvement in public goods and services. Thus, political opportunism on the part of local and national political elites combined with some genuine local-mass quest for gaining localized power generated a countrywide clamour for new districts. Yet, there is no evidence this tallies with the official justification: that new districts bring services closer to the people.

There is no evidence of increase in rural health facilities or significant expansion in paved roads as a result of the runaway creation of districts and

sub-counties. Instead, proceedings in the parliamentary Local Government Accounts Committee, and the reports that this committee has produced over many years, have shown local government as heavens of localized corruption and inefficiency. It appears that the more districts are created, the more avenues there are for decentralized corruption. In the context of political uncertainty, the President has used the creation of districts to soak up pressure from local elite power brokers who gain their own small fiefs. Additionally, many districts and parliamentary constituencies were created on the eve of general elections, for example in 2005, 2009/10, and 2015, suggesting that the practice is a tool for appeasing local power brokers and gaining electoral advantage for the incumbent (Green 2010).

Tableau 1: Number of Districts: 1986 2015



Nationally, dealing with demands for co-opting elites and fending off threats has led to a bloated public sector including a large cabinet, an army of presidential aides and advisers, and a huge parliament (Tumushabe 2009). As political commentator Charles Onyango-Obbo noted, 'Uganda has easily the biggest cabinet in Africa, and Museveni is the only leader who has nearly as many presidential advisers as a very large parliament' (*Daily Monitor* 2015). While presidential appointments are used to co-opt elites and limit political threats, a huge parliament serves as a site for national elite inclusion. Thus, in the face of political uncertainty, regime survival has hinged largely on marshalling a broad and inclusive elite-ruling coalition, something that would be less necessary if there was a political settlement. Although the ruling coalition has been rather fragmented and riddled with factionalism (Kjaer and Katusiimeh 2012), and rather nepotistic at the pinnacle (Golooba-Mutebi and Hickey 2013), the fact that it has been relatively broad, at least in instrumental terms, has enabled Museveni to

secure a hold on power. Yet this political expedience and an expansive public sector create fertile ground for pervasive corruption, rent-seeking and endemic inefficiency.

A Non-meritocratic Public Sector

At its core, Uganda's current public sector lacks a robust incentive structure that rewards performance and punishes incompetence. Career civil servants cannot count on sheer hard work and excellence to move up the civil service hierarchy. Rather, upward movement depends on non-merit factors such as political godfathers and sectarian considerations. There is lack of an explicit and predictable system of rewarding performance and motivating excellence; instead, civil servants tend to be under the sway of political godfathers who influence their progress. Reforms initiatives like performance appraisals tend to fail due to an incompatible administrative culture (Karyeija 2010). There is high absenteeism in the education and health sectors (Wane and Martin 2013), but no strong system of sanctions. To reform these sectors and the civil service as a whole requires single-minded focus.

The reform of the civil service in the 1990s that led to a significant reduction in the size of the public sector, including a sharp drop in the size of cabinet, did not lead to a long-term turn-around once the exigencies of electoral politics set in, starting with the 1996 general elections. The Public Service Review and Reorganization Commission (PSRRC) made a total of 255 recommendations to revitalize the public service in order to make it more efficient, responsive and cost effective (Langseth and Mugaju 1996). Among the PSRRC's key recommendations were the reduction in the number of government ministries and the use of supervisory, inspection and auditing systems to monitor and preempt corrupt practices (ibid.: 28).

At the time the commission was set up in 1989, Uganda had thirty-two ministries with more than seventy ministers. The civil service was estimated at more than 320,000 employees. Consequent to the recommendations of the PSRRC report, a massive restructuring and downsizing exercise was undertaken leading to halving the size of Cabinet from close to eighty ministers in 1992 to forty-one in 1995. The civil service also was cut down from 320,000 in 1991 to 145,000 in 1994, and further down to about 127,000 in 1996. Presidential assistants and advisers too were reduced to only about a dozen. Yet these changes turned out rather short-lived. The civil service re-expanded yet again, shooting through the roof as it reached 230,000 ten years later and more than the 1990 figure of 320,000 by 2010.

The problem here though is not so much the civil service as the non-rationalized political appointees. As part of the political economy of regime

survival, rationalized and meritocratic appointments to public offices have taken a back seat as political considerations take precedence. Instead of an impersonal system of allocating resources and providing public goods and services, there is, rather, a personalized structure through which big government deals are concluded through dubious processes. The most publicized case in the recent past involved the award of a road construction contract to a non-existent company, Eutaw, allegedly through influence-peddling by senior government officials. As Golooba-Mutebi and Hickey (2013: 25) observe, 'it appears that even if the executive is committed to delivering high-quality services, it lacks the ability to develop the required levels of capacity and compliance within the civil service to achieve this, as illustrated by the cases of health and education', where large budgetary allocations have not resulted in increased quality and quantity of services.

The Crisis in the Education and Health Sectors

A recent World Bank study on Uganda's health and education sectors produced some startling findings (Wane and Martin 2013: 2). In a survey of 400 primary schools and 400 health facilities and a sample of more than 5,000 teachers and healthcare providers, the study found that 52 per cent of healthcare personnel were absent from their duty stations. In the schools, 27 per cent of the teachers were absent. And out of those present, 30 per cent were not teaching meaning that 40 per cent of school classrooms had no teacher. In northern Uganda, the study found that students there receive only fifty actual days of teaching time for the entire school year.

The study's findings on the competence levels of public primary school teachers and health personnel paint a more appalling picture. A paltry 19 per cent of teachers showed mastery of the curriculum they teach; the teachers' knowledge of the subjects they teach was very low; and 'the pedagogical skills to transform their knowledge into meaningful teaching were even lower' (ibid.: 4). Tested from the very curriculum they teach, only one in five teachers scored above 80 per cent. The average score was 65 per cent and 58 per cent for mathematics and English respectively. On a pedagogical skills-test, the average score was 26 per cent; only 7 per cent of the teachers scored above 50 per cent. In 86 per cent of the schools, students were not using textbooks for learning.

To put this picture into regional perspective, findings of a 2014 survey of the quality of primary school education in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, by a regional NGO, Uwezo, found that Uganda lagged behind its regional peers. 'In Kenya', the report noted, 'six out of ten children aged between ten and sixteen possess both literacy and numeracy skills at primary two level

compared to five out of ten for Tanzania and four out of ten for Uganda'. The report concluded that there are large differences in learning achievements among the three East African countries with Kenya performing better at 67 per cent in both numeracy and literacy skills compared to Tanzania at 50 per cent and Uganda at 38 per cent (*Daily Monitor* 2014).

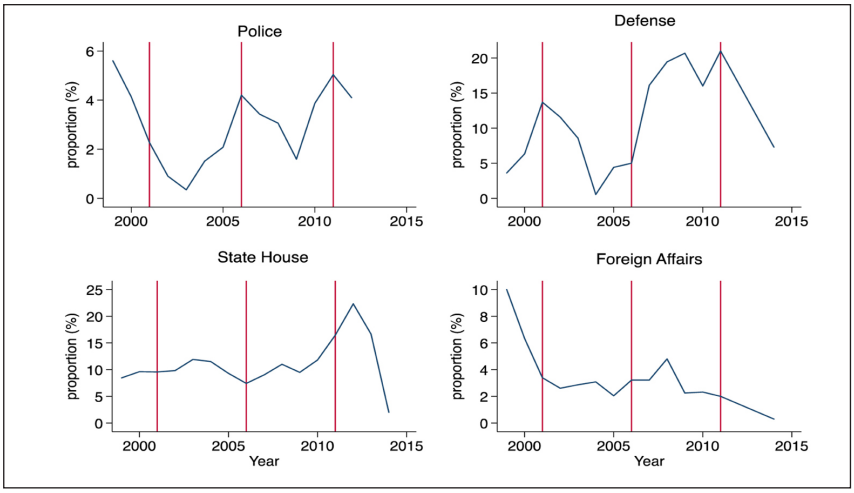
This is not to suggest that the poor state of the health and education sectors is a consequence of political uncertainty; rather, it is that under political uncertainty there is limited incentive to systematically address such substantive issues that affect the public. Instead, the top leadership in Uganda is occupied with staving off political threats. If key political questions were settled, perhaps we would see the same problems of poor health and education services. But until that happens, we cannot confidently surmise as such, ex-ante.

The Phenomenon of Supplementary Budgets

The phenomenon of supplementary budgets is quite instructive. Although the law provided for up to 3 per cent (the law was recently amended to increase the cap), over the years supplementary requests always overshot that limit, and a consistent trend has been more on recurrent expenditure than development spending on investment in production, service delivery and wealth creation. On average, the top four allocations in the supplementary budget requests are for the State House/Office of President, the Ministry of Defence (mainly classified expenditure), the Police Force and Ministry of Internal Affairs. Ministry of Finance officials, notably its Permanent Secretary, Keith Muhakanizi, have repeatedly complained about the disruptive problem wrought by supplementary budgets. In 2011, a huge supplementary budget of up to 30 per cent on the eve of general elections was partly blamed for the inflationary spiral that year.

We can deduce at least two pathways linking the phenomenon of supplementary budgets to the problem of political uncertainty. First, in the context of uncertain politics where there are political tensions resulting from unsettled political questions, the Ministry of Finance cannot make accurate forecasts and give correspondingly appropriate budgetary allocations. For example, knee-jerk presidential pronouncements aimed at assuaging a restive constituency made late in the budgeting process means a distorting impact on the budget and an inevitable recourse to making a supplementary budget request.

Tableau 2: Trends Supplementary Budgets Allocations



Second, supplementary budgets point to the extent of patronage-inflation and the need to deal with political contingencies. With political uncertainty, the cost of maintaining stability and keeping the status quo is high, as seen in classified expenditures for the military and the police. A key component of supplementary budgets is presidential donations that have no cap and are used mostly to mollify different constituencies and fend off potential political threats. Data on supplementary budgets for the last fifteen years show that the top allocations go to ministries and departments that are not concerned directly with service delivery. More than 90 per cent of supplementary budgets go towards recurrent and not development expenditure.

Conclusion

From the foregoing discussion, far from there being a *political settlement* in Uganda, the country is rather shrouded in *political uncertainty.* This uncertainty, I have attempted to show, directly and indirectly impacts on social service delivery as resources are not rationalized and mechanisms for effective delivery of social services are not prioritized. With key political questions unsettled and minimum elite consensus absent, long-term planning is stymied. Having a clear picture of what the presents holds, let alone predicting what the future promises, is increasingly impossible. This article's central message, then, is that until key political questions have been settled, systematic and long-term planning cannot be feasible. The failure to settle key political questions has enormous implications for systematic, long-term planning and the provision of quality public goods and services.

To get around the current malaise requires building both technocratic capacity and a merit-based public sector. But above all it requires finding a political solution – a *political settlement*. This will necessitate getting all key political actors round the table to chart a new course for the country. Only by convening a dialogue for minimum consensus can it be possible to establish the basic building blocks for a stable and acceptable constitutional and democratic order. The final details of such an order shall depend on the calibre of the individuals and interest-groups taking part in reimagining a new Uganda.

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Notes

1. Although the transitional, 'Movement' system was 'individual merit' based and party activities were expressly proscribed, leaders of DP negotiated as an organization. Personal interview with former DP President, Paul Kawanga Ssemogerere, 3 December 2014, Kampala.
2. I am indebted to Professor John Jean Barya, Professor of Law at Makerere University, for this observation from the many scholarly discussions I have held with him in the recent past.
3. Interview with Ssemogerere.
4. Personal interview with Mathew Rukikaire, former Minister for Privatization, 6 Novembe 2014, Kampala. In an interview with Paul Ssemogerere, a leading member of the 'broad-based' government, he confirmed Rukikaire's observation as accurate.
5. Political scientist Juma Anthony Okuku made a prescient argument at the time that focusing on the 'third term' debate, as the deletion of term limits was dubbed then, was to lose sight of the big picture of the breakdown of constitutional governance and the deleterious consequences of clinging on to power by the incumbent.
6. Within the NRM, there was a faction often referred to as the 'progressives' that made a case for amending the constitution to return to multi-party politics. Among the leading figures were influential ministers Eriya Kategaya and Bidandi Ssali.
7. Confidential discussion with a former senior and long-serving NRM government minister, 15 March 2015, Kampala.

8. This has been the position of Kizza Besigye, the foremost opposition leader and flag-bearer for the main opposition party, the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC).
9. Personal conversation with John Barya, 10 August 2015, Kampala.
10. Personal interview, 4 May 2015, Kampala. Muntu has also repeated this position to the local media.
11. I am indebted to Dr Lawyer Kafureeka for underscoring this point.
12. Confidential conversation with one of Mbabazi's aides, 29 April 2015, Kampala. Mbabazi alluded to this in his announcement on 15 June 2015.
13. The fallout involving the former Coordinator of Intelligence Services, General David Sejusa, is instructive. General Sejusa fled to London in April 2013 after writing a dossier alleging that senior army officers and government officials believed to be opposed to having the President's son succeed his father were being targeted for assassination. He was openly supported by General Elly Tumwine and Brigadier Kasirye Gwanga. It is believed that the old-guard in the army is pitted against a new crop of relatively young officers loyal to the First Son, Brigadier Muhoozi Kaneirugaba. Appearing on NTV's 'On the Spot' talk-show on 9 July 2015, General Sejusa alluded to the uncertainty in the ranks of the national army, alleging that there is a problem of a professional command structure such that in some cases a Brigadier salutes a Major!

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