Can NGOs cultivate supportive conditions for social democratic development? The case of a research and development NGO in Western Uganda

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Abstract

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There is an emergent consensus that the 'poverty reduction through good governance' agenda has failed to meet expectations. The capacity of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to cultivate the political economies and state-society synergies that might be supportive of more pro-poor development trajectories is contested. Advocates of inclusive liberalism identify increased political space for NGOs focused on popular empowerment and policy influence within the participatory spaces created by the good governance agenda. More radical critiques cast NGOs as apolitical brokers of neo-liberal development resources which distract from or are disinterested in more fundamental questions of redistribution.

This thesis explores the potential for Ugandan NGOs to cultivate supportive conditions for a more redistributive development process amidst a semi-authoritarian, patronage-based, political regime and within a predominantly agrarian economy, using the lens of a single case study organisation situated in the Western region of the country. The findings suggest Ugandan NGOs should move beyond strategies associated with inclusive liberal governance towards a closer engagement with the politics and political economy of progressive change. Micro-enterprise and economic associational development emerge as more effective enhancers of political capabilities among the poor than strategies aimed solely at promoting inclusive liberal participation because they can tackle the socio-economic power relations that curb political agency in such contexts, and begin to undermine patronage-politics. In contrast, strategies for enhanced inclusive liberal participation engage with the formal *de jure* rules of the game in ways that either sidestep or re-enforce the *de-facto* patronage-based political system and fail to tackle the power relations that perpetuate ineffective forms of governance. Creating new cross-class deliberative spaces which engage with grass roots perspectives, can facilitate the emergence of new ways of thinking that promote a more pro-poor orientation among development stakeholders.

Triangulation of qualitative primary data and relevant literature leads to the overarching conclusion that NGOs operating in such contexts are more likely to enhance the political capabilities of disadvantaged groups by adhering to a principle of self-determination. This focuses energy and resources on non-directive facilitative support to disadvantaged groups. This enables them to a) make socio-economic progress; b) become (better) organised; c) develop the necessary skills and knowledge to advance their interests; and d) cultivate opportunities for direct engagement with power holders and decision-makers. This approach requires a high level of what the thesis terms 'NGO political capacity' and a far more open-ended and programmatic approach to the provision of development aid than currently prevails.

Declaration

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List of Acronyms

ADF	Allied Democratic Forces
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CPF	Community Process Facilitator
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DP	Democratic Party
FDC	Forum for Democratic Change
HRGG	Human Rights and Good Governance
HUMC	Health Unit Management Committee
LC	Local Council
MA	Marketing Association
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MFA	Micro Finance Association
MLFG	Middle Level Farmer Group
MOFPED	Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development
NAADS	National Agriculture Advisory Service
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NRA	National Resistance Army
NRM	National Resistance Movement
PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan
PPA	Participatory Poverty Assessment
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
PWC	Post-Washington Consensus
RDF	Regional Development Framework
SAP	Structural Adjustment Policy
SMC	School Management Committee
SWAp	Sector Wide Approach
TCSO	The Case Study Organisation
UNNGOF	Uganda National NGO Forum
UPC	Uganda People's Congress
UPE	Universal Primary Education
UPDF	Uganda People's Defence Force
VHT	Village Health Team

Acknowledgements and Thanks

The Author

I completed a part-time MA in Social Research at the University of Leeds between 2004 and 2006 comparing the actual experiences of refugees attempting to rebuild their lives in the UK with Government policy relating to the process of refugee integration. After working for two national refugee charities in Leeds and then Manchester, I spent three years conducting cycles of action research with a forum of refugee community leaders and supporting them to carry forward advocacy work and campaigns relating to accessing services and protecting the basic rights of asylum seekers in the U.K.

After six years working with migrants and refugees predominantly from the Middle East and sub-Saharan Africa and many more years of interest and some degree of involvement in global campaigns in support of a more equal share of resources, I decided to explore the possibility of either a voluntary placement in East Africa or a PhD in Development Studies. After travelling to Uganda in 2008, and consulting Dr. Sam Hickey in March 2009, both became possible.

Since commencing this research I have had the opportunity to work on two further projects. The first was a World Bank consultancy to examine the role of context in shaping social accountability interventions with Professor Sam Hickey and Dr. Badru Bukenya. The second involved research assistance for a paper by Dr. Duncan Green for UNDESA examining the role of the state in facilitating empowerment among disadvantaged groups.

1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

There is an emergent consensus that the 'poverty reduction through good governance' agenda has failed to meet expectations (Booth, 2012, Hickey, 2012, North et al., 2009). The discursive response has focused on the political economic conditions (Sandbrook et al., 2007) and forms of politics (Booth, 2012, Hickey, 2009b) necessary for the emergence of a developmental state capable of governing over more inclusive (Hickey, forthcoming, vom Hau, 2012) and capability-enhancing processes of economic transformation than have characterized developing contexts for much of the twentieth and early twenty-first century (Evans, forthcoming).

Contestation about the role of NGOs and civil society more widely in cultivating political economies and forms of 'state-society synergy' (Evans, forthcoming) that might support more pro-poor development trajectories is grounded in a range of theoretical standpoints, from the waning (Hickey, 2012) mainstream 'inclusive' neo-liberal paradigm (Craig and Porter, 2006) to more radical social-democratic perspectives focused on relational understandings of poverty and the redistribution of power (Herring, 2003, Mosse, 2010, Williams, 2004). Inclusive neo-liberalism has been critiqued for its continued focus on market-led development solutions (Craig and Porter, 2006, Sheppard and Leitner, 2010) and for its de-politicisation of the necessarily political process of negotiating a more equal share of power (Ferguson, 2007, Harriss et al., 2004). Others have observed increased political space for NGOs focused on popular empowerment and policy influence within the

participatory spaces created by the good governance agenda (Corbridge et al., 2005, Driscoll and Evans, 2005, Shah, 2007).

This thesis applies the lens of a single qualitative case study of a research and development NGO in Western Uganda to these debates, investigating specifically whether it has been able to cultivate supportive conditions for social democratic development within a semi-authoritarian, patronage-based regime and a predominantly agrarian economy (Tripp, 2010). That is, whether the organisation has created more conducive conditions for the realisation of social and economic as well as civil and political rights, and for more substantive forms of participation and collaboration between rural communities, civil society and state actors in development decision-making, planning, and implementation (Sandbrook et al., 2007, Törnquist et al., 2009). It is a critical modernist study, which operates according to a 'bottom line' goal of 'material well-being' and a vision for development focused on greater popular control of resources and decision-making, and a diversity of modernities (Mohan and Hickey, 2004: 63, Peet and Hardwick, 2009).

The thesis findings point towards a need for Ugandan NGOs to move beyond strategies for engagement with inclusive liberal governance (Craig and Porter, 2006) towards a closer engagement with the politics (Booth 2012, Hickey, 2009b) and political economy (Sandbrook et al., 2007) of progressive change. The case suggests that facilitating the development and federative capacity of producer cooperatives as well as creating micro-enterprise opportunities among the chronic poor are more effective strategies for the realisation of rights than those focused on enhancing citizen participation in formal 'invited' governance spaces (Cornwall, 2002). This is because such strategies tackle the socio-economic power relations

that curb political agency in contexts like rural Uganda, and begin to undermine patronage-politics. In contrast, strategies focused on teaching farmers and local leaders about the principles of good governance and social accountability engage with formal *de jure* rather than patronage-based *de facto* rules of the game (Booth, 2011, Brett, 2003, Francis and James, 2003) and fail to tackle the power relations that perpetuate ineffective forms of development governance (Hickey and Mohan, 2004, Mosse, 2010, Mansuri and Rao, 2013). The creation of new cross-class deliberative spaces, particularly those that engage with robust research evidence focused on the experiences of grass roots actors, can facilitate the emergence of new networks, relationships, and ways of thinking that can promote a more pro-poor orientation among development actors (Bázan et al., 2008, Mitlin and Bebbington, 2006).

Informed by a critical modernist perspective, the development literature, and the case study findings, the thesis concludes that development actors like NGOs, operating in similar contexts to Uganda's, are more likely to enhance the political capabilities (Williams, 2004) of disadvantaged groups by adhering to a principle of self-determination. Such a principle guides activists towards the provision of the necessary facilitative support and information to enable disadvantaged groups to a) make socio-economic progress; b) become (better) organised; c) develop the necessary skills and knowledge to advance their interests; and d) cultivate opportunities for direct engagement with power holders and decision-makers. This approach requires a high level of what the thesis terms 'NGO political capacity' (building on Törnquist, 2002).

This introductory chapter will provide a clarification of some of the key concepts discussed within the thesis; the research background and rationale; a discussion

of the research methodology, and finally, will explain how the remaining chapters of the thesis are structured.

1.2 Key concepts

1.2.1 Democratic development

Current perspectives on the substance of and means for achieving democratic development can be grouped broadly into three schools of thought: the current mainstream development paradigm of inclusive neo-liberal; social democratic; and post-colonial/post-development analyses. These are loose and overlapping categories however and some theorists may position themselves across more than one of these categories.

In inclusive neo-liberal perspective, the focus of democratisation is the development of formal liberal democratic institutions of governance including universal civil and political rights, a liberalized economy with some degree of social protection, and a vibrant civil society. With roots in the economics of Adam Smith and de Tocquevillian associationalism, the underlying theory suggests that minimal state intervention in economic and social affairs combined with an active civil society that is given space to participate in decision-making and hold the state in check will ensure inclusive economic growth and hence universal well-being (World Bank, 1997, 2004, Stiglitz, 1998).

Democratic development in social democratic perspective is focused on the 'redistribution of domestic political power and a more substantive democracy' (Sandbrook et al., 2007: 61). For democracy to be substantive there must be

processes in place which equip people with the social and economic power, and the knowledge and skills to be able to engage in the contest for resources and to exercise power over elected representatives (Harriss et al., 2004, Törnquist, 2002). Social democratic perspectives range from more liberal to more radical analyses. At the liberal end of the spectrum, theorists recognise spaces within the current inclusive phase of neo-liberalism for challenging the dominant economic framing of development in terms of poverty reduction targets and the promotion of institutional reform as a means of realising civil and political rights (Corbridge et al., 2005, Gaventa, 2004, Cornwall, 2004). At the more radical end of this spectrum, structural analyses frame inclusive liberalist agenda's like good governance and poverty reduction as distractions from the fundamental issue of redistributing social and economic power in order for civil and political rights to become meaningful (Craig and Porter, 2006).

Post-colonial and post-development thinkers have re-focused attention on the historical conditions that continue to shape contemporary political and socio-economic opportunities and power relations. Post-colonial analysts oppose the imposition of Western democratic norms and structures on non-Western contexts and highlight the negative and neo-colonial effects of reproducing liberal democratic institutions in environments with different socio-economic structures, traditions and systems of rule (Chatterjee, 2004, Mamdani, 1996, Manji, 2000, Townsend et al., 2002). Chatterjee (2011) argues for example that the historical contingency of Western modernity undermines the notion that Western political norms and institutions are universally applicable, yet questions the possibility of thinking outside of these paradigms to imagine a new political future. Post-developmentalists take a Foucauldian view of development as a historically produced discourse that must be deconstructed in order that alternative

discourses and practices can be imagined (Escobar, 1995, Rahnema and Bawtree, 1997). The kinds of change agents imagined by some post-development theorists include social movements involving subordinate rural and urban classes and radical middle class activists (Escobar, 1992).

A focus on democratising development from a critical modernist perspective leans towards the more radical social democratic perspective. If a critical modernist development is the achievement of 'material well-being' through the realisation of social, economic and political rights and greater popular control over resources (Mohan and Hickey, 2004: 63, Peet and Hardwick, 2009), then democratising development necessarily involves:

1. cultivating supportive conditions for the realisation of these rights;
2. building the capacity of disadvantaged groups to exercise control over decision-making; and
3. fostering receptivity to a more equal distribution of power among the powerful.

While these kinds of processes remain vision rather than reality in most developing countries, there are cases available for analysis such as the local participatory and redistributive politics of Kerala and West Bengal for example, and Brazilian participatory budgeting initiatives (Herring, 2003, Sandbrook et al., 2007, Webster, 2002). As highlighted above, critical modernists recognise the potential for pro-poor outcomes to be achieved within a diversity of modernities that may not operate according to the same systems as Western liberal democracy (Mohan and Hickey, 2004).

1.2.2 NGOs and civil society

The diversity of organisations that have been defined as members of civil society or as non-governmental organisations is certainly cause for conceptual complexity from large international development agencies to informal savings groups in rural villages (Bebbington and Hickey, 2007). The rise of civil society as a key conceptual and empirical concern within development debates is linked to the emergence of conflicting schools of thought about the goals of and means for achieving development amidst the 1980s 'impasse' in development studies that resulted from the failure of both market and state-based paradigms to provide effective development solutions (Bebbington and Hickey, 2007, Booth, 1994). Building on Hegel and de Tocqueville, neo-liberal theorists conceive of civil society as an associationalist sphere between household, state and market that has the potential both for the provision of social welfare services and for holding in check both state and market excesses (Bebbington and Hickey, 2007). A range of perspectives, framed as an 'alternative development' school (Howell and Pearce, 2001), emerged from independence struggles and in response to successful 1980s pro-democracy and anti-authoritarian movements to adopt a more Gramscian reading which frames civil society as a site of struggle for ideological hegemony (Bebbington and Hickey, 2007). These conflicting interpretations have real world effects. Civil society building programmes can be justified on the basis of promoting 'a broader and more inclusive public sphere' in Gramscian terms for example, or in contrast, 'a very particular form of liberal democracy coupled with particular forms of market liberalisation' (Bebbington and Hickey, 2007: 417). Debates relating to African contexts, are also concerned with the relevance of theories about an associational sphere focused on cultivating a 'good society' to environments where associational life is structured around the particularist

concerns of ethnic identity (Chazan, 1992, Kasfir, 1998, Lewis, 2002, Oloka-Onyango and Barya, 1997).

A more detailed background to civil society focused development debates is provided below and a review of the literature concerning the role of NGOs in processes of development and democratisation takes place in Chapter 2. For purposes of conceptual clarity within this thesis, the terms civil society and NGOs are understood as follows: civil society or civil society organisation (CSO) will refer to any organisation whether formally constituted or informally associated which is non-governmental and focused on a social good – whether universal or particularist. This incorporates forms of social enterprise like rural producer organisations that are for profit but also organised for the promotion of social and economic empowerment. In applying a Western concept to an African context, the thesis follows the conclusions of Lewis that 'whether or not civil society can be identified in recognizable forms 'on the ground', it has taken on meanings which are providing researchers, policy-makers and ordinary people with the means to rethink politics and citizenship under conditions of global change', it is therefore a useful analytical tool but one that should be continually refined by studies of 'actually existing civil society' (Lewis, 2002: 584). Following the general trend in development studies discourse, the term NGO will refer specifically to 'formal' non-state, non-profit organisations, that are 'at least partly professionalised' and 'are concerned in some way with development and relief activities – organisations at times referred to as nongovernmental *development* organisations.' (Bebbington and Hickey, 2007: 419). NGOs are therefore for present purposes constructed both as a part of and as actors upon civil society. Grass roots organisations formed by and acting within local communities will be referred to as community based organisations (CBOs). Political parties whose members therefore hold the

potential to become state actors may be referred to as 'political society', but any other politically-oriented groups, such as trade unions for example, will be considered part of civil society (Edwards, 2009).

1.2.3 Semi-authoritarian regimes

As background to her recent study of Museveni's Uganda, Tripp (2010) charts a gradual shift away from authoritarianism in Africa since the early 1990s, and (building on Carothers, 2002, Diamond, 1996, 2002, Huntingdon, 1997, and Schedler, 2006 among others) delineates a typology of regimes ranging from authoritarian, to 'hybrid' semi-authoritarian and semi-democratic regimes, through to democratic. For Tripp, semi-democracies: 'hold regularly contested, closed ballot, multi-party elections in which political parties have free access to the electorate through the media and campaigning and in which there is not massive voter fraud', and 'allow for changes in party dominance and the alteration of the presidency' (2010: 12-13). The democratic deficits that cast a country as semi-authoritarian include: doubts about the willingness of the central regime to open up political processes and relinquish power; regimes doing the 'absolute minimum to democratise' and only in response to donor, civil society, or intra-elite pressure; an absence of 'genuinely competitive elections' leading to presidents winning 'more than 60 or 70 per cent of the vote'; presidents seeking to lift term limits; and ruling parties dominating the legislature (2010: 13). Their hybrid status is 'ultimately a question of degree' - they are distinguished from more democratic regimes by their inconsistency in 'ensuring civil liberties and political rights', and from authoritarian regimes by their 'regard for some of these liberties' (2010: 13-14). Within Tripp's typology, Museveni's Uganda is quite clearly defined as a semi-authoritarian

regime and Chapter 3 will describe the ways in which much of the development literature on Uganda confirms this positioning and the consequences for Ugandan civil society.

1.3   A brief history of NGOs in development

NGOs have had a presence in the developing world since colonial times in the form of religious or charitable organisations and more politicized social movement oriented organisations played important roles within independence struggles (Bebbington et al., 2008). NGOs took a more central position within the development industry during the 1980s 'NGO boom', catalysed both by neo-liberal structural adjustment policies (SAPs) and drives for alternative development approaches. The ascendant neo-liberal paradigm, bolstered by anti-statist rhetoric following the fall of the Soviet Union, advocated economic liberalisation and the privatisation of public services as stimuli of economic growth, the benefits of which were expected to trickle down to the poor. Within this vision, NGOs were constructed as private sub-contracted service delivery agents who could fill in the gaps created by SAPs (Bebbington et al., 2008). The resulting boom was particularly striking in Africa which saw the biggest growth in NGOs among developing regions, principally as a result of weak state capacity and often limited administrative territorial reach (Michael, 2004).

At the same time, the heterogeneous collection of ideas and approaches characterised above as an 'alternative development' movement (Howell and Pearce, 2001) had begun working with people to identify their own needs, to challenge the power of state and market, and to participate in decision-making

(Friedman, 1992). Mistrust of developing country governments among Northern donors led to direct investment in NGOs as 'alternative' development agents - channelling funding first to Northern NGOs for direct operations and, as recognition grew of the need for locally-embedded development agents, via Northern NGOs to their Southern partner organisations (Bebbington et al., 2008). As neo-liberalism took hold, dramatic increases in funding drew many non-governmental development actors away from the politics of their alternative origins towards more technical service-oriented operations, giving rise to the charge that development interventions and associated NGOs were becoming 'de-politicized' (Bebbington et al., 2008, Harriss, 2001).

The failures and severe social costs of structural adjustment combined with economic collapse in parts of Asia sparked a legitimacy crisis for the international finance institutions (IFIs) and sustained protest from global social justice groups (Craig and Porter, 2006). The response was a more 'inclusive' phase of neo-liberalism which emerged in the 1990s out of the Post Washington Consensus (PWC) (Craig and Porter, 2006), within which the terms civil society and NGO became increasingly conflated (Mercer, 2002). This took the shape of the 'poverty reduction' agenda, tied into social protection policies, participatory poverty analysis (PPA) and policy formulation via Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) processes, and the 'good governance' agenda, focused on building democratic, decentralised governments, capable of responding to active, empowered citizens represented in policy-making processes by civil society organisations (World BankBank, 2001, Bank, 1997). In practice, these CSO participants have not been the kinds of associationalist actors envisaged by Hegel and de Toqueville, or the politicised agitators imagined by Gramsci, but frequently professionalised NGOs comprising the educated elite of a national capital (Mercer, 2002).

Under the PWC, aid has increasingly been channelled through direct budget support to governments of Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPCs). Developing country governments have in turn contracted out services to NGOs in line with PRSP agreed Sector Wide Approaches (SWAps) which became increasingly tied into United Nations targets in the form of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Lister and Nyamugasira, 2003). The growth of the sector has continued into the new millennium with an increase in official development assistance (ODA) to NGOs of 34 per cent between 1991-92 and 2002 (Banks and Hulme, 2012) and 75% of new World Bank projects entailing CSO participation between 2007 and 2009 (World Bank, 2009). NGOs have therefore come to occupy three positions within mainstream development discourse: civil society organisers both acting as, and cultivating new, watchdogs of good governance; poverty reduction policy advisors acting as representatives of the poor; and sub-contracted service delivery agents.

The neo-liberal framing of NGOs as critical development agents has increasingly been called into question along with the development agendas their prominence has been bound together with. Through successive waves of rhetoric and reform, from structural adjustment and the privatisation of public services to the good governance agenda, an increasing body of critique has observed the de-politicisation of development and of NGOs as development agents (Bebbington et al., 2008, Craig and Porter, 2006, Ferguson, 1994, Harriss, 2001). This discourse suggests that the alternative development movement has been diverted from social justice into welfare provision and NGOs are charged with exacerbating a breakdown of the social contract between state and citizen. Vastly increased donor finance for service delivery and project intervention since the 1980s, and the

paucity of support for political empowerment work, are thought to have encouraged NGOs to transplant depoliticised charitable provision for the provision of social welfare by a duty bearing state to its rights-bearing citizens (Brock et al., 2001: 14). The teleological development perspective promoted by the IFIs is cast as severely limiting the space for states or CSOs to determine their own agendas, removing the impetus for civil society claims-making of the state, reducing flexibility and innovation, and diverting funds away from research and policy oriented organisations that some consider key to NGOs' democratising potential (Bázan et al., 2008, Fowler, 2000d, Pollard and Court, 2008, Thomas, 2008). Critics question the processes by which CSOs are selected for inclusion in policy processes highlighting the absence of popular representation through membership organisations and the consultative rather than deliberative nature of their participation (Brock et al., 2001, Dagnino, 2008).

Beyond the de-politicisation critique, analysts situated at the more radical end of the social democratic spectrum have suggested that the move to state-owned PRSPs has constituted a discursive shift of responsibility for poverty reduction onto the shoulders of both developing states, civil society organisations and poor communities, while maintaining Western control over a neo-liberal agenda. In this framing, the partnership agenda has replaced the stick of structural adjustment with the carrot of state-ownership on the condition of democratisation (Abrahamsen, 2004, Hickey, 2009a). Critics have also highlighted the hierarchical nature of donor/NGO 'partnerships' that have characterised the promotion of NGO advocacy work within the inclusive governance agenda (Hearn, 2007, Ngunyi, 1996). Since the mid-1990s, increasing concerns have also been raised about NGO accountability, legitimacy, and effectiveness by both advocates of good governance and alternative ideals about tackling inequality and fostering

empowerment (Eade and Ligteringen, 2001, Edwards and Hulme, 1995). Yet, at the more liberal end of the social democratic school, Corbridge et al., highlight the broadening of 'the canvas on which a more committed pro-poor politics can be played out' and the incremental process of social change and re-politicisation afforded by the good governance agenda which may have opened up significant space for actors like NGOs to bring the voices of the poor into policy-making processes (Corbridge et al., 2005: 187).

Increasingly analysts are suggesting that donor-driven initiatives for good governance have lacked sufficient context-specific political-economic analysis, and emphasising the need for approaches that engage with the particular forms of politics that are shaping development outcomes (Booth, 2012, Kjær and Therkildsen, 2012, Routley and Hulme, 2013). The emphasis here is on understanding the informal *de facto* not just the formal institutional 'rules of the game' and how elite interests and incentives shape development outcomes (Booth, 2012, Unsworth, 2010). What this means for NGOs continues to be contested with some Africanists advocating a more 'arms-length' mediation role (Booth, 2012, Fowler, 2000c, Unsworth, 2010); others highlighting the continued importance of both a policy and grass roots presence for NGOs in processes of social and political change (Bebbington et al., 2008); and post-colonial/post-structural perspectives either negating the significance of NGOs as agents of change for the poor 'in most of the world' (Chatterjee, 2004), or promoting their relevance only in so far as they destabilise hegemonic ideas in pursuit not of 'development alternatives' but 'alternatives to development' (Escobar, 1995, Fisher, 1997: 445).

1.4 Rationale

Despite strict state regulation and traditions of patrimony within many African political regimes, academics and practitioners continue to see a significant role for NGOs in democratising development, in ways that both subscribe to and challenge inclusive neo-liberal discourse (Fowler, 2000c, Hickey and Mohan, 2004, Michael, 2004, Ndegwa, 1996). In her 2004 book, Michael identified a crucially important moment for local African NGOs to realise their political agency both because of urgent need in the face of rising levels of chronic poverty, but also in response to greater political space created by increased international attention on Africa linked to global campaigns and the drive for achievement of the MDGs. With 2015 approaching, and the likelihood of this achievement fading, the drive is ever greater. For Michael, African NGOs are the critical actors because of their local understanding of customs, norms and traditions, their ability to mobilise communities, their longer term presence which is less susceptible to trends in international development, and their ability to build a civil society voice at national level in order to hold governments to account.

In her 2002 review, Mercer suggests that 'a wealth of literature' has arisen concerning the potential for NGOs to democratise development but critiques this literature for its theoretical rather than empirical basis and stresses that 'relatively few critical analyses of the role of NGOs in democratization have been undertaken' (2002: 6). In terms of citizen-led initiatives for greater social accountability, there is also increasing recognition about the lack of research focused on how context shapes the outcomes of citizen or civil society-led initiatives (Bukenya et al., 2012, Gaventa and Barrett, 2010). Michael's 2004 study is an useful source for the present research but has a different focus,

namely NGO autonomy, rather than organisational capacity to promote democratic development. Successive publications by Fowler (1991, 1993, 1997, 2000a) are also valuable but only the 1991 and 1993 articles focus on democratic development, with the remaining two focused on the overall effectiveness of NGOs or specifically on social development respectively. Each of these studies also responds to an earlier moment within the political economy of development and observers are now divided as to whether NGOs may be experiencing greater political space (Corbridge et al., 2005) or are engaged in a process of de-politicising development (Bebbington et al 2008). There are increasing calls for a re-politicisation of the role of NGOs within development processes, but as Hickey highlights, 'we still lack the analytical base required to shed light on the links between politics and development' (Hickey, 2009b: 141). This study integrates one attempt to apply a more political lens to participatory development interventions – Williams 2004 political capabilities analysis, with Törnquist's (2002) concept of 'political capacity' (2002) and Bukenya et al.'s (2012) social accountability framework to test out a new configuration of these ideas for the analysis of NGO's ability to cultivate supportive conditions for social democratic development. This is therefore a timely research study which will be able to make both an empirical and theoretical contribution in response to a recently emergent phase of international development.

Uganda presents a particularly interesting case for the investigation of these issues. Uganda has been hailed a 'rising star' of inclusive neo-liberalism's PRSP process, having successfully taken a participatory approach to the development and implementation of their own Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), and implemented a decentralisation program that was once considered to be 'one of the most far-reaching local government reform programs in the developing world'

(Craig and Porter, 2006, Francis and James, 2003: 325). The Ugandan framework for poverty reduction is thought to have benefited the chronic poor and the Government has made significant progress towards the MDGs (CPRC, 2006). Despite these markers of progress, there is evidence to suggest that poverty levels are on the rise, with exclusion and self-exclusion from decision-making and development initiatives identified as prominent factors within the poverty dynamics of the chronically poor, and progress considered to have served the 'working' or 'active' poor disproportionately to the poorest (CPRC, 2006, Krishna et al., 2006).

Sceptics have also questioned the Museveni regime's commitment to the inclusion and democratisation agenda (Craig and Porter, 2006, Hickey, 2005). Civil society participation in development policy making is thought to have gone from consultative rather than deliberative within PEAP revision processes, to negligible within the formative stages of the latest National Development Plan (NDP) (Hickey, 2012). Throughout this policy trajectory, participation is considered to have been highly selective, to the exclusion of popular organisations like trade unions, and tensions have been highlighted between 'bottom up' participatory processes and 'top down' priorities that have already been decided by central government (Craig and Porter, 2006, Piron and Norton, 2004).

A number of observers have also stressed that Museveni's pursuit of decentralisation is part of a political project to secure central control over local areas rather than a sign of political will for democratisation. This is underlined by an under-resourced local government sector, in receipt of central transfers that are subject to central conditionalities, and correspondingly poor levels of participation by, and accountability towards, local communities (Craig and Porter, 2006, Francis and James, 2003, Golooba-Mutebi, 2004, Hickey, 2005, Tripp, 2010). While the

NRM came to power with promises of popular democracy and the protection of human rights, the first twenty years of the regime were characterised by a no-party system (Kasfir, 1998). Despite introducing multi-partyism in 2006 in response to international and domestic pressure, the regime has become increasingly authoritarian with parliament, the judiciary, the media and political opponents subject to repression and coercion, or to co-optation into the NRM (Kasfir, 2010, Mwenda, 2007, Tangri and Mwenda, 2010, Tripp, 2010). The research consensus suggests that NGOs operating within such a restricted space are unable to bring a grass roots perspective into development planning and implementation and are predominantly focused on project level intervention as opposed to political empowerment or challenge (Barr et al., 2005, Hickey and Mohan, 2005, Katusiimeh, 2004, Lister and Nyamugasira, 2003, Robinson and Friedman, 2007).

Yet, the case study organisation (TCSO from here onwards), claims to be promoting greater socio-economic and political equality, and more substantive participation within development planning, monitoring and implementation (Internal, 2010a). It takes a holistic approach to development addressing issues of power and disadvantage at the local community level through support to producer cooperatives, as well as awareness-raising work at village level and within civil society and local government. Through the development of local civil and political leadership forums, it is brokering collaboration across civil-political and ethnic divides underpinning all these efforts with up to date research and information.

TCSO therefore presents a highly relevant case for the study of how NGOs may or may not be able to negotiate complex and restrictive political terrain to secure more conducive conditions for the emergence of social democratic approaches to development.

1.5   Methodology

The case study investigation took place over a total of twelve months of fieldwork during which time I also held an advisory role within the organisation. An overview of the different phases of the research is provided in Appendix 1.

1.5.1   Research questions and objectives

Beyond the overarching research question that forms the title to the thesis the case-specific research questions framing the study have been:

1. To what extent has TCSO cultivated supportive conditions for more social democratic development processes?
2. What has facilitated and constrained TCSO's ability to cultivate these conditions?

In investigating these questions the objectives have been to contribute to wider development debates concerning the politics of development and the capacity of NGOs to reshape societal power relations; to contribute useful lessons for development practitioners in Rwenzori and Uganda more widely; and to identify areas for further research that might contribute to the evolution of more empowering approaches to development.

1.5.2   Perspective and approach

My perspective integrates critical realist ontology and epistemology with a critical modernist positioning and an action research philosophy. Critical realists conceive of 'a world composed, in part, of complex things (including systems and complexly

structured situations) that, by virtue of their structures, possess certain powers, potentials, and capacities to act in certain ways even if those capacities are not always realized' (Bhaskar, 1989, Patomaki and Wight, 2000: 213). The aim of research is therefore to identify and illuminate 'the structures, powers and tendencies that structure the course of events' (2000: 213). Knowledge of this reality (that exists independently of experience and linguistic construction) emerges through the revision and reframing of 'pre-existing knowledge' such as theories, paradigms and hypotheses (2000: 224). Although all beliefs are socially constructed and therefore fallible within this positioning, some theories about the nature of reality are more plausible, or better constructed than others, and may therefore take us closer to the independently existing reality critical realists seek to understand (2000: 224).

This positioning frames the research study which seeks to identify the ways in which a particular organisation has interacted within a complex political economic system to achieve certain effects and the extent to which certain powers, potentials and capacities have been shaped and realized both within the NGO and within the social world it attempts to influence. It is supportive of the interpretive approach adopted during the research investigation in terms of generating multiple perspectives about the nature of the research problem, evaluating the evidence (using the analytical approach outlined below) and constructing my own understanding (Blaikie, 2000, Mason, 2002). Positioned at the constructivist end of critical realism (Blaikie, 2000), my perspective also complements the critical modernist 'ethics of development' and epistemology that underpins the study which is critical of the current capitalist model of development, has an ethical drive to meet basic needs to ensure well-being and seeks solutions in strategies employed by the poor themselves to contest their condition (Mohan and Hickey,

2004: 63, Peet and Hardwick, 2009). Critical modernists are receptive to multiple perspectives on the nature of reality, and therefore value grass roots knowledge, but without 'romanticising' it as 'incontrovertible truth' (Mohan and Hickey, 2004: 63, Peet and Hardwick, 2009).

Coming from a professional background in participatory action research (PAR), but constrained by the ethical risks involved in attempting action research within a time-limited project in an unfamiliar political-economic environment, I have attempted to at least encourage critical reflection among research participants – a key principle within the PAR 'family of approaches' (Reason and Bradbury, 2006: xxii). I engaged villagers, farmers and civil society actors in reflection on the development challenges they were facing and the kind of changes or action that would be necessary for these challenges to be overcome, or changes to be achieved (Fals Borda, 2006). Such an orientation integrates well with both critical realist philosophy, in terms of encouraging recognition of the 'powers, potentials and capacities' of different actors and the constraints on their realization, and critical modernism, in terms of seeking solutions in the strategies employed by popular actors themselves (Mohan and Hickey, 2004).

The multi-dimensional social processes, systems and structures described above would have been hard to measure with quantitative tools so the research has attempted to capture this complexity through the use of multiple qualitative methods (Eisenhardt, 1989, Mason, 2002) to be described in more detail below.

1.5.3 Selection decisions

Although I had already established links with TCSO, case selection was also strategic in terms of the organisation presenting an anomalous case in relation to the existing Ugandan civil society literature which has generally suggested that the sector is too weak to have any significant impact. In contrast, this NGO claimed to be linking up issues of socio-economic disadvantage with civil and political rights, building a stronger civil society voice, and fostering cooperation across ethnic and state/civil society divides. It therefore presented a pertinent case for exploring critical contemporary development debates concerning the politics and political economy of development.

I initially selected interventions focused on the three strategies for cultivating social democratic development defined above. Like Kabeer et al., I started out with the hypothesis that interventions focused on microfinance and production were 'more likely to achieve developmental impacts relating to livelihoods, assets and opportunities' while interventions focused on social justice 'were more likely to bring about changes in the political subjectivity and agency of their members' (2010: 19). TCSO's Human Rights and Good Governance (HRGG) interventions were therefore selected for investigation because of their focus on rights and policy awareness and increasing citizen and civil society participation and influence within development planning and implementation. These partly incorporated the organisation's civil society building work and leadership retreats which were selected for the same reason. Research and information work cuts across all TSCO interventions, and data about their Think Tank initiative emerged out of the focus on their leadership retreats and my advisory work with the organisation. This decision also dictated the time-span focused on as the initial

formulation of these kinds of HRGG interventions began in 2005. I decided this would also act as a good time marker during interviews because of the shift to multi-party elections in 2005 and the Presidential elections of 2006. As data generation got underway, it became clear that investigation of TCSO's work with farmer groups would be more significant for outcomes relating to political agency and capabilities and these interventions were then included in the research.

The political economy of the two sub-counties selected for village to sub-county data generation (Bukuuku and Mahyoro) is presented in Chapter 4. They were selected because together they offered insight into the fullest range of TCSO's interventions and a broad contextual range, but this is not a comparative study. These areas (including one pilot area) were also selected because they are regarded as model-sub-counties in TCSO in terms of intervention outcomes and the research is focused principally on the possibility of NGOs facilitating change and the conditions under which change has been possible. Parishes and villages were selected according to contextual range and potentially interesting outcomes for investigation that were identified during informal discussions with staff and Community Process Facilitators (CPFs).[1]

1.5.4 Sources and methods of data generation

TCSO will be introduced in Chapter 4, but for present purposes can be characterized as a 'hybrid' in terms of operating according to both pragmatic and ideological drivers, engaging in multiple development strategies, with popular, civil society, state and political actors, at a range of entry points from the village up to

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[1] CPF's are local community activists who facilitate some of TCSO's development processes at community level and act as an information channel or link between TCSO and the communities where the organization operates. Their role is described in more detail in Chapter 4.

the national level (Bázan et al., 2008, Edwards, 2009). The multi-levelled methodological approach adopted reflects this hybridity, in engaging a wide range of data sources and participants so as to capture the interrelationships between structural conditions and localised interventions, and to generate the multiple interpretations of the social world that a critical realist philosophy seeks to evaluate in drawing out a new and revised understanding (Patomaki and Wight, 2000). Multiple methods for data generation were also applied to the investigation in support of a process of triangulation that would help to maximise the credibility of that interpretation (Dey, 1993, Miles and Huberman, 1994, Patomaki and Wight, 2000).

A description of the data sources and methods used and the kinds of data they generated follows. The section concludes with a discussion of the methodological and ethical challenges experienced and how these were addressed. Primary data generation events are listed by reference code in Appendix 2 and documentary sources listed in the bibliography. Appendix 3 provides a weighting of data generation by participant type. Data generation focused most intensively on staff and CPFs of the TSCO, farmers or village residents, and local councillors or civil servants up to sub-county level. This is because TCSO has invested most of their resources at these levels and because the research is informed by an epistemology that values grass roots perspectives and seeks solutions to disadvantage in the strategies employed by those groups (Mohan and Hickey, 2004, Peet and Hardwick, 2009).

Documentary analysis

Key organisational and intervention-focused literature was selected for analysis according to relevance, availability, and temporal scope. Review of local government documentation was limited to district and sub-county development plans, budgets and accounts on grounds of relevance and manageability. I also examined school and health unit records and the minutes of management committee and village meetings. Review of national policies and development plans was led by the theoretical and context-specific literature reviews and by key issues arising from primary data generation. TCSO's internal documentation was valuable for determining their ideological positioning and strategic objectives, both in a holistic sense and relating to particular projects, or a technical understanding of how processes were supposed to work and fit together. Local government documentation and management committee or local council records were valuable sources of financial information, and for providing information about particular meetings, events or projects. They were also of varying quality, or sometimes only available in draft form, so some data had to be verified or gaps filled in during interviews or informal discussions with local government or other relevant actors. This kind of data had to be weighed against the effects of various incentives such as the need to demonstrate results and innovation in order to generate funding.

Participant observation

I selected participant observation (PO) as a method in order to cultivate a deeper understanding of the processes being investigated by experiencing some of these in person and in real time rather than second hand and in abstraction from research participant accounts (Bryman and Teevan, 2005). PO opens the research up to unexpected findings, and can reveal 'links between behaviour and

context' or sensitive issues that research participants choose not to discuss openly yet may be key to understanding the issues under investigation (Bryman and Teevan, 2005: 207, Mason, 2002). It also involves constant reflection and re-negotiation of your position on the spectrum from pure observer to pure participant which is discussed further under methodological challenges below (Mason, 2002).

Participation within TCSO included staff meetings and reflections, staff training of CPFs, CPF review and reflection meetings, external meetings and events including a sub-county dialogue meeting, CPF sensitisations at sub-county and village level, Think Tank meetings, leadership retreats and national level NGO events. I also facilitated reflection sessions for staff serving the dual purpose of data generation and enabling reflection about their own strategic direction or programme approaches. Notes were either made simultaneously or engagements were audio recorded and transcribed. Further reflections were noted at the end of the day. Sometimes I was a pure observer for example at trainings and events, sometimes I participated fully either as facilitator or as an external participant/advisor. Regular informal chats with staff and CPFs helped with identifying areas for investigation, interesting case studies, or gaining clarification over points of confusion. I also shadowed, observed, and/or participated in events organised by CSO workers and volunteers from three other organisations (one national, one regional and one farmer cooperative operating across three sub-counties in Kasese district), and regional civil society events, to ensure I was building a wider picture of civil society dynamics.

Participant observation within the organisation has provided rich insight into organisational dynamics and the actual workings of programmes in practice as well as highlighting key issues for further investigation or verification using other

methods. It also provided a positive platform from which to engage in learning exchange because I was able to form stronger relationships with staff than would otherwise have been the case. This facilitated more productive interviews and informal discussions, and multiple channels for sharing my own knowledge and experience where relevant. A three month set up phase enabled me to share plans in progress for the research from an early stage and receive feedback and input from staff members, fostering a positive environment for engagement with the research findings. PO generated extensive data about the internal culture of the organisation, current challenges and tensions including problematic relations between some members of staff that would not have come out during qualitative interviews without this background knowledge. I was also better able to understand TCSO's approach to human resource development which helped to identify challenges for programme implementation. These experiences confirm the arguments in the methodological literature that formed the basis of the selection decisions outlined above (Bryman and Teevan, 2005, Mason, 2002).

Semi-structured interviews and focus groups

In order to understand the underlying systems, structures and capacities that are constraining and facilitating social democratic development, the kinds of NGO strategies that might engage with this political economic context effectively, and the kinds of capacities an NGO might need to effectively implement such strategies, it was necessary to generate and then triangulate multiple accounts about these issues through interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs). These had the character of a 'conversation with a purpose' led by a topic guide, rather than a highly structured list of questions which kept the discussion focused ultimately on TCSO and its effects, but also left room for data to be generated

about issues that hadn't been considered in advance (Mason, 2002: 74). As the methodological literature suggests, both these methods generated data about issues that couldn't be physically observed within the constraints of my study such as gender roles within the household, and about past events and processes (Bryman and Teevan, 2005). Interviews in particular gave people the opportunity to talk about issues that they might not have been prepared to discuss in front of others such as the effectiveness of colleagues within civil society organisations or local councillor views about the effectiveness of parish chiefs (Bryman and Teevan, 2005, Mason, 2002), while focus groups gave participants the chance to develop their thoughts and ideas by entering discussion with others – such as the wider effects of membership of a farmer group for example - and were helpful in terms of getting a sense of wider consensus views about particular issues – such as the effectiveness of village meetings (Bryman and Teevan, 2005).

Transcription of voice recorded interviews following the initial pilot phase led me to conclude that the act of recording increased the formality of the exchange (Gideon and Moskos, 2012). I therefore opted to take notes rather than record most of the remaining interviews or discussions, using the recorder only where a research participant spoke very quickly.

TCSO staff and CPFs

Before data generation with local level participants commenced, one semi-structured interview and five informal discussions were conducted with staff with responsibility for the interventions under investigation, four interviews with the two CPFs linked to the sample sub-counties (including one with each during the pilot phase), and a FGD with all the CPFs working in the two districts where the sub-counties are located. Triangulated with notes from documentary analysis, and PO

of external training sessions during the pilot phase, this provided a baseline understanding of the intended programme outcomes and strategies that it was claimed were being implemented, as well as perceived achievements and challenges, ahead of direct interaction with project participants and other locally embedded actors.

Four further semi-structured interviews were conducted with staff responsible for the interventions during the course of local level data generation and two with the two CPFs towards the end of all local level fieldwork between May and June 2011. This offered the opportunity for verification and clarification in relation to other actors' accounts of events and processes, and for reflection about some of the themes that were emerging from on-going data reduction and analysis.

Senior managers participated in a reflection based on Bázan et al. (2008), about the ideological positioning, experiences and constraints of research-oriented NGOs. This provided rich data about the ideological and strategic trajectory of TCSO, the drivers and constraints that had shaped that trajectory, TCSO's current positioning within the political economic environment, and the current strategic outlook of the leadership. Interviews were also conducted with all members of the Senior Management Team (SMT), with a British expatriate advisor and former board member, and with two representatives from donor agencies, over the course of fieldwork. These generated data about organisational strategy, culture and relations, the achievements and challenges of particular initiatives, external drivers and pressures, and the current aid environment. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with two CPFs outside the sample sub-counties because of their extensive experience of the organisation which generated useful data about the

changing role of CPFs and their relationship with staff of TCSO, and with the communities where they are based.

Village to sub-county level

I communicated at village level and with farmer groups in partnership with my interpreter and research assistant. In Bukuuku, group discussions at village level were organised with assistance either from LC1 councillors, the CPF, or local activists that we had engaged along the way and there were only two groups to choose from that were supported by TCSO. In Mahyoro, we selected farmer groups ourselves from the membership list of a local CBO umbrella body and included both new and long established groups, women's groups and mixed groups, and a combination of savings groups and producer groups. We were also able to talk to people informally during observations of community level meetings and sensitisations. These interviews and discussions with farmers also generated data about HRGG interventions and local governance processes.

Group discussions in both sub-counties were followed up with semi-structured interviews either with new participants or participants from the preceding group discussion aimed at gaining a wider variety of perspectives, generating more detailed data about particular issues, or to investigate issues participants may not have been comfortable to discuss in a group setting (Bryman and Teevan, 2005). Interviews were also conducted with LC1 councillors, successful candidates from NRM party primaries (called flag bearers), parish and sub-county civil servants and councillors. Sub-county chiefs and LC3 chairs, and health workers, teachers and health unit and primary school management committee members of facilities selected for investigation were interviewed as standard purposive interviews in both sub-counties. Beyond the farmer groups in the sample sub-counties, I was

also able to hold short FGDs with members of two sub-county level Marketing Associations (MAs) outside the sample areas, at the end of training sessions facilitated by TCSO.

In terms of encouraging critical reflection, interviews and FGDs with farmers, village residents or CBO leaders included questions geared at facilitating their own analysis of development challenges or TCSO's interventions and encouraging reflection as to what action they themselves could take in response to the situations they were describing. Where I felt I had enough expertise and there was little risk involved for those I was interacting with, I shared ideas about community mobilisation and advocacy. I also invited all the local level organisations, groups and, where possible, individuals to reflection sessions at sub-county level to give initial feedback on the data I had generated and to engage a diversity of participants in reflection and analysis of the situation the data described.

Regional/national leaders and other NGOs

Interviews with other NGO or civil society actors at regional and national level focused both on their experience of TCSO and their experiences within the sector and of the wider political-economic landscape. Interviews with LC5 councillors focused on issues such as the 2011 elections, their experience of TCSO's interventions and their take on events described by other actors from village to sub-county level. One national journalist was interviewed because of his connections to the Rwenzori region, and his prolific publications and commentary on Ugandan political-economy. An interview with the Minister for Local Government was motivated both by his position as MP within one of the sample sub-counties and his experience of local government.

1.5.5 Data analysis and building an argument

I have sought to develop an argument that is interpretive, reflexive and can be defended as reasonable on the basis of the critical presentation of a range of experiences including my own as the data gatherer, analyst and interpreter (Mason, 2002). Data analysis has consisted of three concurrent processes of data reduction (transcription, annotation, categorisation), data display (diagrammatic search for patterns, category refinement) and argument development (drawing out themes and patterns) (Dey, 1993, Miles and Huberman, 1994). Categorisation was guided by the research objectives and theoretical and context-specific literature in an on-going process of revision and refinement. This process led to the adoption of Williams (2004) political capabilities framework for analysis and write up which will be discussed in Chapter 2. Data reliability and validity has been built upon the triangulation of data from interviews, FGDs and observations from a wide variety of actors, and evaluation of weight, quality, theoretical significance, and the presence or absence of conflicting cases (Dey, 1993, Miles and Huberman, 1994).

In terms of having wider relevance, the research reflects arguments made by both Yin (1984) and Stake (1995), that single case studies can add to our understanding of complex processes by either adding validity to existing findings within the literature or highlighting contrasts which raise questions about existing theories and findings. Although TCSO is a particular kind of organisation operating within a particular kind of political economic environment, and as the findings will come to show, is engaging in processes which in some cases are quite unique within the context of Ugandan civil society, Chapter 8 draws out lessons that will be helpful for thinking and practice beyond this case.

1.5.6 Methodological and ethical strengths and challenges

There have been a series of methodological challenges and ethical concerns to address. As a white, Western, middle-class woman I was significantly socially, economically and culturally removed from almost all of the research participants (Fawcett and Hearn, 2004, Woodhouse, 2003, Srivastrava, 2006). There were multiple reasons why participant accounts and documentation might be coloured in ways which obscured the actual nature of events. Among villagers and farmers these might include the hope I could channel funding into a group or project, fear of speaking out about problems or challenges in front of other participants, fear that I might repeat what they have said to a power holder of some kind, or simply a lack of rapport meaning a participant is not comfortable to speak honestly and openly (Johnson and Mayoux, 1998, Srivastrava, 2006). Some of these concerns might also apply to politicians and civil servants encountered as well as wishing to toe the party or government line. These and other actor accounts may be affected by their relationship with TCSO, which might result in either disproportionately positive or negative portrayals. Within the organisation, similar power dynamics may have applied, or there may have been concern that I might unearth poor performance or wrong doing, or a danger that more junior staff associated me with senior managers due to the top-down nature of my entry into the organisation (Bryman, 1989).

Although my research assistant and interpreter shared an ethnic identity with many of the research participants and grew up in a small-holder farming household, as a university graduate working with a Western researcher, it is safe to assume he was seen as an urban, middle-class elite by most of the research participants at a village and farmer group level (Mercer and Green, 2013). His

social positioning may have coloured his own attitude towards the research participants and affected the way he engaged with them and the language he used in ways which could have undermined rapport and constrained the depth and quality of the data being generated (Irvine et al., 2008). Even with extensive experience of interpretation, the act of communicating meaning across culture, class, and very different language systems inevitably creates extensive opportunity for losses of meaning and information or misrepresentation (Ficklin and Jones, 2009).

Traditional critiques of the PO method also applied such as the potential to lose objectivity within a dual positioning as researcher and participant, and ethically, the degree to which the formation of close working relationships with research subjects might result in the exploitation of trust (Hill, 2004, Mason, 2002). Any approach that relies on retrospective qualitative accounts is also subject to the inaccuracies and subjectivity of memory (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000). Attribution is also always a central concern for assessing the impact of a particular initiative. And finally, there was a risk that the research might be extractive or interfere disproportionately in the lives and livelihoods of participants (Bryman and Teevan, 2005).

I have employed a number of strategies to attempt to overcome these challenges. Firstly, before travelling to Uganda I gained approval from the university ethics committee and research permission from the Ugandan National Council for Science and Technology and the Office of the President. Throughout fieldwork, I attempted to remain vigilantly reflexive about my positionality by holding regular,

one-to-one reflection meetings with certain key actors[2] about my approach, progress and impact. I consulted staff and CPFs about potential challenges with the initial research design during the three month formative phase to engage them with the research process from the earliest possible stage and lay foundations for later learning and action.

To avoid exploiting the trust of staff members or CPFs with whom I was spending a lot of time and forming strong relationships, I referred regularly to my research in our informal discussions to remind them of my dual positionality, followed clear and thorough information provision and consent processes which covered confidentiality and anonymity and the right not to participate at the beginning of the research project, and before interviews, discussions and reflections, and gave feedback about emerging themes in ways which ensured anonymity and confidentiality. To maintain good working relations with staff while sometimes sharing what could be perceived to be critical findings, I engaged them in reflecting on emerging data rather than presenting data to them as evidence or findings, enabling them to evaluate data and discuss its significance themselves.

On completion of fieldwork, I held a series of feedback and reflection sessions with staff of TCSO on a departmental basis to ensure that there was time for everyone to contribute and to allow staff to speak more freely than they may have done with a higher concentration of senior managers. I have also made arrangements for one of the organisation's advisors (who divides his time between the UK and Uganda) to hold a staff reflection about the key findings and conclusions of the final thesis. Feedback I received from certain staff members suggests that these

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[2] These included: the Director or senior managers of TCSO, a British expatriate advisor to the organisation, a postgraduate colleague conducting coterminous fieldwork in Uganda, and one of my supervisors during three supervision meetings over the course of the fieldwork period.

steps and the action research philosophy outlined above have contributed to counter-balancing extraction with mutual benefit.

Before beginning fieldwork in each of the sample sub-counties, I convened a small group of elders, to generate data about how these political economic environments had formed over time to ensure I was entering these areas with a degree of sensitivity and awareness of history and culture. My literature review for these areas was limited due to low availability of information. I spent six months learning some basic phrases in Rutooro, the most widely spoken language in one of the sample sub-counties and very similar to that of the other sample sub-county. I attempted to 'mediate' the multiple barriers between myself and these research participants (Srivastava, 2006) by investing time in holding informal conversations, giving information about and answering questions about myself. I always attempted some basic exchanges in the local language which at least introduced some humour and helped to create a more relaxed environment for communication. In addition to carefully explaining informed consent, I spent significant time stressing my complete disconnect from donor agencies, and my inability to influence which groups or projects gained support from TCSO.

My approach to interpretation was aided by previous professional experience of working with interpreters and both built upon and reflected the experiences of Jones and Ficklin (2009), who frame the researcher/interpreter relationship as 'a complex negotiation of meaning embedded in personal and professional positionalities' (2009: 110). My research assistant and I spent a preparatory afternoon discussing my research perspective, questions and initial plans and the challenges of interpretation and reflexivity. We had preparatory discussions before data generation events and de-briefs about the interpretation process, our

respective understandings of the data generated, and weaknesses in the data at the end of each day. As well as enhancing the research process by engaging a well-informed local actor within the on-going analysis this was to some degree motivational and encouraged professional development. We agreed he would use as close to verbatim interpretation as the two languages allowed, but where participants were struggling to grasp the meaning of particular questions he also had leeway to reframe the question in a more accessible way. There were inevitably good days and bad days for communication, but the response of participants and the kinds of data generated – in terms for example of how well local accounts integrated with accounts from other actors and sources – suggest that overall we negotiated the tricky field of interpretation adequately enough to generate reliable data.

In terms of assessing whether the outcomes people discussed could be directly attributed to TCSO, I spent time reflecting on other possible causal factors to assess the weight that actors attached to TCSO in comparison to these factors. I also asked for concrete examples of any changes that people attributed to the work of the organisation. Above all, I attempted to triangulate different actor accounts, observational data and documentary analysis (Mason, 2002, May, 2001, Salmen, 1987).

I believe the strategies described above have ensured a sufficient degree of rigour. There is a methodological weakness within the thesis conclusion that TCSO's interventions have benefited rural elites more than poorer rural citizens however, which is based purely on qualitative information about educational background, occupations, and living circumstances, and on certain assumptions about social and economic status (for example that being more educated equated

to being wealthier). A short survey at the end of qualitative interactions to collect data on socio-economic status would have generated a more robust finding. Part of the problem here was that farmer groups were not initially part of the research design and fieldwork was already halfway to completion before these interventions were included.

1.6   Thesis structure

The thesis unfolds as follows: Chapter 2 takes the divergent ideological interpretations of processes of development and democratisation presented above, and explores the ways in which these have shaped framings of the role of NGOs within these processes. It begins with a discussion of what kinds of political economic conditions have been considered supportive for the emergence of social democratic development and ends with a presentation and brief evaluation of the conceptual framework that informs the thesis findings and conclusions. Chapters 3 and 4 provide the national and regional political economic background for the research respectively, and Chapter 4 also introduces TCSO in more detail including a description of the character of the organisation and the interventions investigated during the research.

Chapters 5 to 7 begin to address the core research objectives by presenting findings about the ways in which TCSO has and has not been able to cultivate supportive conditions for democratic development, framing these outcomes in terms of Williams (2004) political capabilities framework, and the political-economic and organisational capacity factors that have shaped the extent to which this has been possible. Chapter 5 addresses debates about the extent to which the good governance agenda has created space for shifts in state/citizen relations

(Corbridge et al., 2005, Chatterjee, 2006) and about the de-politicisation of participatory development (Cooke and Kothari, 2001, Hickey and Mohan, 2004), and discussions about the political potential of producer cooperatives (Agarwal, 2010, Kabeer et al., 2010). It focuses on TCSO's civic education work with village residents and local councillors to enhance the effectiveness of the local government system in relation to bottom-up planning, and their organisational development work with farmer groups and associations to develop leadership and co-operative capacity which may in turn have contributed to increased participation in, and influence over, development planning and governance. Chapter 6 engages with questions as to whether social accountability initiatives undermine existing democratic processes and institutions (Goetz and Jenkins, 2005), and the politics of elite versus popular representation within strategies for more substantive democratisation (Törnquist et al., 2009). Findings are presented about TCSO's social accountability interventions with school and health unit management committees, local civil servants and councillors, including civic education for good governance and public expenditure monitoring research and the convening of multi-stakeholder dialogues. Chapter 7 engages with arguments in the literature concerning the need to marry formal representation with alternative forms of direct popular representation (Törnquist et al., 2009) and the need for struggles for justice to reach beyond the local project level (Mohan and Stokke, 2000). It charts TCSO's move beyond projects to more programmatic attempts to increase political capabilities among civil society actors and engage power holders in analysis of the actual experiences of disadvantaged groups at the grass roots through the creation of new deliberative spaces including leadership retreats, a regional MPs forum, and the establishment of a research Think Tank in collaboration with a regional university and district-level local governments.

In summary, four potential areas of social democratic impact will be examined in relation to TCSO's interventions: citizen influence over development planning; citizenship capabilities for claims-making alongside state accountability for effective service provision; economic association as a route to increased citizenship agency and influence; and finally, civil society and state collaboration for locally-driven development alternatives and/or effectiveness. Chapter 8 summarises the outcomes that have been discussed, draws together analysis of the political economic and political capacity drivers and constraints that have shaped these outcomes, and presents thesis conclusions about the potential for NGOs to cultivate supportive conditions for social democratic development in Uganda and more widely.

2 Can NGOs cultivate social democratic development? A literature review

'...perceptions of NGOs are tied up with contested notions of what it means to do good. At stake are the very notion of the good and the process of deciding what it is and how to pursue it.' (Fisher, 1997: 446)

2.1 Introduction

As Fisher illuminates, an assessment of the ways in which NGOs may be able to cultivate supportive conditions for a more social democratic development process is positioned within normative debates about the goals of development and democratisation. More than this, it necessitates analysis of the relationship between development interventions and immanent processes of social, economic and political change, and between political processes and political economy, as well as the organisational characteristics that might enable or impede NGO actors in their pursuits (Bebbington, 2004). Chapter 1 has provided some conceptual clarification about divergent ideological perspectives on democratic development. These will inform the discussion to follow which begins with a consideration of the political economic conditions that have been associated with the emergence of social democracy in developing contexts (e.g. Sandbrook et al., 2007). Key characteristics include a strong reformist state, organised political competition, a degree of capitalist development, and the presence of social movements or a robust civil society: a tall order for many developing regions at the current juncture.

This discussion provides further insight into the divergent perspectives on existing and potential roles for NGOs within social or liberal forms of democratisation and the organisational characteristics that facilitate or restrict fulfilment of those roles,

which are the topic of the subsequent section. The roles assigned to NGOs within these debates can broadly be grouped into civil society building; the innovation of people-centred alternatives; and representation or mobilization of disadvantaged groups. Debates about organisational characteristics focus on whether NGOs display the normative characteristics they are assigned in practice and whether these characteristics actually enable or in fact impede the attainment of democratic outcomes. Section four goes on to consider some of the principle political economic factors shaping development trajectories in developing regions and the ways in which NGOs have been found to negotiate these complex contextual terrains. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the analytical framework that structures the thesis findings and analysis.

2.2   Political economic conditions for social democracy

Liberal and social democratic perspectives converge around a broad goal of more inclusive economic development but are divided in their analyses of the political economic conditions necessary for such a goal to be achieved, the kinds of reforms and interventions that might contribute to the emergence of these conditions, and the nature of that inclusion. Under the post-Washington consensus, 'poverty reduction through good governance' became the goal of development which was to be achieved through careful country-led institutional design and pro-poor policy reforms (Hickey, 2012). More recent liberal analysis suggests that this vision has failed because the right political economic conditions have not been in place. North et al. (2009) suggest that the kinds of universal institutions supportive of inclusive development within a capitalist system can only emerge after a long process of intra-elite bargaining which gradually includes a wider section of society over time. Therefore until elites can identify profitability in

opening up access to economic opportunities to a wider group on the basis of impersonal relationships rather than patronage 'the transplanting of institutions... cannot, in and of itself, produce political and economic development.' (2009: 264).

From a social democratic perspective, more inclusive economic development means a more equal distribution of power and resources, to be achieved by redistributive – particularly agrarian – reform (Herring, 2003). Recognising the historical contingency of the emergence of social democracies in the West, Sandbrook et al (2007) describe a set of political economic conditions under which social democratic reforms have emerged in 'the periphery' (specifically Chile, Mauritius, Costa Rica, and West Bengal and Kerala). They outline the importance of: capitalist transformation leading to a commercialisation of agriculture that realigns the balance of power away from landlords and towards small-holder farmers; a 'coherent and effective state with some autonomy from dominant classes' formed in response to either pressure from below, centralizing elites or both; and a 'robust civil society' (2007: 30-31). A series of studies highlight the importance of 'critical junctures' like elections and political struggle by leftist political parties and/or social movements for the achievement of redistributive reforms within these political economic conditions (Herring, 2003, Mohan, 2002, Moore, 2001, Sandbrook et al., 2007). West Bengal and Kerala are often cited as examples because the CPI-M's political autonomy from landed elites was a key enabling factor in the cross class alliance that achieved pro-poor reform in these states (Herring, 2003, Webster, 2002). Herring stresses how agrarian reform led by internal state champions and/or left of centre political parties is the only 'road to purposive poverty alleviation' that is not 'subject to distortions induced by social inequality' (2003: 78), and questions the 'curious silence' around the issue of redistribution in official discourse despite the fact that effective development in

South Korea, Japan and Taiwan has been enabled by 'fairly radical agrarian reform' (2003: 59).

Recent research into the politics of development in Africa suggests that the 'best-fit' governance conditions under which economic transformation can begin may be 'developmental patrimonialism' (Booth, 2012). That is, patronage-based regimes that 'centralise the management of rents and deploy them in support of a long-term vision' such as Rwanda's, whose recently successful provision of public goods is contrasted with Uganda's comparatively poor record (Booth, 2012: 29). Another recent synthesis study suggests that 'the emergence of a political leadership with an enhanced interest in winning elections on a public goods basis'; 'interest within the professional organisations of providers in improving their public reputation'; 'linkage of social movements to political parties', and 'client and voter interest in improved performance' are the combination of factors that can contribute to the emergence of better public goods provision and hence greater access to social and economic rights for the poor (Booth, 2012: 70, citing Unsworth, 2010). A key conclusion of the Africa Power and Politics Programme (APPP) is that governance challenges should be reframed as 'collective action problems' (as defined by Oström,1990) requiring local problem solving which can only be achieved by specific situational analysis and careful facilitation by locally embedded actors (Booth, 2012).

Whether the focus of discussion is the nature of immanent development processes and what is possible at different sequential stages or the kinds of intervention most likely to achieve more effective public services or pro-poor reforms, these debates are joined together by a number of common themes including the nature of, or how to engineer, economic transformation within capitalist systems; the need for,

or the effects of, shifts in the balance of power between elites and between elites and the poor, with a particular emphasis on the interests and incentives driving elites; and the centrality of key moments of political opportunity such as elections. The next section of the chapter will consider the role of NGOs both as actors within immanent processes of development and democratisation and as actors upon these processes in order to highlight some of the key debates that the research findings go on to address.

2.3 NGOs and democratic development: roles, characteristics and capacities

Debates about the role of NGOs in processes of democratic development identify three broad areas of either promise or achievement. These are firstly, supporting the development of a plurality of civil society organisations and networks resulting in a greater number of actors with the capacity to hold the state in check (Hadenius and Uggla, 1996, World Bank, 2004, Edwards, 2009); secondly, developing innovative, alternative and people-centred approaches to development and welfare which can be mainstreamed by the state (Bebbington et al., 2008, Fowler, 2000b, Hickey and Mohan, 2004, World Bank, 2004); and thirdly, working both with and on behalf of civil society groups - particularly the poor and marginalised - to advocate for the realisation of citizenship rights including the right to participate in development processes (Bázan et al., 2008, Corbridge et al., 2005, Michael, 2004, Cornwall and Coelho, 2007, World Bank, 2004). Although empirical studies of which civil society strategies are most effective under what contextual conditions are in short supply (Gaventa and Barrett, 2010, Bukenya et al., 2012), debates about the theoretical and empirical foundations for the roles played by NGOs in democratic development are principally informed by critiques

of organisational characteristics and capacities and political economic analysis of the developing contexts they are operating within.

The discussion therefore begins with an exploration of key debates about each of these three roles and the organisational capacities they are thought to require, which is followed by a consideration of key political economic drivers and constraints on the ability of NGOs to contribute to social democratic development.

2.3.1 Civil society building

From an inclusive neo-liberal perspective, NGOs can help democratise development by fostering a democratic, diverse civil society able to make pluralist claims on the state and hold the state in check (Hadenius and Uggla, 1996, World Bank, 2004). Within this framing, NGOs are credited with a voluntaristic and people-centred ethos, and flexible, democratic structures which inform their approach to fostering a democratic orientation in a broad range of civil society actors (Bratton, 1989).

Critics from across the alternative development spectrum have highlighted numerous problems with the above claims. Post-colonial and structuralist critiques contrast elite, urban based, professionalised, and non-membership NGOs with popular, localised civil society groups and associations, questioning the conflation of the NGO sector with civil society (Chatterjee, 2004, Lewis and Madon, 2004, Mamdani, 1996, Mercer, 2002, Stewart, 1997, Houtzager and Acharya, 2011). Mercer (2002) suggests that theoretical claims about NGOs as civil society builders masks the fact that the NGO boom was in fact a result of NGO positioning as service providers at an opportune moment within the evolution of global political

economy and neo-liberal development discourse. The discursive basis for positioning NGOs as democratic 'engineers' acting on undemocratic ethnically-driven African societies has been questioned with a number of studies of Southern NGOs identifying similar capacity constraints to those assigned to more localised CBOs. These include low human resource capacity, hierarchical rather than participatory organisational cultures and immersion within the same socio-political complexities of ethnicity, patronage and socially stratified power relations (Clarke, 1998, Fowler, 1991, Fowler, 2000a, Mercer, 2002, Robinson and Friedman, 2007). In contrast to their purportedly remote geographical reach, some studies find NGOs concentrated in urban centres either unable or unwilling to reach the poorest, most remote locations (Riddell et al., 1995, Robinson and Friedman, 2007).

Social democratic theorists frame civil society building as a democratising strategy for NGOs in terms of challenging the structural causes of poverty through capacity building popular organisations and coalitions, social movements, and fostering alternative deliberative spaces which offer substantive participation to disadvantaged groups (Cornwall, 2002, Fowler, 1991, Mitlin and Bebbington, 2006, Törnquist et al., 2009). However, for some post-colonial theorists and political economists, civil society building by 'professionalized' NGOs is one aspect of an increasing de-politicization of development (Bebbington et al., 2008, Ferguson, 2006, Harriss et al., 2004). This frames NGOs as externally-driven actors who at best distract attention and funding from indigenous civil society and at worst, 'bring an end to citizen-driven movements, losing the transformative power of radical ideas and threatening the sustainability of long-term processes seeking structural change' (Banks and Hulme, 2012: 21). For Chatterjee (2004), Western notions of liberal democracy are irrelevant to the poor and marginalised in

'most of the world', who must battle for their interests outside formal laws and institutions through the murkier world of what he terms 'political society', a space consisting of sometimes 'uncivil' means and ends mediated by brokers and patrons.

2.3.2 Innovative people-centred alternatives

Informal flexible approaches, strong ties to the grass roots and a comparatively smaller scale of operation to the state, are characteristics that fuelled the neo-liberal framing of NGOs as innovative providers of cost-effective welfare services at the turn of the millennium (World Bank, 2004). They have also been linked to what was once considered a 'niche competency' for NGOs – the development of empowering approaches to knowledge creation and social change such as participatory rural appraisal (PRA) and participatory action learning (Fowler, 2000b: 595). The appropriation of the participation agenda under inclusive liberalism through the mainstreaming of PRA within PRSP processes and the World Bank 'voices of the poor' initiative has fuelled concerns that it has become 'a quick and dirty technology for information extraction' however (World Bank, 2001, Singh, 2001: 176). Dagnino (2008) identifies a 'perverse confluence of meaning' in the misappropriation of formerly alternative, people-centred development discourse into the neo-liberal paradigm, while a number of theorists share concerns that NGO actors are internalising this discourse in a process of co-optation, rather than engaging with it critically (Abrahamsen, 2004, Biggs and Neame, 1995, Craig and Porter, 2006, Ferguson, 2007). Yet, advocates highlight how participatory approaches have created a 'rallying point' for like-minded development theorists and practitioners across local, national and global networks (Singh, 2001) and provide examples of how, when practiced with care and

expertise, and continually renewed and developed according to particular contexts and traditions, they have been effective at tackling disadvantage at least at a local level (Fowler, 2000b, Hickey and Mohan, 2004, Baluku et al., 2009, Waddington and Mohan, 2004).

There is increasing recognition nonetheless, that effective facilitation of participatory processes aimed at social change require a complex set of skills (Biggs and Neame, 1995, Cooke and Kothari, 2001, Farrington and Bebbington, 1993, Singh, 2001: 177), and of the limitations present within local level and particularly project based change (Mohan and Stokke, 2000, Cooke and Kothari, 2001). A widening consensus suggests that systemic change requires multiple strategies employed by a range of cross-sector and cross-class actors beyond the local (Mohan, 2002, Moore, 2001, Mosse, 2010).

Foucauldian analyses of development discourse and spaces for participation highlight the importance of 'claimed' or 'created' spaces where new discourses and competencies can be developed and the constraints within 'invited' spaces for formal participatory governance where agendas may have been set in advance and the rules of the game and technical discourses may exclude some attendees from effective engagement (Cornwall, 2002, 2004, Gaventa, 2004). Social movement theorists recognise the innovative potential of alternative deliberative spaces in which formerly excluded actors can participate for 'changing the terms of development debates', 'influencing policy and programme design' and generating 'new ways of thinking about development' that have the potential for 'shifting the state' (Mitlin and Bebbington, 2006: 10). NGOs are both actors within these emergent spaces and have played important roles as creators, brokers, facilitators and mediators of these interfaces and debates, and continue to be ascribed

significant roles in both intervention-led innovations and immanent processes of ideological change (Bebbington et al., 2008).

Critics of neo-liberalism find that the channelling of large amounts of donor finance through NGOs has severely undermined their capacity for innovation as they have become increasingly beholden to drives for managerialism and measurable, time-bound impact (Booth, 2012, Townsend et al., 2002, Thomas, 2008). Townsend et al. find that NGOs have acted as a 'neo-imperialist transmission belt for western ideologies and management practices aimed more at control than empowerment' (2002: 837) and there is a broad literature charting the rise of teleological log-frame development interventions through which quantitative poverty reduction outcomes can be evidenced but at the cost of messier but more substantive empowerment outcomes relating to the transformation of power relations (Bebbington et al., 2008; Edwards and Hulme, 1995, Ferguson, 2007; Thomas, 2008). Pressures on Southern NGOs to professionalize in order to effectively demonstrate impact and the onerous process of some application and reporting procedures can drain organisational energy away from the effective facilitation both of processes of empowerment and downwards accountability among the communities they are working with (Bebbington et al., 2008, Edwards and Hulme, 1995, Guijt, 2008).

Weighing up the evidence, it seems clear that the aid system is seriously constraining NGO capacity for strategic engagement in longer term systemic change. However, it is important to recognise that positive examples do exist of both donor-NGO relations that have facilitated the experimentation and long-term strategies necessary for tackling the structural causes of poverty (Guijt, 2008, Racelis, 2008), and of NGOs that have managed to balance their need for foreign

finance with an ideological commitment to downwards accountability (see for example: Miraftab, 1997, Mohan, 2001, Shah and Shah, 1995). Cases have also emerged in recent years of NGOs and popular organisations successfully reshaping the hierarchies of donor/NGO relations. Racelis (2008) describes how NGOs and CBOs in the Philippines succeeded in changing particular funding structures and processes at the World Bank and Asian Development Bank, and the homeless people's federations and support NGOs that comprise Slum/Shack Dwellers International have established an international fund of their own that grass roots organisations can apply to, which they are using to demonstrate the benefits of greater local autonomy to international donor agencies (Mitlin and Satterthwaite, 2007).

In terms of organisational capacities, civil society commentators interested in finding alternative positionings for NGOs, associate the success of those organisations that manage to resist externally driven agendas and maintain a coherence between mission and approach, in charismatic and strategic leaders who can inspire commitment internally and confidence with donors externally; the diversification of funding or generation of domestic sources of funding – through commercial consultancy for example, and a participatory learning environment which is flexible to changing priorities, needs and approaches (Bázan et al., 2008, Fowler, 1997, Michael, 2004, Smillie and Hailey, 2001). NGOs successful in scaling up alternative approaches can find themselves censured for losing their connections to the grass roots (Bebbington et al., 2008), but Michael (2004) charts the rise of certain large Asian and Latin American NGOs who have managed to exploit the above organisational capacities to translate scale into influence and international profile. This in turn, enables them to negotiate for more flexible

funding, thereby reducing the limitations placed on their capacity to innovate by narrowly defined donor agendas.

2.3.3 Representation and mobilisation of the poor and marginalized

Within the latest phase of the neo-liberal paradigm, NGOs have been accorded a role both as representatives of poor and marginalised groups within formal policy-making spaces, and mobilizers of these actors within the participatory planning spaces of decentralised government and what has come to be known as 'social accountability' processes. Under the terms of the good governance agenda, the participation of the poor in holding state service providers accountable became critical to increasing 'the power of poor clients in service provision' (World BankBank, 2004: 64), and following an initial focus on supply-side drives for more transparent and accountable local governance, demand-side initiatives have increasingly become the order of the day (Bukenya et al., 2012). Social accountability has been defined in a number of different ways but can be understood in general terms as 'citizen-led action for demanding accountability from providers' (Joshi and Houtzager, 2012). Related literature distinguishes between two different aspects of accountability: 'answerability' (the provision of information and justifications) and 'enforcement' (suffering penalties) (Goetz and Jenkins, 2005). The range of approaches and interventions encompassed by the term social accountability can broadly be categorised into either transparency initiatives (such as budget and expenditure monitoring); contentious actions (such as protests and advocacy campaigns); or participation in formal governance spaces (Joshi and Houtzager, 2012; Bukenya et al., 2012), however some analyses also include participation of civil society organisations in formal policy-making spaces such as within PRSP processes (Bukenya et al., 2012). NGOs are

considered legitimate actors in both policy and social accountability arenas because of their dual positioning as highly educated elites able to mobilize resources to support their activities, and as grass roots participatory facilitators and civic educators able to mediate state/citizen relations at the local level, translate grass roots claims-making into formal discourse, and explain complex policy discourse in everyday language (Bázan et al., 2008, Corbridge et al., 2005, Michael, 2004).

Responses to the good governance/social accountability agenda and perspectives on the role of NGOs within it have been, as ever, mixed, but alternative perspectives are increasingly united in their calls for a 're-politicization' of development theory and practice. Within a broadly social democratic school of critique, some analysts have identified opportunities within new participatory governance spaces for citizenship building and an enhancement of the state/citizen contract, particularly when these are combined with institutional reform which hence tackles 'both sides of the equation' (Corbridge, 2007, Corbridge et al., 2005, Cornwall and Coelho, 2007, Gaventa, 2004). Corbridge et al. for example highlight the importance of incremental changes to states' and citizens' 'sightings' of one another and to their own perceptions of rights and responsibilities to 'slow-burning processes of democratisation' (2005: 258), and to the emergence of popular mobilisations for social accountability such as the right to information campaign coordinated by *MKSS* in Rajasthan. Working to democratise existing spaces, NGOs are credited with building popular capacity for participation within decentralised decision-making processes, or advocating on behalf of poor or marginalised groups within these processes, in particular lobbying for redistributive reforms focused on socio-economic as well as civil and political rights (Waddington and Mohan, 2004, Mitlin, 2004a). NGO engagement in

aggregating and channelling claims-making has been framed as building state capacity for responsiveness while equipping state officials with necessary information and awareness, creating more conducive conditions for collaborative planning and implementation processes, and thereby strengthening existing democratic channels as well as developing alternative routes to influence (Gaventa, 2004, Goetz and Gaventa, 2001). Though sceptical about their mandate and influence, Bebbington et al. highlight the 'unprecedented levels of access' NGOs have now gained to policy-making processes through PRSP processes (2008: 15), and a number of studies have illuminated how increased CSO participation in policy spaces has led to pro-poor policy or political change (Cornwall and Coelho, 2007, Jeppesen, 2002, Heller, 2001, Rodgers, 2007).

Concerns that too many NGOs have been co-opted into a de-politicized development agenda have continued to grow however. In contrast to claims that NGOs perform a useful mediation role within policy-making spaces, more radical critiques suggest that their influence is weak in most developing contexts, that they have failed to consider the long-term effects of their lack of mandate on national accountability dynamics and hence that their participation only serves to diffuse political challenge and legitimise the hegemonic development paradigm (Bebbington et al., 2008, Lazarus, 2008, Lister and Nyamugasira, 2003, Mercer, 2002). The de-politicization critique suggests that the apparently more political turn within inclusive neo-liberal discourse disguises a continued construction of citizens as beneficiaries and NGOs as representatives of their individualized concerns rather than as facilitators of popular participation and mobilization (Bebbington et al., 2008). This can be seen for example in the Bank's emphasis on service user score cards, complaints systems, and technical experimental designs which as Goetz and Jenkins (2005) have argued have 'the disadvantage of divorcing the

enquiry process from any mobilization or participatory process involving the inhabitants of low-income neighbourhoods'. They chart a school of critique (2005: 181) that finds 'the new accountability agenda' fails 'to challenge the structural power of political elites' (e.g. Chandhoke, 2003, Harriss, 2001); stunts 'the growth of formal democratic institutions' (e.g. Jenkins and Tsoka, 2003), and contributes to a further 'erosion of trust, initiative and professional ethos' among public officials (Jayalakshmi et al., 2003, Woods and Narlikar, 2001).

Structuralist critiques continue to highlight the failure of development actors operating within the participatory spaces created within the good governance agenda to tackle power relations both within and beyond the local level (Mohan and Stokke, 2000, Moore, 2001, Mosse, 2007). These more radical social democratic perspectives suggest NGOs should remain focused on economic and social as well as political and civil rights through the mobilisation of the rural and urban poor against exploitative social, economic or political systems, such as discrimination against migrant groups, women, landless classes, or repressive regimes (Herring, 2003, Mosse, 2010). For Törnquist et al., (2009) the problem is how to integrate substantive popular representation within existing elitist governance structures and processes. They propose such shifts require development actors like NGOs to focus on three strategies for a redistribution of power: 'popular capacity building', 'popular organisation building' and cultivating state commitment to the 'facilitation of popular representation' (2009: 227). Training grass roots activists and providing accessible information about government regulations, policies, services and particularly budgets and expenditures is widely considered to be an area of relative effectiveness for NGOs both in terms of democratising development planning and implementation and within this more radical project (Corbridge, 2007, DFID, 2006, Edwards and

Hulme, 1995, Pollard and Court, 2008, World BankBank, 2004). NGOs have also engaged in 'political scaling up' (Uvin and Miller, 1996), by supporting the formation of federations of producer cooperatives and savings groups, creating new permanent representative structures to influence policy-making, developing the profile and financial and human capital of social movements, assisting civil society actors to form political parties or enter into existing ones, and linking local exploitation to global social justice campaigns (Bázan et al., 2008, Edwards, 2009, Katusiimeh, 2004, Pollard and Court, 2008, Uvin and Miller, 1996, Mitlin, 2004b).

The ability of elite, professionalized NGOs to facilitate such radical processes has been called into question, particularly by post-colonial and structuralist thinkers (Mercer and Green, 2013, Hearn, 2007, Townsend et al., 2002). Hearn (2007) for example, suggests that the channelling of vast amounts of foreign aid into the NGO sector in developing contexts has shaped processes of class formation by creating a new breed of elites who may be more interested in securing their next pay check than economic and social empowerment among the poor. The notion of 'briefcase NGOs' staffed by middle class elites subject to the pressures of patron/client social and kinship relations is a fairly common one in development studies (Dicklitch and Lwanga, 2003, Hearn, 2007, Townsend et al., 2004), but so too, increasingly, is an understanding of the potential political opportunities of intra-elite relations (Bratton, 1989, DFID, 2006, Fowler, 1991, Michael, 2004, Uvin and Miller, 1996, Wils, 1995). These links between intra-elite ethnic, religious or social ties and NGO policy and political influence will be examined within the discussion of NGO strategies and political economy below.

2.3.4 Re-politicizing development: research for transformation and federations of the poor

Continued concerns about NGO legitimacy, in terms of impact and accountability, and their ability to maintain an alternative identity and agenda while ensuring their own financial sustainability, have led those focused on a redistribution of power to promote a facilitative rather than interventionist role for NGOs, aimed at creating supportive conditions for social democratic or more radical change. Korten (1990) describes a 'fourth generation' NGO strategy focused on support to social movements and facilitating links from local concerns to global structural change (Banks and Hulme, 2012); Bebbington (1997: 1762) carves out a series of institutional alternatives for rural development NGOs in the Andean region, including as social enterprises for the support of 'popular organizations in the elaboration of development alternatives that the popular sectors would carry forward', to be financed out of agricultural marketing or from domestic, non-governmental private endowment funds. Fowler (2000c) describes 'a fourth position' for development NGOs in 'beyond aid scenarios' between state, market and civil society acting as a 'validatory watchdog' of all three sectors, promoting the realisation of human rights, and securing sustainability through diversification of funding and social entrepreneurialism. Mitlin and Satterthwaite (2007) suggest one way in which this may work in practice, describing IIED's role as researcher, documenter and facilitator of non-hierarchical linkages between the SDI federation, its local associations and support NGOs.

There are two key themes within this emerging discussion of particular relevance to the thesis findings: these are the power of research to generate new ways of thinking about development that have the potential to change the terms of the debate (Bázan et al., 2008, Mitlin and Bebbington, 2006, Hulme, 1994); and the

political potential of membership-based organisations of the urban and rural poor, particularly when organised into apex or federated structures, and when supported by NGOs or academic development institutes with a transformative vision (Kabeer et al., 2010, Mitlin, 2004b, Webster, 2002). Those interested in alternatives to neo-liberalism highlight the importance of research that promotes alternative ways of understanding development and of securing supportive resources in order to protect against the 'colonization' of discursive and imaginative space by those interested in maintaining the status quo (Bázan et al., 2008: 175, Hulme, 1994). Studies of social movements and effective moments of bottom up change have brought attention to the role of research centres and research-oriented NGOs in providing the capacity to generate evidence in support of advocacy and negotiations that have sometimes led to positive cases of empowerment and change (Bázan et al., 2008, Mitlin and Bebbington, 2006, Webster, 2002). Research can give legitimacy to civil society agendas and bringing quality into development debates (Bázan et al., 2008, Pollard and Court, 2008). Michael locates a key source of legitimacy and power for NGOs like DESCO and IBASE in Latin America, or BRAC in Bangladesh, in their ability to produce original knowledge through high quality research because 'by developing knowledge, NGOs can shape the landscape of the possible for both themselves and their beneficiaries' (2004: 149). In other words and in Gramscian terms, NGOs can construct counter-hegemonic narratives through research which if scaled-up and endorsed can shift the balance of power between elites and the poor (Bebbington et al., 2008, Michael, 2004, Pollard and Court, 2008). A fundamental and growing challenge however is to secure sufficient resources to pursue research aimed at systemic change rather than technical problem solving (Bázan et al., 2008) or social accountability techniques such as budget and expenditure tracking which can be positive steps towards greater transparency but are subject to the

limitations of existing institutions, regulatory bodies and budget cycles (Joshi and Houtzager, 2012, Robinson, 2006a).

A form of popular organisation of relevance to the thesis whose political potential in developing contexts seems to be under researched (Agarwal, 2010, Gaventa and Barrett, 2010, Kabeer et al., 2010) is what Agarwal terms 'producer collectivities' (2010: 64). These might include savings groups, micro-credit associations, farming and marketing cooperatives, or any grass roots group or federated association linked primarily to livelihood concerns. Through their membership and operations these groups and associations blur the boundaries between state, market and civil society and have been attributed mixed outcomes in relation to democratisation as have NGOs in relation to their actual and proscribed supporting roles.

Research into rural cooperatives since 1990s liberalization has focused principally on economic outcomes and in developing contexts particularly poverty reduction (e.g. Braverman et al., 2001, ILO, 2008, Wanyama, 2009) leading to calls from one US scholar for theorisation of a 'political economy of agricultural cooperation' (Mooney, 2004: 78-9). There are case studies within the South Asian (Agarwal, 2010, Ramesh, 2007, Webster, 2002) and Latin American (Bebbington, 1997, Jeppeson, 2002) literature of more politically focused cooperatives or cooperatives that have generated political empowerment outcomes, but it is harder to find studies from sub-Saharan Africa because of the particular historical trajectory the cooperative movement has followed in the region. Despite early links between popular organisation and anti-colonial forms of resistance, African cooperatives have moved through periods of co-optation and repression during colonial and post-independence eras into the challenges of economic liberalization in the mid-

1990s. A small number of earlier studies have nonetheless focused on the ability of farmers or producers to advance their interests via these local associations (Hedlund, 1988, Bunker, 1983), while more recently Engberg-Pederson has examined the political space created by the local organisational landscape in Yatenga province, Burkina Faso (2002), and Ferreira and Roque (2010) examine the citizenship potential of local farmer associations in Angola.

There are some cross-cutting lessons that can be drawn from these studies but as with the NGO literature more broadly, political economic context is considered critical to the kinds of capacity and room for manoeuvre these groups have experienced and the kinds of strategies it is suggested NGOs should employ in relation to them (Engberg-Pedersen and Webster, 2002, Hedlund, 1988, Coelho and Von Lieres, 2010). Key democratic outcomes achieved by these membership associations are in relation to increased incomes and social status as an enabling factor for participation in community and political life (Agarwal, 2010, Thorp et al., 2005, White, 1996); learning how to work with others, skills of negotiation, compromise and bargaining, gaining the confidence to speak out within the group and transferring these skills into other arenas (Thorp et al., 2005, White, 1996); and building a collective economic force capable of shaping the actions and decision-making of market, political or state actors (Blair, 2005, Ferreira and Roque, 2010, Thorp et al., 2005, Webster, 2002).

Facilitative factors which enable these kinds of outcomes to occur include: solidarity around livelihood concerns and/or a shared ethnic, class or gender identity, membership and savings-based finance, the cohesive effect of a shared external oppressor (such as state-based marginalisation for example), and the importance of a federated structure for having an influence at different levels of

market and state operations (Kabeer et al., 2010, Thorp et al., 2005, Agarwal, 2010). Organisational constraints include corruption or mismanagement, donor dependency, the valuing of individual over group interests including using groups as a spring board into politics or as a front for patron/client based resource distribution, and the exclusion of the chronic poor from group-based approaches to development (Agarwal, 2010, Kabeer et al., 2010, Thorpe et al., 2005).

NGOs that are able to provide support to these local associations without creating a relationship of dependency, and particularly those who can link this work to macro-level advocacy work, have been considered critical actors within democracy and citizenship building processes (Edwards, 2009, Smillie and Hailey, 2001, Michael, 2004). NGOs provide much needed capacity building support both in terms of skills and organisational development including the formation of federations of local associations (Thorpe et al., 2005; Ferreira and Roque, 2010; Webster, 2002); they play a key role in linking local cooperatives up with finance, technical expertise and equipment (Thorp et al., 2005; Farrington and Bebbington, 1993); and in building the capacity of members to represent their interests with state and market actors, or acting as their advocates (Ferreira and Roque, 2010, Webster, 1995, 2002). NGOs cast as critical actors within positive cases of rural cooperatives developing political capabilities have been attributed an explicit ideological and operational commitment to empowerment or social justice (Kabeer et al., 2010, Thorpe et al 2005, Farrington and Bebbington, 1993). Recent synthesis studies (Banks and Hulme, 2012; Booth 2012), suggest however that overall, NGOs have had a negative impact on producer organisations by creating dependency on their financial and technical support leading to the formation of unsustainable groups on the basis of finance rather than identity or common interest (Bano, 2012), draining energy away from justice and equality goals and

towards bureaucracy and chasing donor finance (Igoe, 2003), and undermining existing solidarity by attracting members with more suitable capabilities or characteristics for participation such as a higher social status and level of education (Gugerty and Kremer, 2008, Thorp et al., 2005).

2.3.5 NGO roles, characteristics and capacities: summary

NGOs continue to generate extensive contestation within debates about the goals of and strategies for achieving democratic development. Generalized debates give rise to a series of paradoxical judgements about their legitimacy and effectiveness as agents of democracy, as Smillie suggests: 'criticised by governments for their lack of professionalism, NGOs are then accused of bureaucratisation when they do professionalize' (1995: 147). NGOs may also experience tension between maintaining a presence at the grass roots and attempting to influence policy or scaling up (Michael, 2004); or struggle to maintain autonomy from linear and teleological imaginings of development while finding themselves overstretched by a more open-ended agenda (Farrington and Bebbington, 1993). Ultimately, what these paradoxes and the foregoing discussion suggests is that ideological perspective, context and politics matter, and that NGOs are a heterogeneous grouping which whether acting collaboratively or individually, can only ever be one piece in the puzzle of structural transformation.

2.4 NGOs, social democracy and political economy

 '...we can talk of greater legitimacy, transparency, accountability, and responsibility to others, some of the key 'requisites for good governance'. But the potential to achieve political participation is highly conditional upon the political environment... it is also dependent upon the socio-economic condition of the population' (Webster, 2002: 234).

This section integrates the preceding discussions regarding political economic conditions for the emergence of more inclusive development processes and the roles assigned to NGOs as contributors to these processes, by examining some of the critical political-economic drivers and constraints that NGOs may have to negotiate in pursuit of a redistributive agenda. These include the discord between informal cultures of governance and imported forms of liberal democracy, the nature of state-society and state-NGO relations, the balance of power between different social groups and socio-economic strata, and the influence of the international aid system on development trajectories.

2.4.1 Level of democratisation

The degree to which level of democratisation has a linear relationship with effectiveness of citizen mobilisation for socio-economic reform and more effective governance is contested. A number of studies find that no minimum degree of democracy is needed for NGOs or other civil society actors to mobilise for increased influence and voice (Michael, 2004, Thomas et al., 2001, Törnquist, 2002). Gaventa and Barrett (2010) find that the least and most democratic contexts have a higher proportion of positive outcomes from citizen engagement strategies than contexts which fall into their middle category of democratic context. Most recent synthesis studies find that there are better outcomes from demand-side mobilization in contexts where the formal system of democratic governance is substantive than in more patronage-based contexts (Citizenship, 2011, McNeil and Malena, 2010). Increasingly, development researchers and practitioners are calling for approaches to development that work 'with the grain' of patronage-based regimes in attempting to facilitate social and economic transformation and political transitions (Booth, 2012, Unsworth, 2010).

2.4.2 Patronage-based African regimes under inclusive neo-liberalism

To facilitate investigation into the potential of NGOs to promote social democratic development in African contexts, it is necessary to examine the interface between neo-liberal rhetoric and reforms and what Mamdani has called the 'specificity' of post-colonial African society (1996: 13). The colonial policy of 'divide and rule' 'set the stage for political instability, politicised ethnicity, and authoritarian rule' in post-colonial African states (Dicklitch and Lwanga, 2003: 487). Mamdani (1996) locates the failure of democratisation in Africa in a failure of successive regimes to simultaneously democratise urban and rural spheres of power. Rather than reforming the colonial power structure which constructed Western settlers as urban citizens ruling over rural indigenous subjects on racial grounds, post-independence regimes have simply replicated it. In this analysis, regimes have operated either 'conservative' decentralised systems preserving indirect rule on the basis of ethnic customary power and hence, ethnic tensions and inequalities; or 'radical' centralised systems rejecting ethnic differences but focusing power and development in urban areas at the expense of rural, placing extra-economic pressure on the rural poor, and holding them in poverty and servitude as 'subjects' of urban or local elite 'citizens' (1996: 25-7). This failure to 'de-tribalise' power has resulted in what Ekeh (1975) refers to as the 'two publics', one the formal political system and the other a 'network of ethno-political and economic allegiances which function alongside, within and across the boundaries of formal institutions' (Fowler, 1991: 54).

The imposition of Western institutional forms on to African post-colonial states such as decentralised government, multi-party elections and civil society

participation is considered by many structuralist analyses to have perpetuated this exploitative legacy (Craig and Porter, 2006, Mamdani, 1996, Stewart, 1997). In Mamdani's analysis, the introduction of multi-party elections without reform of customary power relations is 'explosive', while the decentralisation of government without the mechanisms for alliance building across central and local levels 'fragment the ruled and stabilise their rulers' (1996: 300).   Local government administrations have been subject to elite capture perpetuating patronage relations and the channelling of resources to wealthier areas and actors (Crook and Sverrisson, 2003). Inclusive liberal decentralisation reforms within patronage-based regimes have been found to meet the requirements of donor conditionalities without investing sufficient resources or receptivity into the system which continues to operate according to ethnic and elite privileges (*ibid.*).

When the primary political imperative is regime survival, policies are often driven by the need to garner votes (Tripp, 2010) and the distribution of development 'rents' motivated by a desire to avoid violent opposition from other elite groups (North et al., 2009, Tripp, 2010). This can lead to incoherent policies which fit the populist tendency within inclusive neoliberalism around social accountability, decentralisation and empowerment through participation while lacking financial and human capacity or the necessary incentives and sanctions to foster political will at the level of implementation (Booth, 2011). At a national level, and particularly when power is concentrated within the executive, oversight institutions like parliaments, human rights commissions and auditors may suffer from low levels of resources and hence capacity, and may lack teeth (Claasen et al., 2010, Menocal and Sharma, 2008). Local government officials who benefit from development rents and whose job security rests on good relations with more senior patrons within government rather than performance, may have little interest

in increasing transparency about development resources (Peruzzotti, 2002, Sundet, 2008) or making development pro-poor (Booth, 2011, Brett, 2003). Opportunities for more substantive participation and pro-poor decision-making can and do arise however. The presence of a viable political opposition can fuel drives within ruling parties to better understand public opinion or to project a responsive public image and bureaucrats have been found to engage in pro-poor alliances where such arrangements may benefit their own budgets or professional advancement (Cornwall and Coelho, 2007). The presence of 'internal champions' - reform-minded individuals with a deep felt commitment to pro-poor change has also been a key ingredient within effective demand-side initiatives for better governance or policy change (Aiyar, 2010, Chhotray, 2008, Goldfrank, 2007, Paul, 2011).

The degree to which NGO mobilization or representation of the poor is likely to influence political elites and state officials towards pro-poor social and economic reform or greater social accountability within patronage-based regimes is therefore tied up with regime motivations and the economic, social and political interests of local and national political elites (Booth, 2011, Brett, 2003, Craig and Porter, 2006, Crook and Sverrisson, 2003, Hickey, 2005). Ultimately, it is about relations of power and control.

2.4.3 State/NGO relations

There is debate concerning whether state containment is the principle reason for the failure of African NGOs to move development in a more democratic direction in comparison to their counterparts in Latin America and Asia (Mercer, 2002, Michael, 2004, Ndegwa, 1996, Oloka-Onyango and Barya, 1997). Many

governments in sub-Saharan Africa reserve the right to refuse organisations registration, and severely constrain their activities through legislative restrictions (Edwards and Hulme, 1995, Fowler, 1991, Mercer, 2002, Michael, 2004). They may also seek to control organisations through co-optation into the regime's political project or program collaboration (Bratton, 1989, Gariyo, 1995), which enables state officials to monitor and influence an NGO's operations and that of other civil society groups. Government ministers and officials in the region also regularly establish their own 'NGOs', recognising the potential for increased influence over particular public spheres that related funding and exposure can bring, which are then used as channels for bringing resources into their own constituency or ethnic base (Fowler, 1991). These strategies promote politicisation and patronage, as CSOs are forced to negotiate resources, influence and organisational survival according to carefully managed relationships with government elites (Edwards and Hulme, 1995). This places significant limitations on these organisations' ability to innovate, develop alternative strategies and discourses, or take an overtly political approach to community mobilisation and civil society building.

2.4.4 State-society relations

The history and character of relations between the state and its citizens can be strong determinants of political agency (Evans, 1995, di John and Putzel, 2009, Houtzager, 2003, Unsworth 2010). From an economic perspective, the intertwining of political and economic power within state bureaucracies can shape the livelihood strategies of the poor. Corbridge et al. for example, describe an *Adivasi* small holder accepting 20,000 rupees from the local *dalaal* (middle-man) for trees worth 80,000 rather than seek permissions from divisional officials with their

associated development rents (2005: 25). The degree to which state actors are embedded within networks of socio-economic relations can also shape citizen's behaviour towards them (Corbridge et al., 2005; Harbeson, 1994). While some studies highlight the ability of rural citizens to exert informal pressures on civil servants with social ties to the local community (Hossain, 2010, Newell and Wheeler, 2006, Unsworth, 2010), others suggest that service users in highly stratified socio-economic contexts will not actively challenge a civil servant of higher social status (Goetz and Jenkins, 2001, Shankar, 2010).

A history of violent conflict or repression can lead to the retreat of rural citizens into subsistence agriculture and leave them averse to engagement with the state or other external actors. Cornwall and Coelho question the rationale within the good governance agenda that 'citizens are ready to participate and share their political agendas with bureaucrats as long as they are offered appropriate opportunities – and that bureaucrats are willing to listen and respond' and suggest that in practice these institutional innovations are sites of 'the effective exclusion of poorer and more marginalized citizens' because of the power relations that have remained absent from inclusive neo-liberalist discourse (2007: 5).

Patron/client relations can be the source of effective strategies for the poor however, particularly in the short-term (Hickey and du Toit, 2006, Masaki, 2010). Rural citizens embedded within clientelist networks may prefer to secure their interests and meet immediate needs through local brokers and patrons rather than engage in rights-based civil society interventions that may carry heavy costs of security and time (Corbridge et al., 2005, Engberg-Pedersen, 2002, Hickey and Mitlin, 2009, Hickey and Mohan, 2004). The political potential of patronage as a source of 'resources and recognition' (Masaki, 2010) is highly contested and when

intertwined with ethnicity raises concerns about the kinds of 'political tribalism' that led to the Rwandan genocide (Mohan and Hickey, 2004: 68). A broadly social-democratic critique suggests that if 'material well-being' or 'the defeat of poverty and misery' is the objective, pluralist liberal democracy is an inappropriate system for many developing countries at the current juncture and that particularist ethnic claims-making is a necessary precursor to contestation over 'more universalist democratic gains' (Mohan and Hickey, 2004: 63, Engberg-Pedersen and Webster, 2002).

Developing states can and do create positive opportunities for citizen engagement in politics however. Engberg-Pedersen and Webster suggest that states play a key role in creating political space through 'government policies to support the poor, government rhetoric recognizing the plight of the poor' or through 'administrative practices explicitly considering marginalised groups' (2002: 259). They cite land occupations in Zimbabwe based on Mugabe's speeches and the inclusion of poor users in management of forest lands in West Bengal as examples of how the poor have been able to transform state and international development discourse into political opportunity (2002: 260). Similarly, Corbridge highlights how despite widespread criticism of its failings, 'good governance' discourse has expanded 'the public sphere and civil society' enabling the emergence of 'slow burning' but significant incremental shifts in state/citizen relations including increases in voice and accountability, and greater capacity among the rural poor to engage in the simple but important act of complaining when a service or entitlement is not delivered effectively (2007: 203).

2.4.5 Societal power relations

NGOs seeking to encourage collective action by or on behalf of the poor have to negotiate a complex network of socio-economic relations and conflicts. There may be land-related, historical or political conflict between neighbours, or resentment that one family has benefitted from a government or NGO programme while another has not (Corbridge et al., 2005, Fowler, 1993). Thorp et al. list 'lack of education, capital, labour, social status', 'access to markets and networks', and 'lack of rights' as constraints on poor people's ability to engage in group-based development and suggest that the greater the social stratification within a region the harder it is for the poor to participate (2005: 913-5). The opportunity cost of participation may simply be too high particularly for women bearing the brunt of domestic duties (White, 1996). The ethnic dimension of socio-economic disadvantage in post-colonial African societies poses further challenges for NGOs seeking to mobilize communities for collective action in multi-ethnic environments where ethnicity may be highly politicized.

The effects of poverty discourses and their internalisation and of expectations and prior experiences on people's willingness to organize or be organized within their community or in claims-making of the state are also widely recognised in the development literature (Corbridge et al., 2005, Engberg-Pedersen and Webster, 2002, Mosse, 2010). These 'invisible' forms of power (Gaventa, 2004) interact with the multi-dimensional and relational poverty dynamics described above to contain the agency of the poor, and particularly of women, so that political opportunities are regularly passed over (Engberg-Pedersen and Webster, 2002, White, 1996). Where discourses construct poverty as shameful and the poor as lazy, people may not wish to self-identify as poor (Engberg-Pedersen, 2002), while more elite actors

may disregard their potential as allies or be dismissive or resentful of redistributive taxation or welfare reforms (Corbridge et al., 2005, Booth, 2012). An internalised sense of subordination and deference to better educated, wealthier local elites, or expectations of subordinate treatment at the hands of elites act as a disincentive for mobilization (Engberg-Pedersen and Webster, 2002, Mosse, 2010). Similarly, the internalisation of social and cultural norms and discourses may mean that young people and elders, men and women or landlords and tenants will not engage in collective endeavour (Mosse, 1994). Poverty and inequality and ethnic or religious identity in the kind of clientelistic environments that characterise much of sub-Saharan Africa, have all been found to pose particular challenges for 'collective action in the public interest' (Devarajan et al., 2011, Callaghy, 1994).

2.4.6 NGO strategies in patronage-based systems

NGOs have engaged in a number of strategies to exploit these opportunities or overcome these political-economic challenges. These include the facilitation of popular organisation building around the immediate material and identity concerns of disadvantaged groups leading to the formation of federations or apex bodies for popular representation within existing participatory governance or policy spaces (Mitlin, 2004b, Törnquist et al., 2009, Webster, 2002); facilitating linkages with or formation of political parties in order to form a political constituency with direct electoral representation (Hickey and Bracking, 2005, Moore and Putzel, 1999, Mosse, 2010); and the creation of alternative deliberative spaces for participation by previously marginalised groups where counter-hegemonic ideas can be discussed and the poor or other disadvantaged groups can learn political skills that

they can go on to use in other fora (Mitlin and Bebbington, 2006, Cornwall and Coehlo, 2007).

In relation to state repression or co-optation, strategic NGO leaders can exchange inside knowledge of their practices for influence in government or access to government information by inviting officials onto their boards (Gariyo, 1995). The movement of the minority educated elite between government and NGO sectors also builds NGO capacity to 'read the political opportunities' (Farrington and Bebbington, 1993, Fowler, 1997, Kaplan, 2000, Michael, 2004, Pollard and Court, 2008, Törnquist, 2002: 35). As members of this minority group, NGO leaders may be able to exploit intra-elite relations to influence local planning or implementation in pro-poor directions (Crook and Sverrisson, 2003, Törnquist, 2002), or lobby at a central level through local government actors (Corbridge et al., 2005, Pearce, 2000). Recent studies have found that groups with strong ties to the state and political parties within formal policy spaces were often more effective at giving poor people a voice (Unsworth, 2010, Lavalle et al., 2005).

Fowler (1991) suggests that a primary concern for NGOs seeking organization or mobilization of the poor in African contexts is fostering harmony between different ethnic groups to enable people to organize around their condition of disadvantage, and learn about their civic rights. Other studies conclude that the formation of self-help groups according to pluralist donor agendas rather than kinship can undermine sustainability (Booth, 2012). A consensus in the literature suggests that disadvantaged groups and NGOs seeking to advance their cause must be able to analyse and exploit key political opportunities such as intra-elite competition enabling the formation of cross-class political or economic alliances (Herring, 2003, Houtzager, 2003, Sandbrook et al., 2007). Corbridge et al. for example,

highlight a 'new agrarian politics' in some parts of India where rich landowners form alliances with poorer farmers to strengthen their bargaining power with middlemen and urban traders (2005: 24), and the alliance between the CPI-M and small-holder farmers in West Bengal and Kerala has been discussed above. These dynamics are complex however. While a number of analysts recognise that 'the issue of poverty is one of representation' (Mosse, 2010: 1166, Hickey and Bracking, 2005), Mosse also warns against a reliance on electoral politics as the solution, and concurs with Moore and Putzel (1999) that 'the politicization of poverty reduction will only benefit poor people where there exist institutionalized populist policies (including labour rights and land reform) and competition for the votes through relatively stable party line-ups, backed up by a strong central government able to defend the interests and rights of 'the poor' (2010: 1168). The point here is that getting pro-poor policy issues onto the agenda is not enough if political dynamics and state capacity mean that policies don't get implemented and rights can't be accessed.

Similarly, debate continues as to whether confrontational or rights-based approaches are appropriate within restrictive or patronage-based contexts where NGOs could instead build on existing strategies employed by or preferred by grass roots activists (Engberg-Pedersen and Webster, 2002, Patel and Mitlin, 2009). Mobilisation may leave disadvantaged groups vulnerable to reprisals where political and economic power are intertwined, while non-confrontational, negotiational strategies have been found more productive in engaging weak and defensive states (Hickey and Mohan, 2004, Patel and Mitlin, 2009). Yet commentators on similar regional contexts find differently, further highlighting the contingency of ideological perspective. Dagnino (2008) suggests that a focus on citizenship combats the individualising and charitable orientation of neo-liberal

discourse on democratisation and civil society and re-positions citizenship as a struggle for rights and equality, while Michael (2004) links the strength of influential Latin American and Asian NGOs to their preparedness to confront exploitation publically through mass demonstrations, supreme court battles or vociferous advocacy and campaigns. In what seems like an attempt to find a middle path between these arguments, Sandbrook et al. (2007) focus on the cultivation of popular representation via mobilization rather than elite representation of the poor. They advise agents of 'social democracy in the periphery' 'to nurture the capacity of subordinate classes and groups to be politically engaged, to encourage policy-based and deliberate forms of demand-making, and to press for localized initiatives of popular empowerment' (2007: 32) and to adopt a 'moderate rhetoric' that does not alienate the politically, socially and economically powerful from engaging in the process of building 'a more democratic, politically stable and equitable society' (2007: 61).

2.5   Reading the political opportunities: summary

Clearly NGOs face a significant challenge in either marrying elite representation with popular mobilization or facilitating direct popular representation within post-colonial contexts and patronage-based regimes (Mitlin, 2004b, Mosse, 2010, Sandbrook et al., 2007, Törnquist et al., 2009). A consensus within the literatures discussed here suggests that social and economic transformation require the operation of multiple strategies at multiple levels of engagement through the formation of alliances between state, political, civil society and popular actors, with cross-class coalitions featuring as particularly strong drivers of reform (Mohan, 2002, Moore, 2001, Mosse, 2007, Unsworth, 2010, Houtzager and Joshi, 2008, McGee and Gaventa, 2010). Another is the centrality of ideas and discourse to

creating (or closing down) political opportunities for alternative approaches and agendas (Bázan et al., 2008, Bebbington et al., 2008, Booth, 2012, Engberg-Pedersen and Webster, 2002, White, 1996).

Triangulation of intervention-focused and political economic literature suggest that NGOs with social democratic goals should be focused on creating *enabling conditions* for the emergence of a more social democratic development process by reading and taking advantage of the available and ever changing political opportunities available to them (Engberg-Pedersen and Webster, 2002, Törnquist, 2002) or by negotiating the political economic landscape in such a way that they create political opportunities for advancing this agenda. The evidence suggests that ideas matter for this kind of political capacity. NGOs with a strong commitment to economic transformation and social justice are more likely to advance those agendas. NGO leaders who are able to negotiate programmatic rather than project-based donor funding have more flexibility for alternative agendas and approaches. The generation of domestic or independent finance through consultancy or other forms of enterprise is another route to financial and hence ideological independence. A key competency for NGO leaders in patronage-based systems where civil society activity is restricted is finding a balance between collaboration and critique, manipulating their own elite status and ethnic ties for the cultivation of positive relations with state, political and civil society actors while avoiding co-optation and maintaining a strong grass roots orientation. The NGO literature also suggests that leaders who are able to operationalize their overarching ideology within the internal workings of the organisation, cultivating a democratic and participatory ethos, and inspiring commitment to organisational vision will be more effective and powerful in achieving their external aims (Michael, 2004, Smillie and Hailey, 2001). In addition, this kind of political capacity requires

strong analytical skills to enable effective strategies for the promotion of alternative ideas and approaches, and research capacity may be one aspect of this for some organisations. Further to this, NGOs need to engage in political economic and power analysis in partnership with the development agents they are working with (be they state, political or the poor themselves), in order to avoid the pursuit of strategies that are inappropriate to the particular contexts they are working in, involving a sophisticated and often underestimated set of facilitative, relationship-building, and analytical skills (Farrington and Bebbington, 1993, Fowler, 1997, Kaplan, 2000).

Their major challenge, is how to engage in 'intelligent, critical and strategic' development interventions that shape immanent development processes 'over the long term' (Bebbington et al., 2008: 34) without creating dependency, being co-opted into international paradigms and state agendas, or stifling the emergence of popular political agency; and how to make representation meaningful to the ordinary people seeking realisation of their rights or satisfaction of their needs (Harriss et al., 2004, Törnquist, 2002, Törnquist et al., 2009). The next section will outline the conceptual framework that frames the investigation into the ways in which the case study organisation has attempted to engage in that pursuit.

2.6   Towards an Analytical Framework

The de-politicization critique has led many theorists to seek a more thoroughgoing political analysis of the poverty dynamics and the interplay of power between international actors, states, markets, local organisations, elites and the poor that shape the possibility of democratic development at the current juncture. These include Hickey and Mohan's (2004) framing of participation as radical citizenship;

Houtzager's (2003) polity approach; Whitehead and Gray-Molina's (2003) analysis of political capabilities for policy influence; and Engberg-Pedersen and Webster's (2002) political space framework.

There are merits in all these approaches although a degree of confusion about the specifics of each framework and how they should be operationalized remains (Moore, 2003). For this research, it is important to note that none focus on the political capacity of development NGOs, and more particularly, apply a relational understanding of poverty and power to the analysis of how political economy and organisational capacity shape the ability of NGOs to cultivate enabling conditions for social democratic development as defined here. Williams (2004) political capabilities framework was therefore selected as the most closely suited analytical lens for the research as described below.

2.6.1 Political capabilities

Williams (2004) interpretation of political capabilities attempts to re-politicize evaluations of participatory development. His focus on intervention makes the framework suitable for research focused on understanding the effects of NGO strategies and the conditions that shape them. Williams seeks to understand how inclusive liberal discourse and governance spaces might be 'exploited to forward particular programmes, values and interests' (2004: 96). In this he builds on Moore and Putzel's (1999) work refocusing attention on the ways in which interventions contribute to the long-term political agency of the poor (2004), an emphasis that is highly relevant to an examination of NGO strategies within a restricted political space, where outright challenge and redistributive reform may not be possible in

the short to medium term. Williams suggests development interventions should be evaluated according to three indicators:

1. To what extent do participatory development programmes **contribute to processes of political learning** among the poor?

2. To what degree do participatory programmes **reshape political networks**?

3. How do participatory programmes **impact upon existing patterns of political representation**, including changes to the language of political claims and competition?

Political learning might include increased understanding of formal political rights as well as the '*de facto* rules of the game' (2004: 96-7). Re-shaping political networks might involve either challenge or reinforcement of the 'existing roles of brokers and patrons' and may be more transformative when changes occur beyond the local level (*ibid.*). Changing existing patterns of political representation might include changes in the way interests are framed and represented, changes to the openness or closure of formal decision-making spaces or processes, or adjustments within traditional cultures of leadership and governance (*ibid.*).

2.6.2 Space and power

Williams envisages an integration of his framework with Cornwall's (2002) Foucauldian analysis of different kinds of political space and the power relations that determine the outcomes of different actors participation within them, because understanding 'poor people's changing ability to engage with the state' inevitably means a focus on the spaces in which they interact (2004: 97). Accordingly, the analysis adopts the concepts of 'invited' and 'created' space during examinations of the range of spaces encountered over the course of the research.

2.6.3 An integrated framework: shaping spaces and capabilities for social democratic development

This final section of the chapter describes how Williams (2004) framework has been integrated with the earlier defined concept of social democratic development, an adaptation of Törnquist's (2002) notion of 'political capacity', and Bukenya et al.'s (2012) framework for analysis of the contextual factors shaping the outcomes of social accountability interventions.

The dependent variable

The dependent variable for the research is *the extent to which NGO strategies cultivate supportive conditions for social democratic development.* The independent variables (as identified through the thorough literature review above and described in more depth below) are *NGO political capacity* and *political economy.* Running throughout the analysis are the effects of the donor aid system and the inclusive liberal development paradigm that underpins it which together shape the political capacity of NGOs, and form part of the political opportunity structure in developing countries. The ways in which the dependent variable is evaluated during the analysis is described below by breaking Williams' (2004) three indicators down into a series of smaller questions which integrate this framework with the earlier defined dimensions of social democratic development:

Table 2.1 Political capabilities and social democratic development

Contributing to processes of political learning	• How are attempts to foster social and economic as well as civil and political empowerment among poor/marginalised groups contributing to processes of political learning?
	• What different kinds of actors are experiencing political learning in response to NGO interventions?
	• How is political learning building supportive conditions for the realisation of social, economic and political rights; the capacity of poor/marginalised to exercise control over decision-making or receptivity to a more equal distribution of power among the powerful?
Reshaping political networks	• In what ways have NGO interventions reshaped formal and informal political networks at different levels?
	• How has this opened up or closed down opportunities for disadvantaged groups to realise rights, exercise control over decision-making, or built receptivity to a more equal distribution of power among the powerful?
Impacting patterns of political representation	• How have NGO interventions impacted on the ways disadvantaged groups seek to secure their interests or realise their rights?
	• How have NGO interventions impacted on both formal and traditional cultures of leadership and governance and what does this mean for the degree of control of disadvantaged groups over decision-making or receptivity to a more equal distribution of power among power-holders?
	• How have NGO interventions altered the language or practical processes of political claims making and competition and what political opportunities has this created?

Political economy

Bukenya et al.'s (2012) analysis defines the character of political society, the character of civil society, state-society relations and the character of inequality and exclusion within society as the key contextual factors that shape the effectiveness of demand-side social accountability interventions. This seemed highly relevant to the current study of the ways in which NGO interventions can cultivate supportive

conditions for social democratic development, and integrated well with the key issues arising from the review of political economic literature that supported the foregoing discussions about political economic conditions for social democracy and political economic drivers and constraints within patronage-based regimes.

Character of political society

Building on Corbridge's (2007) discussion of Chatterjee's (2004) work, political society is characterised as 'a loose community of recognised political parties, local political brokers and councillors, public servants, a set of institutions, actors and cultural norms that provides the key links between 'government' and 'the public' (Bukenya et al., 2012: 77). The character of political society is formed most prominently by the degree of political commitment among elected officials and civil servants (in the present case commitment to a more equal share of power); the nature of the political settlement between powerful elites (building on North et al., 2009 and Khan, 2010); state capacity 'to act in the public interest'; and the nature of state-society relations and of the institutions that mediate this relationship (Bukenya et al., 2012: 79).

Character of civil society

Civil society is framed as a Gramscian site of struggle where citizen and CSO agency are 'closely shaped by the underlying field of power relations, involving forms of inequality and exclusion along economic, social and cultural lines' (Bukenya et al., 2012: 81). The degree to which civil society is able to contribute positively to the cultivation of supportive conditions for social democratic development is dependent on the nature of the power relations shaping civil society action, and the degree to which civil society actors are able to form

relationships and alliances which enable them to accumulate power and influence – particularly with actors in political society.

Character of societal power relations

This sub-dimension refers to 'the field of power relations that shapes social interactions and popular agency within society' (Bukenya et al., 2012: 82). As the foregoing review has highlighted, differences in education, income, gender, ethnicity or religion and the balance of power between different social groups can all affect the degree to which citizens are prepared to mobilize for a common cause or becoming better organised through cooperative endeavour. State-society relations are also influential over levels of political agency but this falls within the discussion of political society.

Political capacity

There have been many attempts by development analysts to conceptualise different kinds of organisational capacity within the NGO sector with different end foci such as power (Michael, 2004), effectiveness (Fowler, 1997, Kaplan, 2000), or becoming 'a learning organisation' (Korten, 1980). None of these attempts to conceptualise the capacity of NGOs to politicize development in the sense outlined in the earlier discussion. The following framing attempts to shape key discursive themes into a new conceptualisation of NGO political capacity building on Törnquist (2002).

In seeking to identify 'the dynamics and problems of citizens' capacity to make use of, improve and expand democratic means' Törnquist delineates a concept of political capacity which describes the ability of politicised actors 'to read, manage

and alter the political opportunities', including socio-economic conditions (2002: 35). This is directly relevant to the present study although the three sub-dimensions he goes on to describe (positionality in relation to state/market/civil society; 'politicisation of interests and ideas'; 'politicisation of people') did not adequately cover some of the important issues arising from the foregoing discussion of NGO literature. The three sub-dimensions described below therefore represent an integration of Törnquist's overall concept with key points for consideration from this literature review.

Autonomy and commitment

This refers to the degree to which NGO leaders are committed to a social democratic agenda and are able to inspire commitment to that agenda within the organisation and reflect that agenda within the culture and ethos of the organisation (Kabeer et al., 2010, Michael, 2004, Ndegwa, 1996, Smillie and Hailey, 2001). It also encompasses aspects of the interventionist literature that highlight the importance of autonomy from donor agendas, either through the ability to negotiate a partnership and programmatic funding relationship (Guijt, 2008, Racelis, 2008) or through the ability to generate independent resources in support of an autonomous vision (Bázan et al., 2008, Fowler, 1997, Michael, 2004, Bebbington, 1997).

Analytical and strategic capacity

This encompasses the strong sense in the literature that NGOs focused on the realisation of social and economic as well as civil and political rights by the poor, and receptivity to reform among power holders, need relational and multi-dimensional analyses of poverty in order to develop effective strategies and

promote alternative ways of thinking about development (Engberg-Pedersen and Webster, 2002, Mitlin and Bebbington, 2006, Mosse, 2010, Törnquist, 2002).

Operational capacity

Beyond analytical capacity, NGOs need the practical skills and experience to put strategic ideas into practice effectively in ways which support the cultivation of enabling conditions for social democratic development (Fowler, 2007, Kaplan, 2000, Michael, 2004, Smillie and Hailey, 2001).

2.6.4   Reflections on the suitability of the framework

The three dimensions of Williams (2004) political capabilities framework operate at a fairly broad level of analysis which has been well suited to the sometimes complex and nuanced interplay between interventionist and immanent development and political economic context that characterise this thesis. A more specified and operationalized analytical tool would have made it difficult to engage with the breadth of themes discussed.

Although it served the investigation well as an analytical lens, it was in the end difficult to structure the thesis conclusions according to the framework because the processes and changes under discussion were highly interrelated. Chapter 5 describes for example, how members of producer cooperatives experience political learning which results in farmers becoming political representatives and therefore developing new political networks for example.

The framework emerged from a desire to re-politicize assessments of participatory development interventions and this has to some extent led to a neglect of the links between socio-economic and political change. Given the emphasis in the present investigation on the realisation of social and economic as well as civil and political rights, and the findings to follow that link farmer associations with the accumulation of political power, the framework would benefit from an additional question, such as 'are interventions catalysing socio-economic transformation in ways which link to political learning?', in studies of the ability of NGOs to contribute to a reshaping of power relations.

The tripartite division of political economic factors shaping opportunities and intervention outcomes provided a suitable framing for the contextual discussion although it leaves little room for analysis of socio-cultural norms and attitudes. The concept of political capacity worked well in interaction with political capabilities, in terms of having the capacity to shape political capabilities. The three sub-dimensions have provided a clear framework for the analysis of the NGO's competencies. A weakness may be in the overlap between 'analytical and strategic capacity' and 'operational capacity'. It worked well for the particular case as there were clear divisions between the ability to identify effective courses of action and having the skills and experience to put those ideas into practice. This may not be so clear cut in other organisations.

3 Political Space for Social Democratic Development in Uganda

3.1 Introduction

Uganda has suffered one of the most turbulent post-colonial histories in Africa, yet a period of comparative stability and growth since the 1990s led to the country being vaunted internationally as a model of good practice for democratisation and poverty reduction via economic liberalisation (Hickey, 2005). Increasingly mired in corruption scandals, the inclusive liberalist veil is gradually falling from Museveni's Uganda (Craig and Porter, 2006) which is shifting ever nearer to the authoritarian rather than democratic end of Tripp's (2010) regime typology.

In order to assess attempts to tackle disadvantage, redistribute power, or create supportive conditions for shifts in relations between elites and the poor in Uganda, it is necessary to understand the current drivers of power and disadvantage in the country and to attempt to identify potential sites of agency and change. This chapter will also provide a national-level political economic background for the regional context and findings chapters that are to follow. To facilitate these linkages the chapter is structured according to the political economy dimensions of the analytical framework outlined in Chapter 2. It begins with an exploration of how present day political society has come to be shaped by Uganda's colonial and post-colonial history and a description of the current structure and character of central and local government. An understanding of the nature of these institutions and systems and the actual operations of power within them in practice is key to the analysis of the social accountability and regional leadership interventions in Chapters 5 to 7. The discussion then moves to the history of civil society formation over the same period. The next section examines how socio-economic power

relations have been shaped by political-economic developments illuminating some of the drivers and constraints of political agency at different societal levels. This includes a brief review of recent literature assessing the status of the Ugandan cooperative movement which facilitates the discussion in later chapters about the potential for subsistence and small holder farmers to act as popular power bases. In the final section, the chapter provides an overview of the formation and contemporary capacity of the formal NGO sector and its recent experiences negotiating political space for voice and influence. A brief summary then paves the way for the more context specific political economy of the Rwenzori sub-region and an introduction to the case study organisation in Chapter 4.

3.2   The character of political society

3.2.1   Post-colonial Uganda 1962 - 1985

Mamdani's (1996) analysis of the post-colonial African state which links contemporary patronage politics to both traditional chieftancy and colonial indirect rule was closely informed by the Ugandan context. The arbitrary grouping of disparate clans into ethno-territorially defined governable units, the transmission of ideas about hierarchies of race and 'tribe', and the rule of certain kingdoms like Buganda over other ethnic groups, leading to absolute and exploitative rule by appointed chiefs, laid the foundations for highly politicized ethnic relations in the post-colonial era (Mamdani, 1996, Ranger, 1992). Economic opportunities were concentrated in the hands of Europeans and Asians making 'securing state favours…virtually the only way to advance economically' for Africans, perpetuating a system of patronage politics (Matovu and Stewart, 2001: 244, Mutibwa, 1992). At the same time, the missionary movement introduced new religious identities

which became intertwined with ethnicity and political affiliation. The construction of these complex and divisive identities, compounded by disproportionate economic, educational and infrastructural development favouring central over Northern areas, and a predominance of Northern ethnic groups within the army, undermined national citizenship formation at independence and sowed the seeds for post-colonial conflict (Mamdani, 1996, Ward, 1995).

The first Obote regime came to power in 1962 through a Protestant alliance between the UPC and the Bugandan kingdom to prevent the Catholic DP from gaining power. Obote did little to reform the structure of indirect rule at a local level, leaving governance organised around ethnically-based administrative units, with weak bureaucratic capacity and simmering resentment among ethnic groups that continued to suffer under rule by chiefs from different lineages and holding absolute power (Mamdani, 1996). In 1965, Obote abolished the kingdoms and assumed centralised Presidential control over the country. Although public services and infrastructure were extended throughout the 1960s, appointments and favour were increasingly exchanged for loyalty from army officers (led by General Amin) and political elites (Brett, 1998, Mutibwa, 1992). The Amin (1971-79) and Obote II (1980 – 85) regimes were built upon army power bases drawn along ethnic lines. Military and political officials terrorised citizens while accumulating as much wealth as possible (Mutibwa, 1992, Southall, 1980: 641), while the cultivation of fear and mistrust between neighbours who could denounce each other at a moment's notice, and Amin's economic war against the Asians, followed by their expulsion in 1972, brought economic collapse and social breakdown (Mutibwa, 1992, Southall, 1980). By 1979, the country was bankrupt and infrastructure and services severely disrupted. The civil war sparked by Obote's rigging of the 1980 elections to deny the DP a second time, which was

again drawn (in practice if not design) along ethnic lines, with Obote's northern

power base pitched against Museveni's National Resistance Army (NRA), the

latter comprising Bugandans, Rwandese migrants, and fighters from his own

Western region. The NRA became the first popular guerrilla movement to topple a

despotic regime in post-independence Africa (Mutibwa, 1992).

Figure 3.1 Ethnic and ethno-regional cleavages in Uganda (Lindemann, 2011)
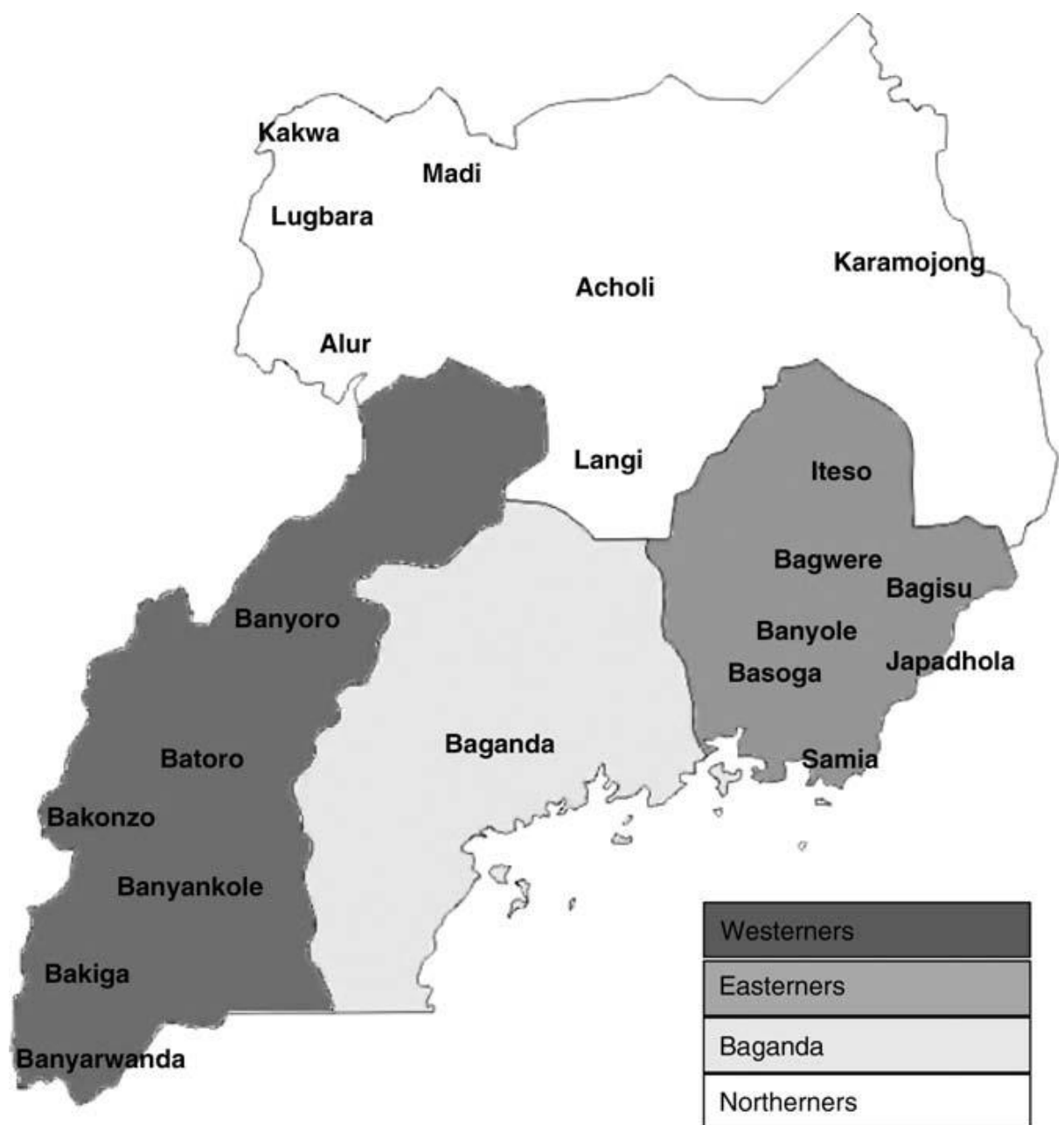
3.2.2 Patronage politics in a semi-authoritarian regime: Museveni's NRM since 1986

After 25 years of political upheaval, ethnic and religious hostility, violence, war and repression, it is difficult to overstate the significance of the stability and rehabilitation secured by the NRM. In 1986, Museveni inherited a decimated economy including an external debt 'running into billions of dollars', a broken society, and a hostile international community – fearful of the domino effect that this successful guerrilla movement might have in neighbouring countries (Mutibwa, 1992: 190). He has since overseen sustained economic growth including an average of 6.5% per year between 1990 and 2002, and an impressive degree of poverty reduction from 56% in 1992/3 to 24.5% in 2009/10 (Krishna et al., 2006, Francis and James, 2003, UBOS, 2012), becoming, until recently, the darling of the international community in sub-Saharan Africa.

Yet Uganda continues to struggle with a legacy of militarism, corruption and patronage and a citizenry whose primary identity is ethnic rather than national, which has suffered decades of political and economic repression and social fragmentation. The NRM has continuously channelled vast public resources into military expenditure to support their struggle against repeated insurgencies in Northern and Western regions and incursions into the Congo in pursuit of mineral wealth which have left Museveni open to future international judicial reprisals (Kasfir, 2010, Tripp, 2010). Approximately 80% of the population live in rural areas mostly surviving by subsistence or small scale farming, and 20% remain in chronic poverty (CPRC, 2006, ILO, 2008). Structural adjustment has had severe social and economic costs for the poor while benefitting large land owners and urban political elites in Western and Central regions disproportionately (Brett, 1998, Jones, 2009, Krishna et al., 2006), and Uganda's growth rate has fallen from

6.6% in 2010/11 to 3.4% in 2011/12 linked to the global financial crisis and monetary policies designed to combat soaring inflation (Daily Monitor, 2013a).

Regime survival has become the most significant driver of policy-making and public expenditure as the challenge of handling this legacy and the increasingly punitive consequences of relinquishing power for the President and his inner circle, have taken their toll (Tripp, 2010). This is being fuelled by a system of 'inflationary patronage', defined by Barkan as 'the need for ever increasing amounts of money to maintain oneself in power and increasing levels of corruption to provide the required funds' (Barkan, 2011: 11).

The Movement system

Museveni's ability to forge an alliance between the Baganda, a minority group of Rwandese migrants in Luwero, and supporters from his own Western region during the 1980s guerrilla struggle enabled the newly titled National Resistance Movement (NRM) to claim a non-sectarian stance which would be definitive of the next twenty years of their administration (Mamdani, 1996). It also paradoxically sowed the seeds for later accusations about preferential treatment for migrants and Westerners (Tripp, 2010). The NRM introduced a 'no-party' system of election and rule on grounds of 'national healing' (Mwenda, 2007: 27) and their initial ten point programme was predicated on themes of popular democracy, national unity, the defence of human rights, and 'the elimination of corruption and abuse of power in public life' (Mutibwa, 1992: 184). The 'movement system' attempted to combine participatory and representative democracy through popular participation in local councils, and elections to both local and national councils, on the basis of merit rather than political affiliation in a move to overcome ethnic divisiveness

(Mamdani,1996, Tripp, 2010). Political parties were permitted as long as they did not engage in party-political campaigns, but in practice, elections continued to be contested by party affiliates along ethno-religious lines (Kasfir, 1998, Mutibwa, 1992, Mwenda, 2007).

At the time of the 1995 constitution, the future of Ugandan democracy looked bright. While the constitution enabled five more years of no-party rule, political parties were permitted to exist as long as they did not engage in party-political activity, and a referendum on multi-partyism was scheduled for 2000. Museveni had formed a broad-based government giving top posts to opposition leaders, the constitution contained widespread commitments to democratisation and human rights, and the first parliament following the constitution 'checked the executive, modified government bills, and audited expenditures', even securing the removal of Ministers from the cabinet (Kasfir, 2010: 2). By 1997 however, the Movement Act had made NRM membership mandatory for all Ugandans and in combination with the Local Government Act of the same year removed the deliberative power of local councils which became administrative organs of the state (Brock et al., 2002, Kasfir, 1998, Kasfir, 2010). The broad based coalition did not last long before patronage-based manipulation and intimidation of parliament emerged with Museveni's cabinet expanded from 40 to 67 members, and ten members of parliament made military appointees, enabling direct executive control over one quarter of parliamentary seats (Kasfir, 2010). Despite the NRM's broad-based beginnings, Museveni ruled for ten years before holding Presidential elections, after which his opponent and former 'comrade in arms', Dr. Besigye, petitioned the Constitutional Court with accusations of election rigging and corruption (Kasfir, 2010, Tangri and Mwenda, 2010: 35).

Multi-partyism, elections, opposition and repression

A competitive political environment and the emergence of well organised left of centre political parties have been key to the emergence of pro-poor and redistributive reforms in a number of developing regions (Herring, 2003, Sandbrook et al., 2007). Although the move to multi-partyism has created space for the strengthening and development of political parties, other semi-authoritarian tendencies and the operations of patronage politics have continued to shape the extent of political competition in Uganda (Tangri and Mwenda, 2010, Tripp, 2010). Observers note a series of motivations for the introduction of a multi-party system in 2005 including the need to undermine resistance to the lifting of Presidential term-limits (Tangri and Mwenda, 2008, Tripp, 2010) and the need to introduce greater discipline within the NRM in that multi-partyism offered the executive greater control over who could stand as NRM parliamentary candidates (Makara et al., 2009). The shift was also introduced on the back of a referendum which left opposition parties only a few months to prepare before the first Presidential and parliamentary elections in 2006 (Kasfir, 2010, Tangri and Mwenda, 2010). Opposition parties suffering from under-developed grass roots networks, party infrastructure and capacity after years of circumscribed activities stood little chance against NRM patronage and intimidation (Kasfir, 2010, Tangri and Mwenda, 2010). The Presidential elections were again mired in accusations of rigging and corruption and this time, Dr. Besigye was arrested on charges of rape and treason, released with just six weeks left to mount his campaign as leader of the main opposition party Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) (Kasfir, 2010, Mwenda, 2007). Museveni increased his vote from 59% in 2006 to 68% in the 2011 Presidential elections and the NRM took 250 of the now 350 directly electable parliamentary seats (Izama and Wilkerson, 2011).

Brutal suppression of riots and protests in Buganda in 2009 and 2010 (relating to tensions between Museveni and the Kabbaka, and the burning of the Kasubi tombs), increasing resentment over economic marginalisation in the North, and the growing strength of the FDC, all might have suggested that Museveni secure his victory by a slim margin if at all in 2011. This was the latest success in a long-standing and deliberate strategy for regime survival however, combining the infusion of vast amounts of state resources with military and police intimidation (Kasfir, 2012). In 2006, the NRM invested US$26 million into their campaign; the FDC managed only US$850 thousand (Tangri and Mwenda, 2010). In 2011, US$1.3 billion, 'more than a third of the entire budget, had been spent in January alone (Izama, 2011: 68). Museveni launched an extensive marketing campaign and travelled around the country handing out envelopes of cash to potential voters and local officials in return for their help mobilizing voters, and made promises of investment in development projects at local rallies while blaming local officials for corruption and distancing himself as president from recent violence and fraud within local level NRM primaries (Kasfir, 2012, Izama, 2011, personal observation).

Opposition parties have struggled to compete with these vast sums and to form a united front despite an attempted coalition in the run up to 2011. Political opposition has become increasingly vociferous since the elections however with an increase in popular and party-political protests and parliamentary rebellions suggesting that the NRM may be reaching the limits of a patronage-based survival strategy (Kasfir, 2012). The 'Walk to Work' movement launched by opposition leaders in response to rising food and fuel prices following the 2011 elections gained increasing supporters as the state's response became more brutal including among the Women's movement, a traditional NRM ally (Kasfir, 2012).

Despite a reputation for co-optation and rubber-stamping the will of the executive (Tumukwasibwe, 2010: 55), there are increasing signs of independence in parliament from across the political spectrum. Though not always effective, opposition has emerged over the lifting of Presidential term limits, the CHOGM scandal,[3] the proposal to sell off the Mabira Forest reserve, and most recently, corruption over oil contracts involving the receipt of large amounts of money by senior ministers in 2011 (Kasfir, 2012). Parliament has nonetheless clearly been a key cog within the NRM's patronage machine which is evidenced in part by the inflation of parliamentary seats from 276 in the original 1995 constitution, to 375 in 2011 (Tumushabe, 2011, www.ipu.org), and Kasfir concludes, that the 'overall effect of the restoration of multi-party competition, at least in the short-term, has been somewhat less accountability for the executive and its legislative proposals' (2010: 4).

Dissatisfaction within the NRM is carefully mitigated by Museveni's inner circle who have a number of strategies for curtailing opposition including blocking opponent's candidacies with charges of corruption, appointing potential rebels to remote or overseas posts, and occasionally more sinister tactics (Tangri and Mwenda, 2010, Kasfir, 2012). Suspicions were raised in 2012, when a vociferous 24 year old Woman MP died from suspected poisoning. Nebanda was part of a group of 'rebel MPs' who had been recently critical of Museveni's long stay in power and corruption within the Executive. There is increasing evidence that Museveni will use military force to stay in power if necessary, with the Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF) operating 'as a de facto personal army of President Museveni' (Tangri and Mwenda, 2010: 44). The 2011 elections were

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[3] involving the disappearance of at least US$6 billion entrusted to the Government of Uganda for hosting the Common Wealth Heads of Government (CHOGM) summit in 2008 (Independent, 2011).

characterised by a heavy military presence in many urban areas and a perhaps

corresponding low voter turn-out (Kasfir, 2012). Museveni intimated publically that

mass-protests such as those that had characterised the Arab Spring would be

handled with force (Izama, 2011). The brutal suppression of 2009 riots in Buganda

and the FDC inspired Walk to Work protests following the election in 2011 are

clear examples of the President's increasing willingness to employ force to

suppress opposition (Kasfir, 2012, Izama, 2011).

As the limits of patronage begin to surface, militarism and repression appear to be

the fall back strategies for regime survival in Uganda. The threat of insecurity that

any alternative to the NRM is likely to involve, and the fuelling of patronage from

newly generated oil wealth, make it likely that Museveni and the NRM will continue

to hold on to power in 2016 (Kasfir, 2012, Hickey, 2012, Tripp, 2010).

Poverty, inequality and populist policy-making

The operations of patronage politics are also highly visible within national poverty

and development discourse and policy-making, which have closed down space for

alternative paradigms. Regime survival has depended upon the maintenance of

donor favour to ensure economic stability (and hence legitimacy among the

public), the ability to generate and distribute development rents to elites and

particularly the military (from both international and domestic resources), and the

ability to garner the popular vote by marketing the President as benefactor of the

masses. These imperatives have taken precedence over astute socio-economic

analysis for an effectively pro-poor distribution of resources (Hickey, 2012, Kjaer

and Therkildsen, 2012, Tripp, 2010).

Since courting the donor community with structural adjustment, economic growth and the development of a 'home-grown' PRSP in the form of the first Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) in 1997, Museveni has skilfully cultivated donor favour during successive PEAP revisions by investing significant resources into meeting the MDGs and supporting inclusive and participatory research and decision-making processes (Brock et al., 2002; Hickey, 2005: 995). Although these revision processes generated awareness of the multi-dimensional nature of poverty, a discourse constructing subsistence farmers as 'lazy peasants' remains pervasive among Uganda's political and economic elites, facilitating a national development agenda which favours the economically active and obscuring the effects of power relations on socio-economic change (Hickey, 2005, 2012, Tumukwasibwe, 2010, Woodhouse, 2003). This has been reinforced by an inclusive liberal construction of poverty reduction as target-driven service delivery in the form of PRSPs and meeting the MDGs via Sector Wide Approaches (SWAps). By constructing citizens as beneficiaries of services, structural and political-economic causes of inequality – such as land, class and ethnic politics, vulnerability to the global market, 'militarism', 'debt and donor dependence' – have been cut out of the picture (Craig and Porter, 2006: 183). In 2001, the NRM launched the *Plan for the Modernisation of Agriculture* (PMA) and in 2006, the *Prosperity for All* election manifesto, which were on paper aimed at the commercialisation of the agrarian economy, but in practice also created opportunities for garnering elite favour and the popular vote amidst the transition to multi-partyism (Hickey, 2012, Kjaer and Therkildsen, 2012). Both could be sold as policies for the poor while in fact creating patronage opportunities for wealthier farmers already holding land and assets and local elite administrators (Hickey, 2005, Tumukwasibwe, 2010).

The dynamics of multi-partyism within a patronage-based system have led to a highly politicized policy-making environment. The National Agricultural Advisory Service (NAADS) launched under the PMA in 2001, has been continually revised according to the need to distribute development rents and generate votes (Kjær and Joughin, 2012, Kjær and Therkildsen, 2012). The original long-term vision was undermined by a speeded up roll out ahead of the 2006 elections. Under the 'new NAADs' that followed a complete suspension of the programme in 2007 (following local level elite capture and corruption), NRM cadres became members of the local forums where model farmers were selected,[4] and the NAADS secretariat was brought under the auspices of the Office of the President allowing direct association of NAADS inputs with favour from the NRM or Museveni (Kjaer, 2012, Kjaer and Therkildsen, 2012). As part of the 2011 election campaign, NAADS was expanded to include a wider group of farmers focused on food security, providing further opportunities for patronage (Kjaer and Therkildsen, 2012).

The abolition of Graduated Personal Tax (GPT) in 2005 has been directly linked to the need to generate votes in 2006 (Kjaer and Therkildsen, 2012, Tripp, 2010). GPT was a poll tax which became highly politicized as wealthier and usually better connected citizens were increasingly evading collection and income tax, which only applied to those generating an income and hence wealthier citizens, became enforced less stringently than GPT was among the poor. The decision to abolish the tax rather than to address these implementation problems was a populist policy that has undermined the social contract between citizens and local government by making local governments almost entirely dependent on central government or international aid for revenue (Craig and Porter, 2006, Green, 2008).

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[4] NAADS was based on the distribution of seeds and technology to a small number of model farmers who would run demonstration farms for others to learn from.

Education and health policy have been subject to the same dynamics. The announcement of Universal Primary Education (UPE) in the run up to the 1996 Presidential elections (including the abolition of PTA fees), the abolition of health service user fees ahead of the 2001 elections, and the announcement of Universal Secondary Education before the 2006 contest have all met with international approval while mobilizing the popular vote, but in the long run undermined the quality of service provision and social accountability (Kjær and Therkildsen, 2012, Ssewankambo et al., 2008, Tripp, 2010). Under UPE for example, school enrolments increased from 2.6 million in 1996 to 5.3 million the following year, without sufficient investment of resources or preparatory work to manage the transition (Tripp, 2010). The abolition of PTA fees and transfer of financial control to well-salaried head teachers resulted in increased corruption and the exclusion of community members responsible for keeping schools running throughout the years of political turmoil from the governance process (Higgins and Rwanyange, 2005, Tripp, 2010).

By the third PEAP revision process, Museveni had distanced himself from the poverty reduction agenda (Hickey, 2012). Sustained economic growth and the discovery of oil in the Albertine basin (with an estimated annual value of US$2 billion dollars) had triggered increased foreign investment, decreased aid dependency, and a drive for improved energy and transport infrastructure (Hickey, 2012, Tripp, 2010). Donors and civil society actors were largely cut out of formative stages of the latest *National Development Plan* (NDP) which is focused on 'structural transformation', through an alleged central focus on 'Agriculture, Manufacturing, Mining, Oil and Gas, Forestry, Housing, Tourism and ICT-Business', with education and health relegated to the third of four hierarchical spheres of priority (GoU, 2010, Hickey, 2012). Agriculture has been afforded a

mere 5% of the 2011/12 budget however and doubts have been raised both about the extent of regime capacity for the implementation of such a transformative vision, and of ideological autonomy from the IFIs, given the World Bank's shift towards a focus on infrastructure and the NRM's continued dependence on positive IMF reviews for attracting foreign investment (Hickey, 2012).

The increasing focus on economic growth over redistribution and empowerment and the imperatives of regime survival suggest that national political space for more social democratic perspectives to gain ground is highly restricted. The recent emphasis on commercialising agriculture could provide grounds for optimism in terms of creating a large enough class of organised small-holder farmers able to form alliances with political elites. In reality however, the NDP is targeted at large land holders rather than the small-holders who supported the 1990s economic boom, and the NRM don't so far appear to have backed up their vision with the necessary financial investment or political will (Hickey, 2012).

The 'inclusion delusion' of decentralisation

The democratisation literature suggests that decentralisation can create new channels, spaces and opportunities for the redistribution of social, economic or political power (World Bank, 1997 and 2004, Heller, 2001, Kakumba, 2010, Saito, 2003) and the NRM system for decentralised government was until recently, the golden child of neo-liberal institutional reforms. It allowed for direct citizen participation in development planning at the village level and for the investment of large amounts of sector-specific finance in local government (Craig and Porter, 2006). In practice, this formal system is undermined by the same culture of patronage politics that operates at a national level, by the lack of substantive roles for citizens to play within planning and accountability processes, and by

governance processes which retain centralized control over the majority of development resources (Craig and Porter, 2006, Francis and James, 2003, Tripp, 2010).

The NRM designed decentralisation according to the five tier resistance council (RC) model within which each council elected members to the next level beginning with all adult members of a village. The Local Government Act 1997, made it effectively a three tier system with village (LC1), sub-county (LC3) and district (LC5) councils elected by universal adult suffrage. Councils still exist at parish (LC2) and county (LC4) levels, but are not involved in service delivery and serve more as communicative bodies between the different council tiers (Kakumba, 2010, Saito, 2003). The village council (LC1) is a shared deliberative, judicial and administrative space for village residents led by an executive appointed by the chair. LC1 chairs adjudicate minor offences, witness land transactions and issue letters of certification for which villagers pay a small fee (Francis and James, 2003). In theory, villagers debate how locally generated revenue will be spent as part of an annual planning process, with priorities passed up to the district via parish and sub-county councils, and hold monthly discussions about collective initiatives and duties such as road or well maintenance, and security. At sub-county (LC3) level, the council operates like a parliament with a speaker and deputy-speaker, elected councillors representing parishes, and technical officials responsible for health, education and development implementation. The district council (LC5) is the highest local government tier and the chair the most powerful local government seat, with overall control over service delivery in the district (Green, 2008). The two most powerful technical posts are the Resident District Commissioner (RDC) and the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). RDCs are appointed by the President and are effectively the eyes and ears of central

government in the districts while CAOs have overall technical responsibility for service delivery and are appointed by the Public Services Commission (Green, 2008). The CAO is accountable to both central and district governments in different ways but the LC5 chair and executive have the final say over district development planning (SubC-CS-1). Another important arena is the District Services Commission (DSC) which is responsible for all local government staff appointments in a move to localise the accountability of public service officials. However, committee members are appointed by the council with input from the executive which can lead to undue executive influence over both the DSC and local government appointments more widely (Tripp, 2010).

Increasing doubts have been raised as to the motivations underlying Ugandan decentralisation. Firstly, administrative decentralisation has not been matched with fiscal decentralisation which has made local councils administrative service delivery agents of central government and undermined citizen participation. By 2008, only 5% of the local government budget was locally generated with 88% of central transfers tied to conditionalities and a large proportion of unconditional transfers going to salary and management costs at district level (Bitarabeho, 2008, Francis and James, 2003, Green, 2008). The abolition of GPT has further depleted the funds available for local decision-making and associated opportunities for citizen and civil society influence, despite the creation of a GPT compensation fund (Green, 2008, Tripp, 2010). In 2005/6, local governments were expecting 80 billion shillings in local revenue but only received 25 billion in compensation from central government, and by 2008, local governments were still only in receipt of 33 billion in GPT Compensation (Tripp, 2010).

The Local Government Development Programme (LGDP), which became the Local Government Management of Service Delivery (LGMSD) programme in 2007, was introduced in part to address this problem. LGMSD channels 30 per cent of development funding to local governments in the form of an unconditional grant for the 'training and sensitization of local leaders and communities in gender mainstreaming issues, advocacy and local development' and the contracting out of local services (Kakumba, 2010: 177). Gains have been observed in terms of improved participation and ownership of local development projects, local level skills development, and improved local service provision (Kakumba, 2010, Onyach-Olaa, 2003). Yet sub-county governments complain of receiving only a small percentage of the allocated funds or none at all, while expenditure on health and education has been mostly pre-determined by PEAP and SWAp targets, and any donor funds channelled direct to local government are invested at district level (Green, 2008). LC1 to LC3 officials also feel that they lack financial information and capacity-building support, and may not even know what size budget they were supposed to have been allocated (Green, 2008, Saito, 2003).

These information gaps are reinforced by an absence of bottom-up pressure from local communities and civil society (Francis and James, 2003, Saito, 2003: 73). Research suggests that active citizen participation in the RCs was fuelled by the goods and rations being administered, and that a culture of 'obedience and deference' following decades of oppression, combined with a recognition that there is no material benefit to participation in village meetings undermines political agency (Golooba-Mutebi, 2004: 302, Saito, 2003). Dramatic reductions in local revenue and taxation has created a lack of ownership over communal goods meaning that collective maintenance which used to be enforced by the village or parish chief is no longer carried out, and councillors and parish chiefs lack the

authority to mobilise the community (Golooba-Mutebi, 2004, Saito, 2003). There have been no LC1 elections since 2001 despite the continuation of NRM primaries at village level in 2006 and 2010, which has undermined the legitimacy of the councils in a multi-party system (Daily Monitor, 2013b).

Decentralisation has created endless opportunities for patronage. The control of staff appointments by the DSC has led to posts being granted for patronage along ethnic lines and undermines accountability as job security depends on favour not performance (Tripp, 2010). Incessant district creation taking the total number from 33 in 1986 to 118 in 2010 has divided regional power bases while exacerbating ethnic tensions by consolidating government around majority ethnic identities and facilitates the co-optation of local elites by the NRM (Francis and James, 2003, Green, 2008, Mwenda, 2007). The creation of special representative positions for disadvantaged groups within parallel but not mainstream council structures has also been criticized for side lining the views of women, young people and the disabled 'into a political cul-de-sac' and ensuring that LCs remain dominated by men and their concerns' (Brock et al., 2002: 24).

Inclusive liberalism and the donor community
The international donor community has been criticized for providing continued support to the NRM regime despite Museveni's increasing semi-authoritarian tendencies and their pursuit of an economic liberalization agenda at the cost of alternative paradigms that may be better suited to tackling inequality in the long-term (Craig and Porter, 2006, Higgens and Rwanyange, 2005, Kjaer and Joughin, 2012, Tripp, 2010, Tangri and Mwenda, 2008). The former point has been attributed in part to a level of co-dependency linked to both the West's security

agenda in East Africa (Tripp, 2010, Kasfir, 2012) and Museveni's reputation for 'the highest returns on aid spent in Africa' (Craig and Porter, 2006, Tangri and Mwenda, 2010: 46).

By 1996 Uganda was in receipt of over US$800 million a year in aid, and despite increasing signs of corruption and authoritarianism, aid accounted for over 50% of the national budget between 2000 and 2005 (Hickey, 2012, Tripp, 2010). The privatisation of public services and economic liberalisation has created extensive opportunities for corruption and patronage, centralisation of resource generation and allocation via SWAps within the PEAP has undermined social accountability and community ownership of public services, while multi-partyism has fuelled patronage-politics and heightened ethnic tensions (Tripp, 2010, Kasfir, 2012). Donor emphasis on quantitative targets over qualitative outcomes and the process by which targets are achieved has also been found to create perverse incentives and undermine development in the long term (Higgens and Rwanyange, 2005, Tripp, 2010). Sustained economic growth and increasing investment rather than donor withdrawal have increased the domestic resource share of the national budget to 70% in 2009/10, but commentators are now suggesting that Museveni's 'love fest' with the donor community is 'largely over' (Barkan, 2011: 11, Hickey, 2012).   Aid has been suspended on several occasions, most recently by Britain, Ireland, Norway and Denmark in 2012 over a scandal involving the diversion of US$13 million of aid into the personal bank accounts of officials within the Office of the Prime Minister (Guardian, 2012).

In summary, Museveni's focus on economic growth through modernisation combined with a patronage-fuelled strategy for regime-survival suggests there is limited political space in contemporary Uganda for development paradigms

focused on the redistribution of social, economic and political power. Regime survival increasingly depends on the ability of the President's inner circle to maintain economic stability and generate development rents. Oil wealth may have bought them time but it has often failed to bring the long-term development expected in other regions (Humphreys et al., 2007). The UPDF's role in Somalia aside, ever increasing military expenditure suggests that the central regime are only too aware of the fragile balance on which their continued reign depends (Tripp, 2010). If the expected returns from oil production do not materialise in the short to medium term to sustain the demands of survival through patronage, and political opposition continues to gain strength, Museveni and his allies may look to securing control over the country through military power heralding yet another chapter of political and economic instability for Ugandans.

3.3 The character of civil society

The absence of strong civil society power bases, linked to the tumultuous political-economic history described above, has been a further reason for the erosion of the nascent democratisation that characterised the first ten years of Museveni's Presidency. The colonial era witnessed the emergence of peasant cooperatives, trade unions and professional associations, but their impact on the independence movement was truncated by the imposition of regulations and colonial 'advisors' which transformed many organisations from popular movements into 'profit-making businesses' (Mamdani, 1983: 18). Under Obote I, the early trade union movement was gradually stripped of autonomy (Goodman, 1969, Scott, 1966) and civil society was dominated by welfare-oriented religious organisations and international NGOs. Under Amin and Obote II civil society was muted, but resistance was expressed silently by peasants and workers through the sabotage

of farms, plantations and factories and as the oppression became more severe, more vocally with some workers braving the bullets to hold strikes and protests (Mamdani, 1983). Resistance was fragmented however: the only organised groups were in exile and comprised of 'middle-class intelligensia' (Mamdani, 1983: 106). With the traditional kingdoms abolished and popular organisations virtually disbanded, the churches became the only openly organised power base left within civil society (Kassimir, 1995). They were also limited in their ability to challenge Amin's reign of terror, and were feared for their indigenous and popular base of support. They became increasingly localised in their operation but continued to play a key role in the 1980 elections between the Amin and Obote II regimes nonetheless (Ward, 1995).

Under the NRM, the delimitation of all political activity within the local council system until 2006, and increasing repression or cooptation, has led to fragmentation and self-censorship within civil society and the 'atrophy' of popular organisations (Brock et al., 2002: 17). Women's organisations, initially hailed as offering a challenge to patronage politics (Tripp, 1998, 2001) are considered by some to be too close to the NRM (Goetz and Hassim, 2003), trade unions constitute a very small formal sector and are split by factionalism and a lack of accountability to members unable or unwilling to pay dues, and professional associations and human rights organisations have been critiqued for focusing on specific cases rather than taking up the mantle of economic, social and cultural rights (Oloka-Onyango and Barya, 1997, Robinson and Friedman, 2007). Religious and cultural institutions continue to be widely recognised as some of the most significant autonomous power bases within society, particularly since the NRM's reinstatement of traditional kingdoms since 1993(Crook, 2001, Dicklitch, 1998, Hansen and Twaddle, 1995, Jones, 2009, Oloka-Onyango and Barya,

1997), but church leaders are frequently co-opted by the NRM, and focused on self-preservation rather than democratisation (Kassimir, 1998). The larger churches also lack a presence in more rural and remote areas, and while the traditional kingdoms (particularly Buganda) continue to pose a significant threat to the Museveni regime, political opposition along religious and ethnic lines in conjunction with multi-party elections is predicted to 'deepen rather than erode patrimonial politics' and ethnic and regional tensions (Jones, 2009, Mamdani, 1996, Robinson, 2006b).

Civil society commentators are finding evidence of autonomy and resistance in Uganda despite these critiques. Tripp (2001, 2010) continues to hold the women's movement as one of the most effective, semi-autonomous voices within Ugandan civil society, highlighting the leverage they have gained through NRM dependence upon the female vote, and the limitations of patronage for such a large percentage of the population. Mwenda identifies 'the explosion in the number of educated Ugandans' who pose a challenge to NRM patronage (2007: 36). The Ugandan media have playing a key watchdog role despite arrests and detentions of journalists (Kasfir, 2010, Mwenda, 2007, Robinson, 2006b). Certain popular civil associations have also been neglected in much analysis of power and politics including populist and Pentecostal churches, burial societies and other home town associations (Jones, 2009).

3.4 The structure of societal power relations

There is a distinct lack of research applying socio-economic analysis to understanding the effects of power relations on political agency and social change in Uganda. A brief overview of the current structure of societal power relations in

Uganda in relation to issues of ethnicity, class and gender follows, despite this gap in the literature.

3.4.1 Ethnicity and conflict

As the above background makes clear, political transitions and military power have been driven by ethnic allegiances and tensions in Uganda. At the national level, this has led to vast regional disparities in development outcomes and the balance of power in central/local relations (Golooba-Mutebi and Hickey, 2010). Northern and Eastern Uganda have dramatically higher levels of poverty than Central and Western regions and are distinctly under-represented within key Ministerial posts (Lindeman, 2011). The role played by indirect rule in constructing inter-ethnic tensions was introduced briefly in the opening section and reflects Mamdani's analysis in Chapter 2.

3.4.2 Social hierarchy and deference

Pre-colonial chieftancy systems which varied across ethnic traditions but had the exchange of tributes for favour in common, have significantly shaped the modern patronage-based social and political system in Uganda (Kelsall, 2008, Mamdani, 1996). This has been compounded by decades of unrest and the continued association of politics with militarism under the NRM (Tripp, 2010), and by the favourable development invested in urban over rural areas (Mamdani, 1996). A culture of deference to those in authority, the educated, and the wealthy (with many such people situated in urban areas) is prevalent in rural Uganda undermining political agency for greater influence and control over public resources (Golooba-Mutebi, 2004). With 80% of the population living in rural

areas, and 70% engaged in either subsistence or small-scale farming (ILO, 2008), several analysts suggest that most Ugandans are more interested in survival than participating in decision-making (Dicklitch, 1998, Golooba-Mutebi, 2004, Mwenda, 2007).[5]

3.4.3 Land and social stratification

Years of instability have created a highly politicised land issue in Uganda with insecure tenancies arising from conflict and displacement and the colonial legacy of communal land being handed out to favoured tribes. A number of different tenures were introduced under the Protectorate which varied regionally, but in practice, at the local level, farmers continued to operate according to a customary system whereby land belonged to the clan and was claimed by occupancy and working the land with the permission of the chief or clan head (Rugadya, 1999). A series of land reforms were introduced in the pre-NRM post-colonial era to formalize and/or nationalize land-ownership but these were not widely enforced. Following the 1998 Land Act and the establishment of Land Commissions, local occupants of customary land were required to apply for a certificate which they could then transfer to a freehold title (Rugadya, 1999). Many families have not officially registered their land however which leaves people vulnerable to land grabbing by political and military officials (CPRC, 2006, Kasfir, 2010). Migrant groups are particularly prone to discrimination and insecurity of tenure with tensions heightened by the increasing number of districts organised around majority ethnic groups, and the 2010 Land Amendment Act which Bugandans in particular believe favours migrant and minority groups (Daily Monitor, 2010a).

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[5] Although Afrobarometer data chart high levels of electoral and party-political participation in Uganda, their surveys also suggest that satisfaction with democracy has dropped dramatically since 2011 (Bratton et al., 2000, Liebowitz et al., 2013).

Land fragmentation through a process of all sons inheriting a share of their father's land, vulnerability to contingencies leading to 'distress sale' of land, and reducing soil fertility all contribute to social differentiation and entrenched poverty (Bird and Shinyeka, 2003: 19). Estimates vary, but a 2008 ILO study cites an average land holding per household of less than one hectare and Ainembabazi (2007) finds that land ownership increased among better off social classes but declined among middle income and the poor between 1993 and 2002. Many farmers continue to survive on subsistence but small-scale farmers who do attempt to farm commercially struggle to generate enough produce to bargain for better prices and lack accurate market information (Ferris et al., 2008), while a minority of large land-holders have been favoured within successive development policies and the patronage system as described above (Hickey, 2005, 2012, Tumukwasibwe, 2010).

3.4.4 Gender inequality

Gender inequality in Uganda, as in much of sub-Saharan Africa, is deeply rooted within social and cultural values, norms and traditions and is therefore a highly complex challenge. It is 'reproduced through the paternal family and kinship systems; religious institutions which preach domination of the woman by the man; and is reinforced by the state ideology through state policies and the legal system' (Mugyenyi, 1998: 135). Women are excluded from land ownership leaving widows, or wives within polygamous family structures, highly vulnerable and 'AIDS widows' subject to stigmatisation and blame leading to evictions and the stripping of assets, forms of disadvantage that are inherited by children (Bird and Shinyeka, 2003: 20). Although a 2007 constitutional amendment made it legal for women to

inherit property (Tripp, 2010), Museveni himself stepped in at the last minute to remove a clause from the 1998 Land Bill that would have enabled marital co-ownership of land (Tripp, 2010). Women have suffered disproportionately from social breakdown including theft, alcoholism and inter-ethnic conflict, and the social costs of structural adjustment such as extra economic pressure for export crop production without corresponding financial gains, and increased costs of social services (Bird and Shinyeka, 2003, Mugyenyi, 1998). Women continue to face significant, sometimes violent obstacles to political or local associational participation (Tripp, 1998, Guardian, 2010). Being usually the principle breadwinners, women also have little time for anything but their livelihood strategies (Lakwo, 2009).

Although gender inequality continues to constrain the development potential and political agency of rural households, significant changes are beginning to be felt across the country. Although the degree of influence they wield within a male-dominated political arena is debated (Tamale, 2004), the provision of positions for women within NRM party structures and local and national government has at least increased the visibility of women in leadership roles. At a national level, the women's movement have kept women's rights high on the national policy agenda (Tripp, 2010). Female enrolment in schools has also increased rapidly since 1996 (Nishimura et al., 2008) which can be expected to reap further gains for women in the future.

3.4.5 Producer cooperatives: agents of change?

Cooperative production, savings and credit and collective marketing are strategies that have enabled some small-scale farmers to tackle some of the structural

disadvantages described above, though often to the exclusion of the poorest (Thorp et al., 2005). Cooperative production has a long history in Uganda. Pre-colonial practices varied regionally but in Western Uganda it was common for households to cooperate in farming, construction and the maintenance of common resources (Rwagweri, 2003). The process of cooperative development and agricultural commercialization was stunted by the monopolising of crop processing and marketing by first Protectorate and later post-colonial state regimes (Mamdani, 1983, Brett, 1998). By the time the NRM came to power, cooperative endeavour had been tainted by mismanagement and collapse from the late 1960s through to the early 1980s undermining any indigenous or localised drives for collective working. Structural adjustment in the mid-1990s increased the prices gained by larger scale coffee and cotton producers but led to impoverishment among much of the rest of the rural population (Brett, 1998). Cooperative societies which had survived the Amin era were unprepared for the transition to private ownership and members suffered from further mismanagement and struggled to cope with the fierce competition of a market-led economy (ILO, 2008). The NRM changed tactics and began promoting a revival of the cooperative movement in 2002 (Flygare, 2006: 61). There is a legacy of mistrust among subsistence and small holder farmers in contemporary rural Uganda however, and disarray within the cooperative movement including confusion over registration requirements and the roles and responsibilities of committees and ordinary members (ILO, 2008).

There is a paucity of studies on the Ugandan cooperative movement since 1990s liberalization (IFPRI, 2010) and conflicting data within those available. The Ministry for Trade and Industry (MTIC, 2012) suggests that in 2009 there were a total of 8811 registered cooperatives in Uganda, of which 2523 were agricultural

marketing cooperatives and 2417 were Savings and Credit Cooperatives (SACCOs), while an ILO (2008) study suggests that there were over 6,000 SACCOS alone by 2000. The latter study also finds that the major challenge facing producer collectives today is fostering a substantive sense of ownership and to shift thinking among the membership from 'me' to 'we' (2008: 171). A recent doctoral study finds a number of other challenges (within which ownership is a key theme) including dominance of wealthier members over decision-making, pressure on staff to provide unregulated cash advances to larger-scale farmers, members selling their produce outside the cooperative, lack of will or capacity to monitor members' use of common property, and the use of informal strategies rather than formal procedures for problem resolution (Flygare, 2006). Cooperatives also have to overcome a shift away from collective action such as peasant movements towards more individualising strategies such as micro-finance under the international neo-liberal paradigm (Bebbington, 2005), and Wiegratz (2010) highlights increasingly destructive exchanges between Ugandan farmers and traders in response to neo-liberal modernisation.

Despite these challenges, cooperative production and marketing clearly hold potential for popular power-building in rural Uganda. Two examples from different periods include the Bugisu Cooperative Union (BCU) in Eastern Uganda and Bukonzo Joint Micro Finance Cooperative Society (BJ) in the region studied here. BCU successfully gained control over coffee marketing within their district in the colonial era by withholding their coffee crops – a key source of state revenue (Bunker, 1983) and has been recently reinvigorated under the leadership of a senior member of the parliamentary opposition (Daily Monitor, 2010). In Kasese district, BJ have mobilized a 5,000 strong membership to finance political negotiations which have successfully redirected sub-county resources into rural

electrification, enabling local farmers to power their new coffee huller machine (CSO-district-5). In addition to mobilization for political influence, cooperatives have the potential to offer members varying forms of social protection contributing to the tackling of socio-economic disadvantage and inequality (ILO, 2008), and an array of experience and skills that can facilitate social as well as economic empowerment particularly for women including increased 'confidence', 'negotiating skills', and 'the ability to take control of certain household decisions' (Ferguson and Kepe, 2011: 421).

Debates in Chapter 2 suggest that a degree of commercialization is necessary for the emergence of a significant agrarian business class that can better negotiate for the interests of small holder farmers. This examination of the current structure of socio-economic power relations in Uganda suggests that small-holders must become better organized and the policy arena more favourable to the needs of farmers with smaller land holdings before these kinds of political-economic shifts can be expected to emerge.

3.5   Political capacity in the formal NGO sector

The foregoing discussion suggests a highly constrained political space for NGOs focused on tackling inequality and reshaping power relations but also begins to highlight potential sites of agency and change. This final section of the chapter will examine the current organisational landscape within the formal NGO sector and the political capacity of Ugandan NGOs to engage in re-politicizing development in light of this political-economic background. It is informed rather than structured by the three dimensions of NGO political capacity outlined in Chapter 2 – autonomy and commitment, analytical and strategic capacity, and operational capacity.

3.5.1 Sector overview

Since the NRM came to power, the Ugandan NGO sector has expanded from less than 200 organisations in 1986 to a recent estimate by the Uganda National NGO Forum (UNNGOF) of 8,000 in 2010 although the NGO registration board suggest only 15-30% of registered organisations are operational (Independent, 2009). There is a lack of accurate information about the sector in general, a national survey was conducted in 2002 but was subject to certain reliability and validity gaps (Barr et al., 2005). The available evidence suggests that Ugandan NGOs were predominantly engaged in service delivery in the late 1990s in response to structural adjustment but a shift towards advocacy occurred in the early to mid-2000's alongside the emergence of the inclusive neo-liberal paradigm and a lack of space for party-political opposition (Barr et al., 2005, Brock et al., 2002). The 2002 research found the top three reported activities to be awareness raising (including education and training activities), support to farming, and HIV/AIDS or health related action, and that most organisations took a holistic rather than a specialised approach (Barr et al., 2005).

3.5.2 Policy influence

Political space for NGO participation in policy-making appears to have gone full circle. NGOs were consulted during planning stages for the first PEAP in 1997 but only under international pressure and equipped with little expertise (Brock et al., 2002, Isooba, 2005).(Brock et al., 2002, Hearn, 2001) NGOs played an increasing role over the course of the three PEAP revision processes, and had sustained involvement in implementation of the PMA as members of the steering group and monitoring committees at district level (Isooba, 2005). Civil society participation in

the 2009/2010 NDP planning process has been far more selective however with certain high profile actors involved only at later consultative stages (Hickey, 2012).

The trajectory of policy influence has been shaped significantly by the character of the central regime. Inclusion has not equated to influence. The policy spaces opened up by inclusive liberalism have been consultative not deliberative, and invitations highly selective enabling the state to 'mute dissenting voices' (Brock et al., 2002: 47, Hearn, 2001). Government has also limited NGO influence by restricting their access to information; during the second revision process for example, a draft PEAP was circulated with the chapters on public expenditure and monitoring and evaluation missing (Isooba, 2005). These consultative spaces are also imbued with hierarchical power relations which 'deter genuine and confident engagement'(Brock et al., 2002: 45), to the point where Uganda ActionAid rejected the whole process of 'invited space' in 2004, issuing a call for action to NGOs to create their own distinct spaces for national debate (Hearn, 2007). There is a lack of space for challenging the inclusive liberal development paradigm and space is only provided for monitoring sector specific expenditure rather than more political areas such as military expenditure. At district level, the increasing contracting out of services undermines NGO capacity for monitoring by making service provider organisations vulnerable to co-optation (Lister and Nyamugasira, 2003).

The most frequently cited constraint on NGO operations in Uganda is state regulation, most recently in the form of the 2006 NGO Amendment Act which introduced an onerous registration process including compulsory renewal after one, three and five years, and the requirement to provide seven days written notice of fieldwork to District Administrators. Members of the two national intelligence agencies also sit on the NGO registration board (Barr et al., 2005,

Larok and Kiija, 2009). Many of these administrative procedures are not enforced, but the state effectively reserves the right to dissolve organisations at any time, placing significant limitations on NGOs' ability to innovate, develop alternative strategies and discourses, or take an overtly political approach to community mobilisation and civil society building (Barr et al., 2005).

The sector's political capacity has also been undermined by questionable legitimacy and organisational capacity. In policy terms, the lack of expertise in macro-economics and of experience with advocacy among NGOs has led to the submission of recommendations without follow up and to jumping into invited spaces without weighing up the 'opportunity costs' in terms of analysing the full range of positions that they might occupy, or assessing policy spaces according to the influence they may yield (Brock et al., 2002: 48). With respect to legitimacy, Ugandan NGOs have been criticised for being motivated by lucrative salaries rather than voluntarism, diverting energy, resources and skills from the public sector (Mwenda, 2007: 34), and lacking internal democracy and processes for beneficiary participation, with top-down centralized decision-making structures a common phenomenon (Barr et al., 2005, Dicklitch, 1998, Katusiimeh, 2004). The elite and usually urban staff base of Ugandan NGOs compounds doubts about their priorities, the depth of their knowledge and the quality of their situational analyses (Lister and Nyamugasira, 2003). The sector's party-political independence has also been called into question. Half the leaders in the 2002 study had worked in Government before becoming NGO directors (Barr et al., 2005), and Brock et al. highlight the conspicuous silence on the ethnic bias within the leadership of the majority of national development NGOs who 'are almost all from western Uganda, where the most influential figures in government – including Museveni – also come from' (Brock et al., 2002: 20). The preference for defining

activities in broad terms such as 'community development' and 'empowerment' and the lack of compulsion for NGOs to prove their non-profit status through the filing of corporate tax returns have also been raised as potential avenues of abuse (Barr et al., 2005).

Many Ugandan NGOs are constrained by a weak financial base, dependency on state and donor resources, and skills and capacity gaps. Dependency on state or donor resources rather than membership fees or business arms is undermining downward accountability and constraining innovation (Dicklitch and Lwanga, 2003, Lister and Nyamugasira, 2003). The proliferation of NGOs during the donor-fuelled boom of the late 1990s and early 2000s has led to fierce competition over resources contributing to a lack of coordination and cooperation within the sector and a small number of larger organisations receiving a disproportionate share of resources (Barr et al, 2005). Consultancy work also diverts energy away from the main business of social change (Dicklitch, 1998).

Ugandan NGO leaders are generally highly educated but this frequently has not translated into impact in terms of innovation, pressure or policy influence. NGOs lack information and analytical skills which 'constrains their ability and confidence to provide…independent perspectives' (Barr et al., 2005, Brock et al., 2002: 15), or 'to develop strategies based on an understanding of the social, political and economic context' (Lister and Nyamugasira, 2003: 102). This gap has been linked to an over-emphasis on civil and political rather than economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR) among rights-based NGOs (Lister and Nyamugasira, 2003, Oloka-Onyango, 2009). Of 245 rights and development organisations in one 2002 directory, fewer than 10 reported an ESCR focus (Oloka-Onyango, 2009, citing HURINET, 2002). Other studies find that fear of being marked as political and the

need to pander to apolitical donor agendas are stronger determinants of practice than low human resource capacity, with donors having favoured civic education style strategies with clear, measurable outputs (Dicklitch, 2003).

There are increasing signs of better organisation within the sector and a greater willingness to challenge the state and generate alternative ideas however. The formation of the Uganda National NGO Forum in 2001 has provided a stronger and better coordinated voice for civil society at a national level (Tripp, 2010). A coalition of NGOs led by the Forum filed a constitutional challenge to the Amendment Act in 2009 which has since been suspended while the case is yet to be scheduled for a hearing (HRW, 2012). Environmental and Women's Movements have both mounted vociferous campaigns in recent years including successful resistance to the selling of Mabira Forest Reserve to a Sugar company and the tabling of successive bills aimed at securing Women's rights (Tripp, 2010), while ACODE have come under investigation following vociferous condemnation of suspected government corruption over oil contracts (HRW, 2012). Despite earlier concerns that Ugandan civil society was not only significantly formed on the back of, but was also serving to perpetuate, the inclusive neo-liberal paradigm (Hickey, 2005, Tumukwasibwe, 2010), the recent civil society submission to the NDP makes a clear attempt to reframe development in terms of empowerment rather than poverty reduction, redistribution through progressive taxation, and increased state regulation of markets (UNNGOF, 2009).

Certain progressive organisations and coalitions are also attempting to address some of the sector's historical challenges. UNNGOF have introduced a Quality Assurance Mechanism for the sector (CSO-Nat-1). By the turn of the millennium, a number of national organisations had begun introducing more robust processes

for citizen participation and consultation (Brock et al., 2002) and Ugandan NGOs were already receiving praise for 'effective literacy training, employment-generation, and building the capacity of grass roots organisations and leadership', all important first steps towards empowerment of the poor (Dicklitch, 1998: 161). More recently, the Uganda Debt Network (UDN) and Anti-Corruption Coalition of Uganda (ACCU) have made significant strides to increase state accountability to citizens through budget and public expenditure monitoring work and exposure of corruption (Robinson, 2006a). Their task is enormous, but these strategies contribute to political learning among citizens and arm legislators with much needed information contributing to the increasing rebellion against corruption in parliament and among the public (Robinson, 2006, Kasfir, 2012). The suggestion that a holistic approach is more open to abuse than specialisation is also debatable with some studies finding the synergy between service delivery and advocacy or grass roots projects and policy influence far more effective than a single focus (Bukenya, 2012, Lister and Nyamugasira, 2003).

3.6 Political space for a redistributive agenda in Uganda: concluding comments

Political space for the cultivation of supportive conditions for social democratic development in Uganda is clearly highly restricted but does contain openings which NGOs may be able to manipulate to the advantage of poor or disadvantaged groups. Opposition to the Museveni regime is becoming more vocal both within the NRM, in parliament, and in public, including rebel MPs within the NRM that are beginning to resist the established order (Kasfir, 2012). Intra-elite splits within the ruling bloc can create opportunities for alliances with more popular actors (Houtzager and Pattenden, 2003). Increased political competition

and a correlated increased need for votes on the part of the NRM may create

leverage for a more pro-poor orientation as suggested by the 2010 Land Act.

Although fuelled by Museveni's need for the female vote, the women's movement

provides one example of how negotiating relationships with actors within the

central regime for mutual benefit can advance the position of disadvantaged

groups (Tripp, 2010). The Ugandan media continues to be a space for open

criticism of government policy or corruption which many NGOs already make

extensive use of (Brock et al., 2002, Chibita and Fourie, 2007, Robinson, 2006a).

There are also key contemporary civil associations which generate high levels of

participation and support among ordinary people including churches, burial

societies and other home town associations, as well as the traditional kingdoms,

which have been neglected in analyses of the democratising potential of civil

society (Jones, 2009).

To promote robust alternative ideas and approaches and build legitimacy,

comparative evidence from Chapter 2 suggests that NGOs will need to cultivate

stronger information, research and analytical capacity, greater autonomy by

diversifying funding, developing more domestic resource bases, and negotiating

more programmatic rather than project-based funding. They must also develop

stronger processes for internal democracy and downwards accountability and

responsiveness. The discussion here and in Chapter 2 suggests that in order to

tackle entrenched political, social and economic power relations, NGOs may do

well to focus on re-building popular grass roots organisations and cooperatives

(with particular attention to issues of gender and chronic poverty), fostering multi-

level, multi-ethnic, cross sector and cross-class alliances and coalitions, and

harnessing the power of existing cultural and religious power bases and traditions.

Increased political opposition to Museveni and the challenge of addressing not just

poverty but inequality and disadvantage suggest an opportunity for NGOs to foster

alliances between disadvantaged groups and rural and urban elites opposed to

increasing authoritarianism and its potential negative economic consequences.

Organisations like ACODE have already begun to work alongside MP's for

example in combatting corruption around oil governance. In the face of potentially

violent reprisals, a key concern will be how to pursue some of these strategies

without increasing the vulnerability of the poor or of NGO actors themselves.

NGOs attempting to exploit these political opportunities clearly face a major

challenge and it will be important to assess the achievements of the case study

organisation against the context they are operating within and not according to

universal ideals, hence the emphasis within the thesis on cultivating supportive

conditions rather than bringing about major redistributive changes. The next

chapter provides a political economic overview of the Rwenzori sub-region where

most of this NGO's strategies have played out and describes its character and the

interventions selected for analysis.

4   Introducing the Rwenzori sub-region and TCSO

4.1   Introduction

TCSO is based in Fort Portal Town which is the largest urban centre for the
Rwenzori sub-region and home to Kabarole District Local Government. The sub-
region is rich in resources and ethnic diversity but has a long history of ethnic
tensions and conflicts which has posed serious challenges for regional unity and
development. This chapter will describe some key aspects of Rwenzori history,
society and governance, introduce the sub-counties where local level data
generation took place, and provide a brief history of TCSO including an
introduction to the interventions that the research has focused on. This will provide
a clearer sense of the significance of the changes the organisation has been able
to achieve in the findings chapters to follow.

4.2 Socio-economic overview

The Rwenzori sub-region covers an area of approximately 13,970km2[6] and is
known internationally for the Rwenzori mountain range. Census projections
suggest that the region has a population of over two million spread across eight
districts (Businge, 2010). The thesis mainly refers to the five districts that existed
before 2009.[7]

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[6] www.rwenzoriinfo.com
[7] Kabarole, Kasese, Kyenjojo, Kamwenge, and Bundibugyo up to 2009, adding Kyegegwa, Ntoroko
and Kitagwenda between 2009 and the present day.

Figure 4.1 Map of Uganda districts in 2009[8] (KwDLG, 2009)
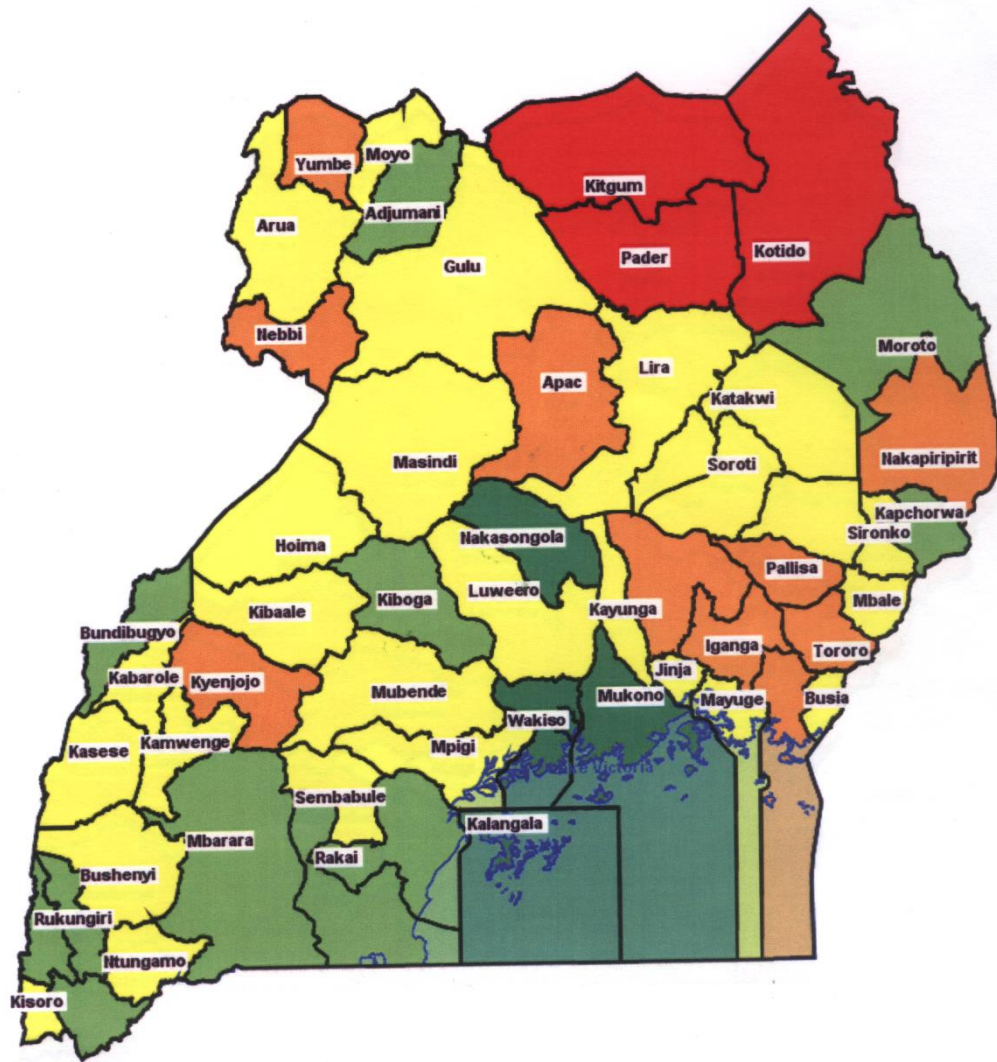
Rwenzori is home to great environmental diversity and has a multi-ethnic

population with the largest ethnic groups being the Batooro, Bakonjo [*Ba-kon-zo*],

Bamba, and Bakiga [*Ba-chi-ga*], and the mountains and neighbouring plains

mainly occupied by Bakonjo and Bamba (Internal, 2010c). Inward migration of

Bakiga following resettlements under the British Protectorate and migrant labour

for the tea estates has over time caused resentment among some Batooro linked

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[8] In 2009, the Rwenzori sub-region still comprised only the five districts of Bundibugyo, Kabarole, Kyenjojo, Kamwenge and Kasese which appear towards the South Western corner of the map in Figure 4.1.

to rapid population expansion and political-economic development, though not in the sample sub-counties (Rwagweri, 2003, TCSO-SM-3).

Agriculture and livestock farming are the largest economic activities (Internal, 2010c) and the majority of farmers continue to operate within a customary land tenure system based on inheritance and occupation (Elders-BK-1, Elders-MY-1). Officially, land titles should now be applied for through the LC1 but local elders claim that few people have done so in practice (Elders-BK-1, Elders-MY-1). The sub-region encompasses two national parks and part of the Great Lakes region, so fishing provides livelihoods in some areas (BSLG, 2009, MSLG, 2008). The parks have caused tension between government and local communities relating to evictions from the Rwenzori Mountains National Park in the 1990's (Ernst, 2011) and farmers and pastoralists suffering loss of land and damage to crops or livestock from wild animals in Queen Elizabeth National Park (Elders-MY-1, IISD, 2007). Villages bordering the parks are now in receipt of a small amount of compensation. Queen Elizabeth is one of the sites where oil has been discovered however the extent to which this will generate local incomes and revenue remains to be seen.

Poverty levels in the sub-region are below the national average at 30% and vary across the districts with conflict-affected areas suffering disproportionately (Internal, 2010c). Farmers are also struggling with the effects of climate change (*ibid.*) and face material barriers to commercialisation including poor transport infrastructure, poor access to market and technological information, and lack of capital (Internal 2009a, 2007). Most households continue to use hand hoes for cultivation (KDLG, 2010). Labour migration from rural to urban areas and related remittances are common practice and by 1991 the Batooro were the third largest

ethnic group living in Kampala (Rwagweri, 2003). Kabarole district in particular has a history of high quality education for those who could afford the fees (Kasfir, 1970, Rwagweri, 2003). Anecdotal evidence suggests that well educated elites often enter into local politics, the civil service or civil society, set up local businesses and NGOs or move to Kampala or into international positions particularly within the NGO sector.

Population growth above the national average, land fragmentation through the traditional inheritance system, and an increasing concentration of land in the hands of large companies like the tea estates, are leading to increasing pressure on land or landlessness particularly among younger generations, and combined with negative cultural or generational attitudes towards cultivation, are increasing the pursuit of alternative livelihood strategies, such as casual labour, *boda-boda*[9] driving, and retail (Ainembabazi, 2007, Mulley and Unruh, 2004; Rwagweri, 2003; Elders-BK-1, Elders-MY-1). This combination of factors was contributing to falling levels of production and soaring food prices during the research which was igniting concerns about future food security among civil and political leaders (TCSO-FN-36, TCSO-FN-3).

4.3   Struggles for sovereignty: a political history

As Ingham notes in one of the few studies of the region, 'the struggle for Toro is the story of the struggle for sovereignty' (1975: 1). The Rwenzori sub-region was originally part of the Bunyuro-Kitara empire and became Toro District under the British Protectorate when the Batooro successfully lobbied for recognition of their own kingdom and for administration over the Bakonjo and Bwamba of the

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[9] Motor-bike taxis

Rwenzori mountains, foothills and valleys (Ingham, 1975, Kasfir, 1970).

Discriminatory treatment of the Bakonjo and Bwamba led to the emergence of the

Ruwenzururu peasant movement in 1962 and the declaration of a Ruwenzururu

kingdom independent of Toro in 1965 (Ingham, 1975, Kasfir, 1970). Despite

various attempts at coercion or persuasion under Obote I and Amin, including

Amin's creation of two districts for the Bakonjo and Bamba (present day Kasese

and Bundibugyo respectively), the Ruwenzururu struggle continued until 1982,

when the Obote II regime made peace with the king and the political and civil

leadership were given control over the two district administrations (Mamdani,

1996, African Rights, 2001). Distrustful of the settlement, a small military

contingent remained in the mountains. These rebels formed an alliance with the

NRA during the civil war but later fell out with Museveni, and joined other guerrillas

to form the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) in the 1990s. Museveni's

reinstatement of Toro kingdom in 1992 revived passions for recognition of the

Ruwenzururu kingdom among the Bakonjo (African Rights, 2001) until this was

finally granted in 2009.

The ADF have been accused of being 'a rebellion without a cause' but

nonetheless manipulated ethnic tensions and political rivalries to commit terrible

atrocities throughout the 1990s (African Rights, 2001: 1). The core membership

comprised an Islamic sect who claimed to be protesting against the

marginalization of Muslims by the NRM government (*ibid.*). They found common

cause with disparate groups of armed rebels, and were given supplies and training

from the Mobotu and then Kabila regimes in DRC. One estimate suggests they

had killed approximately 1,000 civilians and displaced over 100,000 people by

2001 (*ibid.*). Uganda's involvement in the war in DRC, rumours of abuse of power

in relation to the 2001 Presidential elections and a series of corruption scandals

are also thought to have added fuel to the fire (*ibid.*). Within the Rwenzori sub-region the worst affected area was Bundibugyo district however parts of Kabarole and Kasese district also suffered severe upheavals.

These struggles for sovereignty and recognition have also been bound up with party political, economic and religious affiliations. Under the British Protectorate, elite Batooro and particularly those within 'political clans' such as chiefs, became Protestant in emulation of their colonial governors, and Catholicism spread increasingly among the peasant class (Kassimir, 1998). Chiefs therefore favoured Anglicans with the dividends of patronage leading to a sense of grievance among the Batooro peasantry and among Bakonjo and Baamba among whom Catholicism had taken hold as an alternative identity to the Protestantism of their oppressors. Associated with Protestantism at a national level, the UPC became the party of choice for elite Batooro and the Catholic DP that of the Batooro peasantry and the Bakonjo and Baamba, with the latter choice later associated with the central UPC government's failure to support the Ruwenzururu cause (Ingham, 1975). The majority of Batooro voted DP during the 1980 elections however, seeing the UPC as a greater threat to federal status for the Toro Kingdom (Kassimir, 1998). These affiliations have become less clear cut over time and the region has predominantly voted NRM in Presidential, parliamentary and district chair elections since 2006,[10] but this politicisation of ethnicity has had a lasting impact on the potential for collective action.

Beyond local government, Batooro elites have remained 'exceptionally well-represented' within national political regimes (Kasfir, 1970: 53, Lindeman, 2011), based initially on their affiliation with the UPC and subsequently with the NRM

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[10] based on election result records of the Electoral Commission of Uganda - www.ec.or.ug.

during the civil war (Kabarole was an early stronghold for the NRA) (Kassimir, 1998). In 1970, four out of five Batooro representatives to the National Assembly were ministers or deputy ministers making their representation greater than any other district of the time (Kasfir, 1970), while Lindeman (2011) finds that 4.5% of Museveni's inner core of Ministers between 1986 and 2008 were Batooro, despite their comprising only 2.9% of the population in 2002. The Batooro are not well represented in comparison with other groups in the Western region however such as Museveni's own Banyankole, or the Bakiga (Lindeman, 2011).

4.4   Governance: From indirect rule to decentralised patronage

The findings come to highlight how traditions of hierarchy and patronage and the exploitations of indirect rule (Mamdani, 1996) have interacted with imported forms of liberal democracy in ways which undermine political agency among rural farmers in the region. Traditional political systems varied between the Batooro and Bakonjo but had in common rule by a powerful elder or chief to whom the peasantry must show their allegiance through tributes. This system of paying tributes (in kind) to the king via his chiefs, and receiving hand outs or favours in return, laid the foundations for the patronage-based system underlying modern social and political relations (Rwagweri, 2003).

The British Protectorate adopted the Toro system of governance for indirect rule in the area covered by present day Rwenzori under the 1900 Toro agreement and this system of chieftancy 'dominated politics and administration in Toro until independence' (Kasfir, 1970: 44). Village chiefs either inherited their title or were appointed by a council of elders, and reported up a hierarchical structure through parish, sub-county and county chiefs up to a British District Commissioner based

in Fort Portal (Elders-BK-1, Elders-MY-1). There was little understanding about the nature of British rule among the rural peasantry (*ibid.*). Chiefs held judicial, legislative, executive and administrative power, were appointed and ruled by the Toro Kingdom, and enforced loyalty to the king and obedience to the laws of the Kingdom (Elders-BK-1, Elders-MY-1, Ingham, 1975). Parish chiefs received tax collections and enforced collective maintenance of communal facilities, roads and hillsides and hygiene. The village chief mobilised people for meetings, identified tax or hygiene defaulters for punishment by the parish chief, and presided over a village court, passing more complicated cases up the governance structure when necessary (Elders-BK-1, Elders-MY-1). County chiefs were paid salaries by the District Commissioner in Fort Portal and granted 100 acre estates, with similar but smaller allocations for sub-county chiefs while peasant tributes were paid into a local government fund (Kasfir, 1970).

Chiefs were appointed out of the Toro kingdom's governance structure so that successive chieftancies were dominated by elite, educated Batooro (*ibid.*). This paved the way for later dominance of local administrations in the region by the Batooro and for the emergence of the Rwenzururu movement described above. Batooro leaders discriminated against the Bakonjo and Bamba in the provision of health and social services, government positions, tax assessments and educational scholarships (Ingham, 1975, Kasfir, 1970).

Under Obote I, chiefs became appointed by government rather than by the kingdom. Enforced collection of taxes and collective public works by state appointed chiefs continued and became ever harsher under Amin and Obote II including disappearances and violent repression (Elders-BK-1, Elders-MY-1). As elsewhere in the country, in the 1970s and early 1980s many people retreated into

subsistence agriculture and avoided contact with state officials as much as possible (*ibid.*).

The intertwining of superior social status with governance has continued into the NRM era. Kabarole was one of the first areas to be liberated and local elders suggest that resistance council executives were elected from among the village elders rather than all adult members of the village, and that those elected to govern at parish level were among the most educated residents. Although the provision of special leadership positions for young people and women engaged most people in the new system to begin with (Elders-BK-1, Elders-MY-1), by the mid-1990s, there was little village planning taking place, and development plans were agreed by chiefs and councillors at parish and sub-county levels (*ibid.*).

Patronage-based districtization has been manifest in Rwenzori just as in other parts of the country under the NRM (Green, 2008) and politicised ethnicity continues to dominate questions of governance. Three new districts have been carved out of the existing administrative structures since 2009 and new sub-counties have been created along ethnic lines within these districts as the research findings will describe. Local government elections have sparked off inter-ethnic tensions and sometimes violence. In Kyenjojo for example, competition between native Batooro and immigrant Bakiga led to clashes in 2006 when Museveni had to intervene leading to national debate about the potential for ring fencing seats for native ethnic groups on local councils (TCSO-SM-3). Although tensions between the Bakonjo and Batooro have flared up repeatedly over the past decade, overall relations between the two groups have improved over time, many rural and urban areas have mixed populations and though still not common, intermarriages have been known to occur (CPF-BK-1, Elders-BK-1). There are still

strong feelings of resentment among some Bakonjo at their continued political exclusion outside Kasese district however and with some foundation, until 2006 there had never been a Mukonjo representative on the Kabarole district council (MinLocGov, LCV-KB-1).

4.5   Social relations, local associations and civil society

Rwenzori society has a long history of hierarchy and stratification beyond the division of chief and peasant: 'the Batooro traditionally possessed a highly stratified social structure with the royal Babito clan on top, the pastoral cattle-keeping Bahima below them, and the Bairu peasants at the bottom of the ladder'; while 'any Mutooro, no matter how lowly his own social status, regarded all Bakonjo and Baamba as his inferiors' (Kasfir, 1970: 40). Many Batooro therefore felt a drop in social status when a severe epidemic in the 1920's wiped out a devastating number of cattle leaving many Batooro to seek out other livelihood strategies (*ibid.*). Competing contemporary discourses now describe Batooro farmers as 'lazy' (LC1-MY-1, TCSO-FN-7, TCSO-SM-2) or locate their agricultural underdevelopment in a loss of cultural identity along with their loss of pastoralism as a lifestyle, and in their disregard for farming linked to this historic association of cultivation with 'the stigma of toiling and slavery' (Mulley and Unruh, 2004, Rwagweri, 2003: 53).

Bakonjo and Batooro elders felt that the division of labour and gender roles within a household or village during the colonial era and earlier, were similar across their ethnic groups and polygamy was also common practice: "Women were ascribed to upbringing of children, domestic work and producing food for subsistence. Males...all the heavy work relating to constructions, defence and adventurism'

(Rwagweri, 2003: 48). There were also strong traditions of collective working and consultative decision-making however, involving both women and men. These included collective rotational cultivation between the women and children of different households, joint construction of households by men, or social gatherings over home brewed banana beer or a meal (Elders-BK-1, Elders-MY-1). Batooro elders have recently tried to revive the '*Isaazi*' tradition in Kabarole district in the form of the Toro Elders Forum which seeks to mentor the young and hold debates on cultural heritage and values via local radio. *Isaazi wa*s: 'a place in front of the house. People would sit around the fireplace, the young and the old, women and men, and they would talk.' Similar forums would be held at a village level, where elders would sit and 'discuss community affairs and the shape of the future they envisioned for their area.' (CCFU, 2010: 34). Local accounts from the field sites suggest that women were not involved in decision-making (Elders-BK-1, Elders-MY-1). These associational traditions began to break down during the political turmoil of the post-independence period which drove people increasingly towards working on their land as an individual household and avoiding public gatherings (Elders-BK-1, Elders-MY-1).

Local elders suggested that the structure of social relations within the village and clan remained almost unchanged until the NRM brought relative stability to most of the region (Elders-BK-1, Elders-MY-1). They felt that the influx of NGOs with new ideas and technologies, a gradual increase in production beyond subsistence, and the provision of special positions for women within NRM party and governance infrastructure has created increased space for women's voices within processes of development and decision-making (Elders-BK-1, Elders-MY-1), although the extent to which this has changed is a subject of contestation within the literature (Tamale, 2004, Tripp, 2010). Overall, men still predominantly control household

finances and decision-making in most rural households (Elders-BK-1, Elders-MY-1, CSO-Reg-1).

Producer cooperatives and self-help groups

The cooperative movement in the Rwenzori sub-region has followed a similar trajectory to the rest of the country with many farmers now distrustful of cooperative endeavour (Elders-BK-1, Elders-MY-1, Kasfir, 1970). Chapter 5 describes how the environment for cooperation has been further marred by donor-funded projects and state programmes that have failed to strategise in response to socio-economic power relations and local culture; created dependency through 'handouts'; failed to build on existing forms of shared identity; or assumed that small holders will copy the practices of model farmers without the same inputs of seeds and technology. Some cooperatives have managed to overcome some of these multiple barriers however and the dynamics of cooperative capacity will be examined in Chapters 5 and 8. The fragmented nature of data on the extent and distribution of cooperatives and self-help groups in the sub-region and the range of organisational development among these groups from highly informal to constituted and registered enterprises, makes it difficult to give a comprehensive account of the sector's overall current state of development. The first self-help groups emerged in the form of Parent Teacher Associations in the late 1960s and 1970s which kept schools running for those who could afford it. Savings and credit groups like burial societies emerged at different times in different areas but the most significant changes occurred with the influx of NGOs in the late 1990s and early 2000s (Elders-BK-1, Elders-MY-1). Government and NGO records for Kabarole district suggests there are 86 CBOs (predominantly self-help groups or producer cooperatives) across the 13 sub-counties outside Fort Portal Municipality. A recent mapping exercise of groups supported by three of the

region's key agricultural advisory NGOs found that among 132 supported associations, the most common at 13.7% were savings and credit associations; 13.3% were focused on production and marketing of coffee; followed by maize and banana production both at 9.1% (Internal, 2010d).

Faith and cultural institutions

The kingdoms continue to ignite popular passion and loyalty and implement a small number of cultural and humanitarian development projects including acts of charity for disadvantaged individuals within their clans.[11] Toro is also in receipt of small grants from Kabarole District Local Government in support of 'cultural growth and development' (KDLG, 2010). Both kingdoms have been plagued by internal divisions however constraining their potential for mobilising political agency for development (2006c, Independent, 2012).

Religion continues to play a significant role in the lives of both rural farmers of different social strata and urban dwellers in Fort Portal and other centres. A recent household survey using random sampling in seven districts of the region which included religious identity as a variable, found that of 922 respondents, 38% identified as Protestant, 37% Catholic, 7% Pentecostal and 6% Seventh Day Adventists (Internal, 2011b). However, at least one study suggests that Catholicism has become undermined as a force for social justice among the Batooro peasantry because of the loss of patronage resources following the Africanisation of the church and an increasing avoidance of political issues among the clergy (Kassimir, 1998). Robust studies of dynamics within the Church of Uganda (CoU), Pentecostalism or Islam at this sub-regional level have been difficult to identify. The capacity of religious institutions to ignite political agency or

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[11] See www.rwenzururu.org/nyabaghole/index.php and www.torokingdom.org for more information.

popular mobilisation behind a redistributive agenda is somewhat unclear therefore. However, faith denominations clearly continue to be a relevant and respected form of popular and elite organisation within the Rwenzori organisational landscape as are faith-based non-governmental service providers (Leusenkamp, 2010).

The NGO sector

There is no comprehensive directory of the Rwenzori NGO sector but aggregating available records for the two districts where fieldwork was carried out - Kabarole and Kamwenge - reveals a total of approximately 50 NGOs in operation, including 26 international organisations, 9 with a national scope and 14 with solely regional-level interventions. The 'NGO boom' was highly visible in the Rwenzori region with many of these organisations having begun operations or entered the area within the last fifteen years (CSO-Reg-15). Advocacy, rights and good governance concerns have become increasingly visible within the sector following the ascendency of these agendas globally, and sustainable livelihoods, water, sanitation and health development projects are also key concerns (CSO-Reg-15, KDLG, 2010, KwDLG, 2009). Significant resentment exists among Kasese-based organisations about the comparatively larger amounts of donor aid channelled into Kabarole-based organisations, reflecting continued tensions between Batooro and Bakonjo elites (Businge, 2010), while increasing competition for resources associated with reductions in aid and the rapid growth of the NGO sector also pose a challenge for alliance building and collaborative action (CSO-Reg-15, International-2).

4.6   Background to the field sites

Having described the sampling logic for field site selection in Chapter 1, this section provides the political economic background to the sample sub-counties in advance of the presentation of findings in Chapters 5 and 6.

4.6.1 Bukuuku Sub-County

Bukuuku is situated 5km from Fort Portal in Kabarole District and covers a land area of approximately 96.3 km^2 most of which is situated approximately 5000ft above sea level as hillside areas lead into the foothills of the Rwenzori mountain range. It has therefore been a key border area between Batooro and Bakonjo communities. There is a population of approximately 21,500 across three parishes. The mountainous areas remain predominantly Bakonjo and the lowland areas are now a mix of mainly Batooro, and Bakonjo, but also small numbers of Bamba and Bakiga. Bukuuku has had strong recent links to the district and national NRM leadership with the Minister of Local Government as a local MP since 2009, and the Woman MP and LC5 Chair for Kabarole District between 2006 and 2011 both originating from the sub-county. The main economic activities are agriculture and livestock farming; stone quarrying; local retail; and tourism linked to the national park (BSLG, 2010). Poverty levels have dropped by only 2% between 2000 and 2010 from 50% to 48% of the population, and 59% of the population can only afford 1 meal a day (*ibid.*)

Conflict and governance

The area has been caught up in both the Ruwenzururu and ADF conflicts. During the former, Bakonjo and Bamba moved to Kasese, Buganda, or went into hiding in the forests around the Rwenzori mountains (Elders-BK-1). Following violent suppression in the late 1960s, Obote's government attempted to resettle internally displaced people leading to widespread conflicts over land which had been

occupied by Batooro and some Bakiga migrants. These tensions continue to cause intra-communal conflict (Elders-BK-1, TCSO-FN-5). Fighting during the civil war was mainly in the mountains and resulted in some movement of Bakonjo into lowland areas and further afield to Kasese and Hoima. Many young people joined the NRA (Elders-BK-1). Local people were the victims of raids during the ADF insurgency, many were killed, animals and crops were taken, and there were significant migrations into the nearest urban centre (*ibid.*). The Bakonjo residing in the mountains were worst affected (*ibid.*).

The resistance council system encouraged significant participation initially, but since the late 1990s there is a sense among communities that local governance has become ineffective (Elders-BK-1, Elders-MY-1 and other data). Local accounts suggest that the absence of LC1 elections while NRM primaries have continued has been particularly problematic and some leaders have become tired of their positions (Elders-BK-1, CPF-BK-1).

Land and livelihoods

By 1991, Bukuuku had become one of the most densely populated areas of Kabarole at 288 persons per km^2 compared to the district average of 92 persons per km^2. By the late 1990's, population growth combined with low availability of land had created high demand and low availability, driving up prices and further increasing tensions (Nkata, 1998). Land conflicts became common place particularly between tenants and landlords, with frequently unsuccessful eviction attempts leaving landlords reluctant to rent out or loan land to others (Nkata, 1998). Elders suggest these pressures continue unabated (Elders-BK-1).

The main cash crop under Protectorate- and then state-enforced cooperative production in the area was coffee. By the late 1970s, the coffee cooperative began to collapse under mismanagement and corruption while food prices increased and commodities became scarce. Economic recovery following the Amin and Obote II regimes and the civil war was a slow process and further hampered by the ADF incursion. By the 1990s, with no market for their produce, people were surviving by subsistence agriculture while others began working as casual labourers or night watchmen and migration to local urban centres or Kampala increased (Elders-BK-1). State and NGO programmes since the late 1990s have increased farmer access to seeds and knowledge of agricultural techniques leading to increased and more diversified production among some households (*ibid.*). Until recently, farmers continued to suffer from poor access to markets but improved road infrastructure to Kampala and Kasese over the past decade has improved this situation and buyers will even travel to Bukuuku for produce, although usually as middle men offering low prices. Many households continue to survive on subsistence agriculture however as the earlier poverty statistics suggest (BSLG, 2010, Elders-BK-1).

Health and education

There are 11 Government aided primary schools, 2 secondary schools (one Government aided and one community owned), and two health units – a county level Health Centre IV (constructed in 1994 with support from an international NGO) and a parish level Health Centre II (constructed in 2001) (BSLG, 2010, Elders-BK-1). Elders claim that the first primary schools began to appear in the 1950s as faith schools built by local congregations, and increased in number over the 1960s and 1970s as PTAs began to emerge (Elders-BK-1).

Local associations

Self-help associations in the form of savings and farming groups began to emerge in Bukuuku in the early years of the NRM as people began to bring ideas in from other areas or gain exposure through NGO interventions (Elders-BK-1). Information about the form and extent of associational activity is limited, particularly for groups operating at a village level. One Kabarole directory suggests there are thirty five groups registered at sub-county or parish level but some of these may no longer be active. There are some NGO-catalysed rights-based groups including ActionAid reflect circles, Uganda Human Rights Commission monitoring groups and a somewhat defunct Peace Committee set up by TCSO. Traditional associational practices of rotational working as groups of households appear to have dissipated completely and development actors like NGOs have struggled to encourage farmers to work cooperatively, with people taking a more individualistic approach to household development. Other associational activity is faith-based, with Catholic, Protestant and Adventist churches having particularly strong followings (Elders-BK-1).

4.6.2 Mahyoro Sub-County

Mahyoro is a remote sub-county situated along the equator line in the basin of Lake George in what was Kitagwenda county, Kamwenge district.[12] The nearest urban centre is Ibanda town 38km to the south (MSLG, 2008). Census projections suggest a population of 22,797 residents by 2008 across seven parishes (MSLG, 2008). Agriculture, fisheries and livestock are the three principle livelihood strategies with distinct pastoralist, cultivator and fishing communities having evolved around them. Mahyoro has experienced high levels of inward migration

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[12] Kitagwenda recently gained district status.

from a diversity of ethnic groups since the 1950s because of the fishing industry and the availability of fertile land (MSLG, 2008). Local government reports lack data on poverty levels but the sub-county development plan suggests that 'income levels are still very low due to subsistence farming and fishing', 'most households lack latrines', 'people prefer unboiled water to boiled', and that there are 'a lack of water sources which can be identified for protection' (MSLG, 2008).

Political history

Traditionally, Kitagwenda was part of the Toro Kingdom but local elders suggest that remoteness from the palace in Fort Portal, meant people were less passionate about the kingdom than in other areas (Elders-MY-1). Under the Protectorate, Mahyoro was administrated by Kicheche Sub-County, 30 kms from the present day Mahyoro Sub County offices *(ibid.)*. Local government followed a similar pattern to the rest of the region during the post-colonial era although Mahyoro's remote location gave it some protection from the most violent excesses of the Amin era. It became a sub-county in 1978 in response to a rapidly expanding population, increased further by the flight of many urban residents into the countryside *(ibid.)*.

Most local people supported the NRA during the civil war and formed resistance councils but as in Bukuuku, by the late 1990s there was little bottom-up planning taking place (Elders-MY-1). Despite the re-introduction of a multi-party system, Mahyoro has remained extremely pro-NRM. There has been little political change at a local level with many LC1 executives across the sub-county having been in post since the 1980's or 1990's, partly because of the lack of LC1 elections since 2001 (ibid., observed during fieldwork). In the 2011 elections, the incumbent and

newly elected LC3, LC5 and MP candidates for the area all stood as NRM members.

Land and livelihoods

Livelihoods and migration have been closely linked since colonial times. As continuous hunting depleted the wild animal population enabling greater cultivation, and fishing communities increased their incomes through sales to a British company in Kasese, migrant labourers moved in to cultivate fishermen's land. Bakiga were also resettled in Mahyoro from Kabale in the 1950s. Once land was cleared, the British set up a cotton cooperative which local farmers were forced to sell their crop to as a poll tax (World Bank, 2009b). The British controlled fishing on the lake through licensing, and following the establishment of Queen Elizabeth National Park in 1952, 75% of the lake shore now falls inside the park boundary (Musinguzi et al., 2003).

Both fishing and cotton production suffered from the same mismanagement that dogged the rest of the country in the Amin and Obote II eras and increasingly people survived through subsistence agriculture. The history of enforced labour meant cotton production had become highly politicized by the time the NRM came to power, so maize and livestock farming were promoted as the main commercial enterprises from the late 1980s, although some cotton production also continued. A traditional customary land tenure system has prevailed in Mahyoro although state and NGO interventions are increasing awareness about the importance of land titles.

Health and education

Mahyoro has two health centres, one at parish (HCII) and one at sub-county level (HCIII). Mahyoro HCIII was constructed by local residents in 1990 with assistance from an international NGO, but community participation has deteriorated since Government took control in 1991 (HUMC-MY-1). There are 11 government-aided primary schools and two secondary schools (one government aided and one private). The first primary school was built in 1978 following mobilisation by a newly founded PTA, and by the time UPE was introduced in 1997, a further eight had been established with collective endeavour (Elders-MY-1). Before this, only a small number of wealthier families sent their children to school either to the few primary schools in Kicheche sub-county approximately 13km away, or larger urban centres (*ibid.*). There has been a dramatic improvement in access to education over the last decade (before 2000 there were no university graduates and presently there are twenty), but illiteracy is still widespread (Elders-MY-1). One farmer association has begun an adult literacy programme for their members stating "out of 17 members we found that 13 don't even know how to write their names" (FarmerGp-MY-6).

Local associations

Associational life before independence consisted mainly of clan or faith-based social gatherings. Islam was the first major religion to become established in the area, introduced by Bugandan fishermen in the 1940's, followed by Catholicism and Protestantism in the early 1950's (Elders-MY-1). Self-help associations like PTAs and burial societies began to emerge in the 1970s in the absence of state services. Beyond assistance after bereavements, members of burial societies would sometimes carry the sick by hand to Ibanda Town 38km away (*ibid.*). Despite this history, development actors have found encouraging collaborative working across households challenging. There is no culture of cooperation at a

village level because of the history of forced labour and the loss of trust that occurred when the cooperative movement collapsed in the 1970s (LCIII-MY-2). Early NRM cadres also encouraged individual farmers to engage in market competition and discouraged cooperative activity (Elders-MY-1).

However, there has been an increase in cooperation among farmers in the form of savings groups and farmer associations over the last decade. This has been partly through the support of certain key NGOs and particularly a locally run sustainable production NGO ('CBOMY'- community based organisation in Mahyoro - from here onwards) but also in response to the introduction of NAADS to the sub-county in 2007 (Elders-MY-1). Burial societies in the form of savings groups can be found in every village and CBOMY is working with 35 farmer groups in the sub-county and supports three farmer owned and governed membership organisations – a marketing association, a micro-finance Association and an information centre. While Catholic, Protestant and Muslim faiths continue to draw significant congregations, the largest increase in recent years has been among populist 'born again' churches.

Having provided a political economic background to Uganda, the Rwenzori sub-region and the two field sites where research was conducted from village to sub-county level, the final section of this chapter will introduce TCSO and begin to explore the ways in which it has interpreted and attempted to tackle these challenges and opportunities.

4.7   Introducing the case study organisation

4.7.1 Character of the organisation

TCSO is a research and development NGO that was founded as a research institute in 1996 by a small group of university graduates led by a charismatic founder leader who became a local NRM MP in 2011. It can be described as a 'hybrid' (Edwards, 2009, Bázan et al., 2008) in terms of the variety of strategies it engages in, the multiple levels at which it intervenes in the political-economic environment from the village to the national level, the range of actors it works with and attempts to influence across state, market, political and civil society, and its ideological positioning and vision which combines a focus on socio-economic and political empowerment with the kinds of technical research and development inputs that many research NGOs find themselves driven towards within the international neo-liberal development paradigm (Bázan et al., 2008).

The organisation does not have members or participatory channels for popular input to their strategic direction, but staff attempt to design programmes in response to practice-based learning and evaluation (TCSO-KI-1). The founding director, a graduate of an MA in Gender Studies, drove forward TCSO's early focus on issues of inequality, power, 'girl-child education', and women and children's rights (Internal, 2003a, TCSO-SM-2, TCSO-KI-1). His move into the NRM came as a surprise even to some of his closest colleagues, given his own and the organisation's, at times, highly critical stance towards Government, leading to suggestions that he had become the latest in a long line of civil society leaders to be co-opted by the NRM as a means of curbing popular support for critics of the regime (TCSO-FN-1, CSO-Reg-11).

TCSO has had to tread a careful line between confrontation and collaboration with state and political leaders, while also having to constantly negotiate space for experimentation amidst an increasingly target-driven funding environment. Their more contentious rights and governance focused interventions including public demonstrations, broadcasts and cross-sector leadership retreats had been softened by the relationship between a prominent religious leader on their board, and Museveni, until the leader in question passed away in 2010 (TCSO-FN-1).[13] The organisation has also benefitted from the presence of a British expatriate since the late 1990s, first as a board member and then as an adviser, who has played a key role in relationship building and negotiations with European donor agencies and assisted with fundraising and strategic direction.

There is a discourse within the organisation that suggests it is highly decentralized and internally democratic. This will be debated in the chapters to follow, but it is certainly the case that the organisation values reflective practice: as well as regular ad hoc reflections on progress and dedicated time within weekly staff meetings, there is an annual two day reflection process. It has been led by a Senior Management Team (SMT) since 2005 comprising a Director, Deputy Director, and heads of the finance and human resource department and of all the operational programme areas. By 2010, it had a total budget of approximately GBP £750 thousand from ten international donors. During fieldwork, there were twenty eight members of staff,[14] who were all graduates, with a majority of Batooro reflecting the geographical location, but also a minority of Bakonjo, Buganda and people from other ethnic groups.

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[13] He had acted as a go-between for Museveni and a Rwenzori bishop during the civil war.
[14] Not including support staff like drivers.

4.7.2 A donor-driven and context-adaptive history of programme development

TCSO has always had a dual focus on livelihoods and human rights but their organisational identity has been through a series of shifts from a founding profile as research institute, to project-based community-development, and back to professionalised research, but with a major focus on leadership and governance. The organisation now operates these multiple programme areas in parallel addressing issues of chronic poverty, sustainable livelihoods, and rights and governance, while attempting to integrate these concerns through research and information and the convening of regional multi-stakeholder deliberative spaces for reflection and development planning. Programme development within the organisation reflects the trajectory of civil society's rise within the development industry and some of the associated challenges discussed in Chapter 2. A brief review of this history facilitates understanding about the nature of their current interventions and the findings and analysis to follow in Chapters 5 to 8, particularly in relation to their facilitation of participatory methodologies.

Donors first became attracted to TCSO after its research played an important role in the formulation of a national Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) policy in the early 2000s, and an action research intervention led to a reduction in the number of girls dropping out of school (TCSO-SM-2). It then became a channel for donor aid to other more local organisations shaping the development of civil society in the region as the NGO boom took effect in Uganda (International-1, CSO-Reg-5, CSO-Reg-15). As in other regions, the opportunity of increased income began to shape the organisation's priorities and its main focus shifted from research into the implementation of donor-driven development projects although this shift was also

shaped by a desire among staff to begin to address some of the challenges that their research had identified (TCSO-SM-2).

TCSO began its local level project work with a focus on agriculture, civil peace, and human rights in response both to donor agendas and actual development challenges of food security amidst conflict at the turn of the millennium, and with a focus particularly on women's and children's rights in response to their early researches and the founding Director's background in gender studies (TCSO-SM-2, Internal 2003a). As the ADF conflict subsided and donor interest in peace initiatives with it, TCSO's two main programme areas became sustainable production via cooperative savings and production and 'human rights and good governance' (TCSO-SM-2), both key themes within donor discourse, with the latter department being named directly after a European donor programme of the same name (Businge, 2010).

When participatory methodologies became mainstreamed during the early 2000s (Chambers, 2004, Cooke and Kothari, 2001), TCSO managed to cultivate an image among donors as having expertise in designing and implementing effective participatory approaches to development on the back of its earlier work with school drop outs and guidance from a British academic in Participatory Action Learning Systems (PALS) in 2002 (TCSO-FN-14, Internal, 2003b). It has since generated a series of consultancies and funding, particularly in relation to rights and governance projects on the back of this participatory profile.

Their original PALS toolkit was developed in relation to the organisation's micro-finance project area with the aim of empowering communities to analyse and act in response to their condition of disadvantage both in terms of holding TCSO and

other CSO's to account for their interventions and in terms of advancing their interests within development processes more widely (Internal, 2005c). It included a step-by-step guide to facilitation of this analytical and action planning process as well as particular tools to support that process such as pot diagrams, problem trees and visioning through road-maps (Internal, 2005c). In practice, it is the individual participatory tools that have been used in support of training and awareness raising work rather than the overall methodology for conscientization and social change as Chapters 5 and 6 will come to explore. The organisation's recent use of PALS to support situational analysis, visioning and micro-enterprise development with chronically poor individuals has however come closer to the initial intention of action learning and with positive outcomes for participants (TCSO-FN-3, Internal, 2011a).

Rather than developing its methodological approach in response to the organisation's ideological vision and staff experiences on the ground, TCSO's early adaptation of PALS into a Poverty Resource Monitoring Tool (PRMT) was in response to the civil-society building agenda of a European donor. TCSO was commissioned to design and roll out a participatory monitoring and advocacy tool for CSOs to train communities and local leaders in monitoring community resources (such as water sources, latrines, and schools), identify resource gaps or access problems, and plan action to address them. The top-down approach resulted in an inappropriate design which meant elite urban-based trainers were too far removed from the communities that were to use the methodology for the intervention to succeed (TCSO-FN-14). In 2007, TCSO therefore introduced the role of Community Process Facilitator (CPF) to simplify the model and create stronger local ownership, by teaching locally-embedded activists to facilitate training, planning and review meetings, and coordinate performances by local

drama groups (TCSO-FN-14, CPF-BK-1, Internal, 2008c). However the findings will come to reveal how donor pressures and capacity limitations mean that CPFs have continually operated at sub-county level rather than as activists within the local village and parish community where they reside.

The next donor-funded PRMT-related intervention ran into problems again when TCSO's approach didn't fit with their requirements for expenditure and reporting.

TCSO did not pay 'allowances' to politicians and other officials for attending meetings or training sessions, and wanted to implement the methodology at the pace of participants, meaning that money was not being spent either according to the original project plan or at the same rate as other organisations funded by the donor in question. A key informant explained that 'the [donor] staff did not like it and in the end cancelled the contract saying that [TCSO] expenditure was too low - meaning [TCSO] could not be doing the work as stipulated well'.[15] Despite this history, a different branch of the same European agency provided TCSO with their third round of rights and governance funding between 2008 and 2011 to work directly with CPFs and these are the 'civic education for good governance' interventions described below and investigated in parts of Chapters 5 and 6. This history and the findings to come show how TCSO's reliance on donor funds and adherence to donor agendas combined with certain capacity limitations have diverted the organisation away from its original focus on participatory action learning towards target-driven awareness raising and training.

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[15] Information about this aspect of programme development at TCSO was received in an email from a key informant linked to the organisation dated 090212 and confirmed other anecdotal comments from members of staff about their experiences with this donor.

By the time the NRM made the move to a multi-party system, the frustrations of a long-term strategy focused on bottom-up, community-led pressure for more equitable development solutions had begun to motivate the organisation's leaders to seek out a more direct strategy for influencing state and civil society approaches to development and regional development planning (TCSO-SM-2). The evolution of these regional level interventions will be described as part of the presentation of intervention areas investigated in the next section. However, it is important to note that the founding Director and senior managers have also determinedly pursued a national presence. Apart from their role in shaping IDP policy, TCSO has been involved in PEAP revision processes, the Uganda Governance Monitoring Platform, a World Bank funded Public and Private Expenditure Monitoring consortium (PPEM) led by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED), and recently a national Citizens' Manifesto Initiative in the run up to the 2011 elections.

4.7.3 Intervention areas investigated during fieldwork

Civil society building and the Regional Development Framework
TCSO have played a lead role as brokers of civil society development since the early 2000s either in terms of capacity building farmer groups or developing new structures, networks and fora for civil society advocacy (TCSO-SM-2, Internal, 2005b). This has been part of a deliberate strategy to promote democratic development regionally and nationally (Internal, 2003a). A key aim of their 2003-2005 strategic plan was: 'to enhance civil society development by facilitating civil society capacities to promote collective empowerment and democratic participation, lobbying and advocacy on macro level constraints and inequalities and other policy issues' (Internal, 2003a). The strategy also focused on coalition

building for a stronger civil society voice (*ibid*.). As well as acting as an intermediary channel between international donors and local level CBOs or fledgling advocacy NGOs, a key pillar of TCSO's civil society building has been the use of 'open space' (Groot, 2003, Owen, 1997) and 'appreciative enquiry' methodologies which involves the convening of deliberative space for civil society actors to come together and reflect in positive and constructive ways on 'how to make development work' (TCSO-KI-2).

In 2008, a regional cross-sector leadership retreat identified the need for greater local autonomy from 'donor driven agendas' (Internal, 2008e), while one of their core donors, a Dutch co-financing agency, agreed to make TCSO a strategic partner for the Rwenzori region, meaning programmatic rather than project-based finance and TCSO's adoption of a regional advisor role for the donor's engagements in the region (International-1). Both actors were concerned not to cut smaller organisations out of the picture, and began discussing ideas for a regional programme that TCSO could lead on but that would engage a range of development actors (International-1).

TCSO convened a series of 'open space' workshops between 2009 and 2011 which generated agreement for a coordinated regional approach – a 'Regional Development Framework' (RDF) – based on a locally-driven 'code of practice', with the aim of attracting basket funding for the region attached to these best-practice principles (Internal, 2009d, 2010e, 2011c, 2011d). The framework was launched in 2012 with objectives to foster collective action for the achievement of locally defined priorities, and to 'provide a new outlook on development through emphasising people initiated and people owned initiatives' (Internal, 2011e). The guiding code of practice is aimed at ensuring interventions are shaped by the

needs, aspirations and experiences of rural households within the region (CSO-Reg-14). Other key guiding principles include citizen participation in 'planning, implementation and monitoring of Government and CSO programmes', 'action research' as a key methodology for accessing people's views, and 'culture and leadership' focused on facilitating attitude change by harnessing existing cultural structures and traditions (Internal, 2009d, 2010e, 2011c, 2011d).

Leadership retreats and fora

By 2005, TCSO and affiliated local activists found that their grass roots civil peace work was being undermined by ethnically focused political campaigning. The introduction of multi-partyism created an opportunity to tackle these tensions at a higher level which took the shape of three day annual leadership retreats, which bring together political, technical, civil society, traditional, and religious leaders from across the region to debate development challenges. As well as ethnic conflict, community members were expressing concerns about the lack of accountability among politicians, so, as a senior manager explained, 'in that proposal we were looking at strengthening the conflict resolution potential within the election period, but also accountability and feeding back, can you come back and talk to your people? Can you look at the problems affecting your community?' (TCSO-SM-3). The focus of the retreats was therefore from the earliest point about increasing social and political accountability, as well as promoting more autonomous and locally relevant interventions, and building a unified vision and identity for the region.

TCSO has now convened seven[16] annual retreats where leaders participate in plenary discussions about development priorities, new potential policy and political developments and make a series of resolutions to be followed up by different groups of participants. Participants are not given the traditional 'allowances' for attending and accommodation is basic. Aside from the main formal points of debate, the retreats provide many opportunities for informal discussions and networking including congregating around a fire in the evening in the *Isaazi* tradition discussed above. This is an intentional strategy by TCSO's leaders to create relationships, alliances and opportunities for civil society actors to influence the thinking of key state and political leaders (TCSO-SM-2).

In 2008, delegates agreed to establish a Regional Development Leaders Group (RDLG) and an MPs' Forum. The RDLG was to comprise the LC5 Chairs from all districts in the region and two MPs. Its main objectives were to promote more substantive democratic processes by checking that development plans responded to bottom up priorities, promoting peaceful forms of political competition and mainstreaming gender and human rights issues within development planning and implementation processes (Internal, 2009e). The MPs Forum had a remit to develop effective linkages with the MPs Forum and regional Think Tank (introduced below), promote regional concerns using Think Tank evidence within parliamentary committees, promote peaceful forms of political competition and promote new or more effective interfaces between citizens and their political representatives (*ibid.*). The RDLG was to meet quarterly and the MPs Forum, three times a year.

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[16] Two after fieldwork had finished.

Regional Think Tank initiative

Since 2009, TCSO's research agenda has been focused on the development of a regional Think Tank. The idea was born out of discussions about the evidence-gap underlying civil society and state development planning processes and the need for a 'household approach' both within open space workshops developing the regional framework, and the annual leadership retreats (TCSO-SM-2, Internal, 2008e). It also came about as part of a reassessment of TCSO's institutional identity as both development agency and research institute and a perceived need to professionalise their research in response to demands for robust evidence in support of claims-making from policy-makers and academia (TCSO-SM-2), echoing observations in the NGO literature that research quality is a key source of legitimacy for NGO advocacy work (Bázan et al., 2008, Pollard and Court, 2008).

Imagined initially as a partnership between the political leadership and a regional university, it has been developed in practice largely by TCSO's research department. The intended approaches and methodologies underpinning both Think Tank research and the RDF are concerned with participatory action research, attempting to understand ordinary rural communities experience of development, and bringing that understanding to the attention of district and national civil, political and state leaders (Internal, 2008e, TCSO-SM-2, TCSO-SM-3, TCSO-FN-1). The specific objectives are to contribute to effective governance and development interventions by engaging community members in agenda-setting processes, to catalyse leader responsiveness to local priorities, and to meet the evidence and information needs of stakeholders across state, civil and political divides with a focus on the education, health and agricultural sectors (TCSO, 2011e).

After several years of development, and with support from the Dutch co-financing agency discussed above,[17] it is now operational and has completed four research studies, and the partnership is gradually shifting in responsibility towards the regional university. The Think Tank convenes regional stakeholder forums which engage local community and CBO representatives, CPFs, CSO workers, political leaders, and civil servants at sub-county and district levels, in identifying research priorities, deliberating findings and developing action in response to evidence and experiences from the grass roots. It is also linked directly – in the terms of reference if not yet in reality – to the RDLG described above who are mandated to 'receive research reports and develop actions for adopting findings and implementing recommendations' (TCSO, 2011f). The Think Tank is also expected to provide the locally generated evidence that will support development actors to create relevant programmes under the terms of the RDF and to inform related grant-making decisions.

Civic education for good governance

The interventions investigated during fieldwork are focused on increasing the influence of rural citizens within the bottom-up planning process and increasing social accountability for the provision of better quality health and education services through civic education, participatory monitoring, and capacity building within local governance structures. Under the latest programme (running from 2008-2011), the initiative has expanded in geographical coverage from the 9 sub-counties they began with in 2005, to 23, and has focused principally on village planning and the primary health and education sectors, attempting to foster

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[17] Approximately GBP £90 thousand in 2010. All amounts of Ugandan shillings in the thesis are expressed in British pounds in footnotes using the exchange rate for 1st January 2011 (the date that the main phase of data generation began) when one British pound was equal to 3,648 Ugandan shillings.

ownership among service users and parents to encourage their participation in monitoring the effective running of these services and reporting problems to participatory governance bodies, or relevant local leaders and officials.

To provide an introduction to the findings presented in Chapters 5 and 6, the main outputs for the first year of this 36 month programme are presented in Table 4.1 below. Although these findings relate to the same intervention area they speak back to different (although overlapping) schools of debate and were therefore examined according to the processes they were attempting to shape: village and bottom-up development planning (Chapter 5), and social accountability in the health and education sectors (Chapter 6).

Table 4.1 Civic education for good governance – planned outputs year one
(Internal, 2008b - paraphrased)

Initial PRMT training sessions for CPFs
12 village sensitization meetings on roles and responsibilities of local government CPFs inform and facilitate discussion about the roles and responsibilities of Parish Development Committees, Health Unit and School Management Committees, and key policies including health and education guidelines, the Decentralization Policy, the Local Government Act, and the Access to Information Act.
12 village review meetings CPFs facilitate discussion of needs, priorities and challenges – with a particular focus on health and education – which can be addressed within the village or passed on to the next level of the local government structure or to health unit and primary school management committees. Political leaders or management committee members can also give feedback on issues raised in previous meetings.
12 parish review meetings Facilitated by CPFs and attended by the LC2 chair, the Parish Chief, the Parish Development Committee and LC2 councillors. Feedback given on information collected and shared at village level for action by those present or passing on to the sub-county.
4 training sessions for primary school management committee members (incorporating an estimated total of 612 members) Training delivered jointly by staff and CPFs and includes SMC roles and responsibilities,

health policy guidelines, participatory monitoring approaches, and 'modalities of cooperating with local communities, health unit staff and the political levels.'

4 training sessions for health unit management committee members for Health Units II and III (incorporating an estimated total of 183 members)

Training delivered jointly by staff and CPFs and includes HUMC roles and responsibilities, health policy guidelines, participatory monitoring approaches, and 'modalities of cooperating with local communities, health unit staff and the political levels' (*ibid.).*

The training is focused on parish and sub-county health centres because these are the centres most often used by communities, partly due to difficulties reaching county and district health centres which are located in urban centres.

1 training session for LC3 chairs on key central government policies and community engagement strategies

4 training sessions on participatory information collection and storage systems for LC1-3 chairs, parish development committees (PDCs), community development officers (CDOs) and sub-county planners

2 sub-county dialogue meetings

Facilitated by TCSO staff with assistance from the CPF. Participants include LC2 and LC3 chairs, sub-county chiefs, sub-county accountants, sub-county councillors for health and education, production officers, management committee members and PDC chairs.

Feedback given from HUMC and SMC monitoring and village and parish review meetings. Needs, priorities and challenges which could not be solved within the parish structure are presented here and actions made to address the mentioned issues. Feedback should then be given by attendees at their respective parish and village review meetings.

2 district dialogue meetings

Facilitated by TCSO staff with assistance from the CPF. Participants include LC3 and LC5 chairs, the CAO, the district planner, the gender officer, health and education councillors, PDC and management committee chairs.

Feedback given from HUMC and SMC monitoring, village and parish review meetings, and sub-county dialogues. Needs, priorities and challenges which could not be solved within the sub-county structure are presented here and mechanisms to address them agreed upon. Feedback should then be given by attendees at their respective sub-county, parish and village review meetings.

Most of these programme activities involve working within existing and invited

inclusive liberal governance spaces, except the dialogues. Sub-county dialogues

are a new space paid for and facilitated by TCSO, where management

committees, civil servants, political leaders and community leaders can come

together and discuss issues raised during village, parish and parents' meetings, or

gathered through the monitoring activities of management committee members and local councillors. Feedback is then supposed to be given to service users through village, parish or parents meetings (Internal, 2008b). The dialogues are founded on an 'appreciative inquiry' approach to problem-identification, with TCSO staff and CPFs facilitating a process of non-confrontational deliberation and solution development, which is intended to build positive relationships across state-political-civil divides and divert the emphasis of accountability and planning discussions away from 'finger-pointing' (TCSO-staff-1).

PPEM and district dialogues

In 2006, TCSO and a prominent national advocacy NGO were nominated to participate in a World Bank and MoFPED consortium for the development of a PPEM toolkit for CSOs that could provide more robust and easily aggregated evidence on public service effectiveness (Internal, 2008d, TCSO-FN-14, CSO-Nat-4, UNNGOF, 2010). The consortium subsequently collapsed over disagreements about the degree to which communities themselves should be able to adapt the tools (CSO-Nat-4), but for TCSO, PPEM was an opportunity to meet recent demands from civil servants and politicians for more robust research evidence to support claims-making (TCSO-FN-14, TCSO-SM-2). In partnership with an NGO in Northern Uganda, TCSO adapted the tool for research into value for money in the primary health and education sectors across the region in 2008 and 2009 respectively and in 2009, the National NGO Forum paid for the results from both regions to be collated and presented at a national health symposium in Kampala (TCSO-FN-14, CSO-Nat-2).

PPEM research in the Rwenzori sub-region combined survey data and reviews of health centre and school records with PRMT techniques to generate evidence for presentation at district dialogues in an attempt to tackle social accountability at a more senior level (TCSO-SM-2). The health research incorporated 24 health facilities in four out of the then five districts in the region including Bukuuku HCIV and Mahyoro HCIII, interviews with 295 'health service consumers', and 36 community meetings (Internal, 2008d). The education research included 181 school visits in both easy and hard to reach areas in each of the then five districts of the region. 34 community meetings were also held, one in each of the sample sub counties with over 500 participants in total including members of management committees and PTAs, local councillors, parents, religious leaders, teachers and centre-coordinating tutors (Internal, 2009b). District dialogues were organised in each of the districts included in the research sample for presentation and discussion of the research findings.

Farmer enterprise and associational development

TCSO has taken an adaptive approach to their agricultural interventions which have evolved in response to the changing situation of the farmers they have been working with. There have been two principle interlinking strands to their programmes – micro-finance and sustainable production. Their sustainable production work began with a 'micro-projects' programme which involved providing grants and training to small farmer groups to enhance food security and nutrition. TCSO then developed the concept of a 'Middle Level Farmer Group' (MLFG) where groups of model farmers were prepared by staff to train a number of affiliate farmer groups in better agricultural practices to begin to move rural communities towards commercial rather than subsistence agriculture. As MLFGs began to

increase production the next focus became collective marketing. Staff and CPFs train farmer groups how to get a better price for their produce by forming Marketing Associations (MAs), building stores and encouraging members to bring their harvest for storage until prices increase, while also securing a better price by selling in bulk. Staff and CPFs also carry out sensitisation at village level and among farmer groups about the importance of savings and how to save through micro-finance associations (MFAs), and take members of MLFGs and affiliates on exchange visits to learn from other model farmers and associations. Once MFAs and MAs are formed, they provide technical advice and sometimes finance to support organisational development, store building or equipment accumulation, organise business forums bringing together buyers with producers, and link MFAs up with a regional micro-finance umbrella organisation which is an exit and sustainability strategy for TCSO (TCSO-FN-6, TCSO-FN-19, TCSO-FN-37, TCSO-FN-38).

The principle objectives of this programme area have been economic and social empowerment particularly of women (Internal, 2003a, 2005a, 2009a) and since 2006, TCSO have been attempting to integrate their civic education work around human rights and social accountability with their work with farmer groups. At the point of fieldwork this had not advanced further than staff sharing a few words of encouragement about sending children to school during technical or organisational development trainings. After a 2005 impact assessment identified the exclusion of the chronic poor from their agricultural interventions, TCSO also developed a pilot project for micro-enterprise development among extremely poor individuals in 2007 involving the provision of cash grants and training in simple business planning to people falling into this category who have been unable to join groups. This importantly focuses on using participatory action learning tools to facilitate

individual reflection and visioning as well as the provision of follow up support in monitoring progress, and on-going encouragement and advice in taking their enterprise forward.

In partnership with CPFs, TCSO estimate they have worked with over 500 CBOs across the Rwenzori region, 13 MAs and between 2007 and 2010 supported 400 chronically poor individuals to develop small enterprises, and increase household income and food nutrition.

4.8   The Rwenzori sub-region and TCSO: concluding remarks

The forthcoming findings chapters will highlight a series of challenges and opportunities for development actors focused on transforming power relations in the Rwenzori region which have been shaped significantly by the political-economic background provided above. Local governance systems designed for popular participation but undermined by the realities of patronage and centralised control over development resources, have become ineffective in the region as in much of the country. Political agency among rural communities is constrained by a history of deference to authority and post-colonial militarism and repression, but also to a process of social stratification and development that has privileged particular social and ethnic groups over others. Exclusion on the grounds of ethnicity or geography, or the absence of the state in times of turmoil, have also however sown seeds of resistance or self-help which have been and may continue to prove key sources of mobilisation for rural farmers. The legacy of cooperative collapse and mismanagement and economic liberalization have seriously undermined confidence in cooperative endeavour as a solution to socio-economic

disadvantage, and group approaches have failed the chronic poor. Yet, successful examples do exist and the findings to come suggest that while model farmer approaches have been ill-thought through, interest in associations increases when people are seen to benefit economically and socially from their participation (Thorp et al., 2005, Sharma, 2013, Uphoff and Wijayaratna, 2000).

The character, history and programme trajectory of TCSO reveals this organisation to be a hybrid – implementing multiple strategies, at a range of levels and across the civil political divide to promote socio-economic change, better governance and a more pro-poor orientation among the regions development leaders. They are attempting to re-shaping socio-economic power relations through livelihood and associational development, enhancing community participation within the invited spaces of inclusive liberal governance, and at the same time attempting to reshape political networks and approaches to governance beyond the local level through the convening of alternative deliberative spaces. Clearly the organisation has been constrained by the aid environment but it has also benefitted from positive donor partnerships and the interaction of these organisational and financial dynamics with political economic constraints and opportunities will be explored in the chapters to follow.

Chapters 5 to 7 will now present findings about the extent to which the case study organisation has been able to negotiate this complex political economic terrain to effectively implement the interventions introduced here, and present initial analyses of the drivers and constraints that have shaped the outcomes they have been able to achieve.

5 Political capabilities for influencing resource allocation: inclusive liberal participation and associational development

5.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 highlighted two divergent interpretations of the current moment of inclusive liberalism from a broadly social democratic school of critique: a more liberal perspective that recognises space within the good governance/civil society agenda for bringing the voices of the poor into decision-making (Corbridge, 2007; Webster and Engberg-Pederson, 2002; Williams, 2004), and a more radical framing which finds that inclusive liberal participation fails to tackle socio-economic disadvantage and serves only to legitimize a status quo that has de-politicized development (Craig and Porter, 2006, Harriss, 2001, Mosse, 2010). Analysts within this more radical school of critique suggest that development interventions must engage with the realisation of social and economic as well as civil and political rights in order to shift power relations between elites and the poor as well as between citizens and the state. As Hickey suggests 'the problem remains one of how to link a politics of recognition with a politics of social justice and economic transformation in meaningful ways.' (2010: 1152).

This chapter engages with these debates by presenting findings about two different strategies of TCSO. Firstly, the discussion examines the extent to which TCSO's civic education for good governance interventions have shaped the political capabilities (Williams, 2004) of local leaders and citizens participating within the 'invited' space of decentralised village planning (Cornwall, 2002). The chapter then examines the ways in which the organisation's enterprise and economic associational development interventions have shaped the political

capabilities (Williams, 2004) of supported farmer groups in ways which might have gained them a greater influence over development resources. The weight of the evidence presented below suggests that TCSO have been unable to increase the influence of village residents over resource allocation, but may be supporting the increased representation of previously excluded rural farmers in governance and political leadership structures. As Golooba-Mutebi (2004) found in Masaka and Rakai districts over a decade ago, citizen participation in bottom-up development planning processes is nominal with very limited degrees of political learning occurring. Village planning for self-help is either not taking place or is failing to foster a collective spirit among residents resulting in poor levels of collective maintenance of development infrastructure and resources. In contrast, however, leaders are emerging from the farmer groups and associations in some areas of the region – created, community-driven spaces – that TCSO has supported since the early 2000s, who are taking on responsibilities for the governance of schools and health units, and political representation, suggesting shifts in networks of power and patterns of representation, in Williams' (2004) terms.

This suggests that in the context of rural Uganda, social and economic empowerment may be a more critical focus for NGOs with a commitment to social democratic development outcomes than inclusive liberal participation, or at least that a degree of social and economic empowerment might be a necessary pre-requisite for rural farmers to be able to engage in formal political processes.

5.2 Civic education for good governance

These findings relate to TCSO efforts to train local councillors and villagers about their roles and responsibilities within the existing inclusive liberal decentralised

planning process, and to facilitate village sensitization and review meetings, in order to both increase the influence of rural communities over development resources and catalyse collective action for local development and better governance at a village level. LC1 councils are supposed to hold village meetings at least once in two months (GoU, 1997) to facilitate discussion about management of village resources and local services, key issues that need addressing, and to share and disseminate information. Once a year they are supposed to make an annual development plan to pass up to the parish council as part of the bottom up planning process (GoU, 1997). As Chapters 3 and 4 have suggested, in practice many villages no longer hold meetings and don't even make an annual work plan (Golooba-Mutebi, 2004, Saito, 2003). Although the holding of meetings does not equate to increased political capabilities for influencing resource allocation, the findings here are presented in two stages according to areas that were holding meetings or not holding meetings, because this serves as a useful indication of likely differences in the kinds and level of outcomes achieved by TCSO in these different areas. A case study of effective political mobilisation is then also considered in terms of the particular drivers and constraints that facilitated this moment of agency.

Although CPFs claimed to have carried out sensitisation work across all the parishes visited during fieldwork (CPF-BK-1, CPF-BK-1), only one of the 14 villages I engaged with, situated in Mahyoro, was holding meetings at least once every two months (FarmerGp-MY-3, VHT-MY-1). Four villages in Mahyoro were holding meetings on a quarterly basis (LCI-MY-1,2,3, V-Meeting-MY-1,FarmerGp-MY-5), five were not holding meetings at all, one in Mahyoro (LCI-MY-4, FarmerGp-MY-7), and four in Bukuuku (Villagers-BK-1, Villagers-BK-3, LCI-BK-1, LCII-BK-1), and the rest only held meetings if there was a particular issue to

discuss or a visitor who had come to share information and not more than two or three times a year, one in Mahyoro (FarmerGp-MY-2), and three in Bukuuku (LCI-BK-2, LCIII-BK-2, Villagers-BK-2). Five out of seven villages visited across three parishes in Mahyoro were therefore holding regular meetings whereas none of the villages in the two parishes visited in Bukuuku were holding regular meetings. Although this research was not designed for comparative analysis, the findings suggest that the differential situation in the two sub-counties is linked not to differences in the implementation of TCSO's good governance interventions but to political-economic conditions and the degree of economic associational development in the two areas.

5.2.1 Some participatory planning: outcomes for political capabilities

In villages where some village meetings were taking place, the findings suggest that TCSO has fostered political learning among councillors but has achieved little for the political capabilities of ordinary village residents. Findings are presented initially through the lens of a village case study which is at the more positive end of political capabilities outcomes that can be attributed to TCSO compared to other villages across the sample sub-counties.

Case Study 1: A cultivator community in Mahyoro

I attended one meeting in a village situated about ten minutes' walk from the offices of 'CBOMY', a local CBO which has worked in partnership with TSCO to provide sustainable production and associational development support to farmer groups in Mahyoro since the early 2000s. The CPF invited me unexpectedly so none of the residents knew I would be attending in advance. Before the meeting

began, the secretary informed me that usually between 30 and 40 people out of 75 homesteads and a total population of 350 people attend their quarterly meetings and that the LC1 Executive meets every month (V-Meeting-MY-1). At this meeting, there were 64 people present, 30 women and 34 men. Young people were also present in significant numbers and a small number of elders, and the Chair of the village council invited the youth council Chair to close the meeting. Action points from the previous meeting were reviewed and three people gave out information and tried to mobilise residents in relation to education, health and sanitation issues. At the previous meeting it was agreed that each household should pay 1,000 shillings for maintenance of water sources but only 10,000 shillings had been collected and there was an on-going debate about who was responsible for carrying out maintenance work. Residents had also agreed to participate in maintaining access roads to the village but little maintenance work had been completed. The LC1 Executive had used a monitoring tool introduced to them by the CPF with which they had identified the number of children from the village who were in primary, secondary and tertiary education and a high number of school drop outs. The monitoring information enabled the LC1 Chair to sensitise villagers about the importance of education but no specific action was agreed about this. The LC1 Chair asked attendees to plan how to ensure that every household had a latrine and at least ten people – both women and men – participated in the discussion which concluded that villagers should form groups and work together to build latrines for the thirteen households that didn't have them and that this should be carried out within the next month.

Later, the LC1 Chair showed me their village meeting records and some worksheets the CPF had given him that the Executive had used to monitor village resources and make an annual work plan (LCI-MY-3). It was impossible to get a

sense of how attendance, inclusivity or the quality of meetings had changed over time, because the records were in disarray and of questionable accuracy (attendance at the meeting I had observed was recorded as 34 people for example). The LC1 Chair was confident however in claiming that attendance at meetings had begun to increase about five years ago which he associated with 'development', going on to explain that 'in the past people had a lot of sickness and now they see people prosper and they also get interested. You learn things from meetings' (LCI-MY-3). The CPF had only been carrying out TCSO's good governance interventions in the village since 2008, and stated that before that women were only participating in social organisations and 'young people were not engaged' (CPF-MY-1). Residents in the other three villages visited in the same parish also claimed that attendance had begun to increase at least before the 2006 elections (approximately five years before data generation) or earlier (LCI-MY-2, FarmerGp-MY-3 and 5). In reference to influencing the bottom up planning process the Chair felt that 'when it reaches up [beyond the village level] it loses focus', suggesting that village residents had little influence on development resources other than those held at LC1 level (LCI-MY-3).

This case study suggests that the CPF had facilitated political learning within the village council executive by teaching them about how to monitor village resources and engage villagers in discussion and planning about how to use these (including their own money and labour) for everyone's benefit. A degree of collective action was clearly taking place but appeared to be sporadic and councillors lacked enforcement power, while villagers seemed to lack a sense of responsibility towards enacting decisions that had been made. No action was planned by villagers to tackle the problem of school drop outs for example other than a vague

suggestion for 'more sensitisation' about the importance of sending children to school.

Increased participation was not linked to political learning in terms of increased understanding about how to channel and negotiate interests (Williams, 2004). Rather, more people had become interested in the potentially useful information they might gain from attendance. Neither was there a clear link between increased participation and TCSO. There appeared to be a closer link between participation and incremental processes of political learning and empowerment associated with economic development in the area dating back farther than TCSO's good governance interventions. Members of two farmer groups linked this directly to the learning people had experienced from participation in their group and associated trainings and meetings attended because of that membership (LCI-MY-2, FarmerGp-MY-8). These links between economic associational development, political learning and shifts in power relations will be explored in section 5.3.

This case also suggests that TCSO's civic education work has not increased community influence over resource allocation beyond the village level. Resident's priorities were not making it into the sub-county development plan (LCII-MY-2), which the CPF attributed to a poorly performing parish council: 'You talk of the Chairman LC2 there, they don't even have meetings' (CPF-MY-1). Two other local leaders also partly attributed the ineffectiveness of the bottom up planning process to the lack of skills and representative ability of two other parish councillors - the representatives to the sub-county (LCV-MY-2, LCII-MY-2). Despite these critiques, these councillors were still re-elected in the 2010 NRM primaries.

This case study resonates strongly with the wider findings. Where annual development plans were being formulated during village meetings, LC1 chairs and residents were rarely able to say whether their priorities had made it into higher level development plans as there had been no feedback process. One woman in Mahyoro complained for example: 'we called the Chairperson LC2 to the LC1 meeting, what came out they've never come back' (LCI-MY-5). Where priorities made it into a development plan, this was no guarantee of implementation. One village in Bukuuku had had a request for culverts for a local access road outstanding for over ten years (LCI-BK-2). This suggests that training councillors and villagers has not had any significant effect on political networks or patterns of representation beyond the village level (Williams, 2004). There was a strong sense among local residents that they considered themselves passive recipients of information rather than agents of development. One woman described the purpose of meetings as 'getting advices and messages' for example (FarmerGp-MY-7). Where people did have a sense of the importance of planning there was a strong sense of frustration and disillusionment with the village meeting process: 'We don't sit regularly, once in a while we get meetings... When meeting is there, there is lots of disagreement... Those meetings they try to hold they don't come to conclusions' (FarmerGp-MY-6). Gains for political learning had therefore been limited and there had been no facilitation work to encourage reflection about how to tackle these problems. CPFs from Kamwenge and Kabarole districts were in agreement that there has been increased participation by women since they began their community work but that young people, elders and the very poor continue to be excluded or to self-exclude from village meetings in their areas of operation and this is something that they have not managed to overcome through training and information provision (CPF-OTHER-4). The case study village above was therefore an exception in having increased young people's participation,

which the CPF attributed to a particularly motivated and responsive LC1 Chair (V-Meeting-MY-1).

5.2.2 Some participatory planning: political-economic and strategic dynamics

Analysis of the factors shaping these outcomes provides support for a series of arguments within the Ugandan and wider development literature. Firstly, civic education for enhanced participation within inclusive liberal planning spaces is ineffective because it does not tackle the power relations shaping people's interests in participating (Mohan and Stokke, 2000, Moore, 2001, Mosse, 2007). Interviews with CPFs, young people, elders and NGO staff working on the *Micro Enterprise Development for the Very Poor* pilot revealed that young people and elders don't feel respected or feel that meetings address their interests (CPF-OTHER-4); tenants and labourers fear speaking out in front of their landlords and employers (CPF-OTHER-2); and the very poor are ashamed to appear in dirty, torn clothing, and suffered from feelings of social inferiority and a corresponding lack of confidence (CPF-MY-1, CBO-MY-1). Researchers have been highlighting these dynamics of exclusion consistently for decades (e.g. Cooke and Kothari, 2001, Mosse, 1994), yet interviews with CPFs revealed that TCSO had not trained CPFs or councillors in how to include disadvantaged groups within communal activities or incorporate their views (CPF-OTHER-2). The fact that these structural barriers to participation are recognised within other projects of TCSO suggests, as other studies of development in practice (Craig and Porter, 2006, Thomas, 2008, Williams, 2004), that this strategic shortfall is linked more strongly to the apolitical 'good governance' focus of the donors driving forward these interventions than a lack of socio-economic analysis among staff. Indeed, project documentation contained: 'percentage of community members actively participating in village

meetings' as an outcome target (Internal, 2008a) which casts village residents as a homogenous group, and provides no incentive for greater access to decision-making for women, the very poor or any other disadvantaged group.

The findings suggest an underestimation on the part of TCSO, and its donors, of the depth of skill required for the facilitation of PAL processes that can begin to build awareness of the causes of disadvantage and the collective motivation to begin to address them (Kaplan, 2000, Farrington and Bebbington, 2003). The extent of the activities that staff and CPFs are expected to engage in each year and the geographical scope also suggest there has been an underestimation of the amount of time and follow up work CPFs would need to invest in each village and parish, for their good governance work to have a more empowering effect. Other studies of civic education initiatives and participatory development interventions find similar constraints of either a lack of facilitative capacity (Finkel and Ernst, 2005, Bratton et al., 1999) or organisations becoming overstretched by the challenge of facilitating open-ended processes (Farrington and Bebbington, 1993).

The character of politics has also severely constrained what TCSO has been able to achieve, with Craig and Porter's (2006) characterisation of decentralised governance as an 'inclusion delusion' highly visible in the machinations of development planning in practice. Patronage politics obstructs processes of prioritisation, negotiation and compromise during the annual planning process shifting the focus on to political gain rather than how resources can be allocated in ways that will bring the maximum benefit to the local community. One civil servant described how development funds were late reaching his sub-county because the budget was not agreed until the financial year was already underway (SubC-CS-

1). Despite technical advice from civil servants explaining how focusing resources on the development of the HCIII would benefit everyone in the sub-county, local councillors insisted on dividing up the meagre resources equally by parish, enabling them to demonstrate financial dividends for the area ahead of the imminent elections. The district planner refused to endorse the plan which prevented any major projects from being completed and the sub-county council had to reconvene causing severe delays to the final release of funds.

Sub-county and district budget conferences are the only formal mechanism for community and political leaders to ensure that the priorities that have been raised have been included within development plans and budgets. Yet little time is provided for analysis and reflection between the availability of the budget information and the conference itself; the level of complexity of the documentation makes this a difficult process to engage in for all but a minority of elite actors; and the approach to facilitating discussions during the conference does not encourage participation or deliberation (CPF-OTHER-4). The conferences also take place at the start of the budgeting process and later stages are not open to input from citizen representatives (CPF-OTHER-4).

Local government officials complained of the overall lack of resources available to address local needs, which has been exacerbated by the abolition of Graduated Personal Tax in 2005, and Graduated Tax Compensation (GTC) funds have not filled the gap (SubC-CS-BK-2, SubC-CS-MY-1, see also Green, 2008). In Bukuuku in the financial year (FY) 2003-4, graduated tax comprised 59.5% of local revenue at 20.3m shillings[18], but in FY 2008-9 GTC for the sub-county totalled just 11.6m

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[18] Approximately GBP £5.5 thousand.

shillings[19] (SubC-CS-BK-2). Local governments only ever receive a fraction of central government indicative planning figures (IPFs) in practice, which is partly due to overestimations but also due to funds being diverted to other purposes. The implication here being into the pockets of government actors further up the local or central government structure or in 2010 and 2011 into election funds for the NRM (Kasfir, 2012, LCII-MY-1, SubC-CS-BK-2). Table 5.1 displays IPFs against actual funds received by Bukuuku Sub-County in FY 2010/11 leaving just 7.5 million shillings[20] of the Local Government Management and Service Delivery (LGMSD) fund - the principle source of local government public service expenditure - available for addressing bottom up planning priorities, of which some would be spent on administrative costs.

Table 5.1. Indicative Planning Figures and Actual Funds Received by Bukuuku Sub-County Local Government 2010/11(SubC-CS-BK-2)

Financial Year 2010/11	
IPF for Total LGMSD	15.7 m
Actual LGMSD received	10.4 m
IPF for CDD (30% of LGMSD)	4.7m
Actual CDD allocation	2.9m
Total LGMSD available for bottom up planning priorities:	7.5m

By March 2011, Mahyoro Sub-County Local Government had only received 18 of the 28 million[21] promised in the IPFs for the annual LGMSD grant (SubC-CS-MY-1). In such a context, individuals can make big differences. Table 5.2 contains

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[19] Approximately GBP £3.1 thousand.
[20] Approximately GBP £2 thousand.
[21] Approximately GBP £4.9 thousand of GBP £7. 7 thousand.

comparative figures over two financial years for local revenue and GTC in Bukuuku sub-county. A civil servant within the local government offices made it clear that in their opinion the improved financing could be attributed to a change in the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) for Kabarole District, claiming that accounting systems were working much more efficiently since he came into post with fewer discrepancies between expected and actual amounts received (SubC-CS-BK-2).

Table 5.2. Local Revenue and Graduated Tax Compensation, Bukuuku Sub-County Local Government (SubC-CS-BK-2).

	2008-09	2009-10
Estimated Total Local Revenue*	41.3 m	53.7m
Actual Total Local Revenue*	28 m	54.7m
Variance (total)	-13.3m	+ 1.0m
Estimated G Tax compensation	22.5 m	33.8m
Actual G Tax compensation	11.6m	33.5m
Variance (GTC)	-10.9m	- 0.3m

* including G Tax Compensation

Examples such as this were few and far between however and with their job security dependent on maintaining a good relationship with their patrons rather than performance, civil servants have few incentives for effectiveness beyond their own set of values as Chapter 6 will explore in more detail in relation to social accountability (Joshi, 2007, Tripp, 2010).

In summary then, where meetings are taking place and work plans being made, TSCO has fostered a degree of political learning among LC1 councillors. There has been increased participation in meetings notably by women however this may be linked to an immanent process of development rather than the TCSO's intervention. Villagers who attended meetings may have experienced political learning in terms of information about rights and resources, and collective responsibility but this had not resulted in significant changes in behaviour. TCSO has not reshaped political networks or patterns of political representation through their training and awareness-raising work with councillors and villagers in ways which have enabled them to follow up on the priorities they have identified and mobilise to ensure they are included in sub-county and district plans.

5.2.3 No participatory planning: political-economic and strategic dynamics

In terms of the character of politics and the *de facto* operations of the decentralised planning process, similar dynamics were at work in Bukuuku where village planning was either not happening at all in the villages I encountered or where meetings were only called when there was a particular issue to discuss or an external visitor with information to share. The case study to follow adds a flavour of some of the political, cultural, and political-economic factors hindering local level agency to the preceding analysis.

Case Study 2: a lowland village in Bukuuku

The LC1 Chair for this village was elected in 2001 since when there have been no elections nationally at the village level despite the move to a multi-party system in 2005 (NRM-BK-1). The NRM party however, continued to run their own primary elections for flag-bearer positions at LC1 level in both 2006 and 2011, and in 2006,

a new flag-bearer LC1 Chair was elected in the village who was recently returned in 2011, but remains without any constitutional right to lead (NRM-BK-1, LCII-BK-1, Parish-BK-1). The existing LC1 Chair has never held a general village meeting and when other members of the executive committee tried to hold a meeting with the new flag-bearer he travelled back from a trip to Kampala to disrupt it and chastise those involved (LCI-BK-1). The executive committee hasn't taken any further action and nor has the Chair of the parish council who is a friend of the LC1 Chair (LCI-BK-1, NRM-BK-1). Those that have sought to take action have been unsuccessful. The local CPF is actually from the same parish and he is related to the new LC1 flag-bearer, who has been on local radio to highlight the situation (CPF-BK-3). Both he and the CPF have tried advocating with the parish and sub-county leadership but no significant action has been taken to resolve the situation. The latest response from political leaders during fieldwork in May 2011 was that they were awaiting the autumn LC1 elections (NRM-BK-1, LCII-BK-1). The elections never materialised.

Aside from the dynamics of patronage politics described above, this lack of agency at a local level has cultural, political and economic dimensions. From a cultural perspective, an executive committee member explained: "The problem is that it caused lots of divisions in the village and we don't want conflicts... The problem here for us, we are people born in this village, when you look at conflicting with a neighbour you just ignore the issue and keep quiet" (LCI-BK-1). This preference for conflict avoidance is a recognised local cultural trait, having its own term in Rutooro '*kitandugaho*' translated locally as 'I must not be seen to have raised the problem', is linked to fear of grudge-bearing and repercussion, and arose in discussions about the effective running of the local government system and civil society organisations (TCSO-adviser-1), as well as in this case of reticence to

challenge poor performance. Cultural mores are complex and should not therefore be characterized in normative terms as good or bad for development (Kelsall, 2008). In this case inaction by multiple parties has however resulted in village self-governance coming to a standstill: 'The gravity water system that passes through the villages has lots of leaks along the pipes. We can't call the water committee. There is no communal work like on our roads, we used to work on them collectively." (LCI-BK-1).

Similarly, a culture of deference and loyalty to elected or appointed leaders – irrespective of performance, and a dependency on enforcement by those leaders as the catalyst for citizen agency was described as another challenge for citizen-led decision-making:

"People are simple, if they have someone with authority to tell them to do the work, they will do the work, but otherwise they don't bother [...] It is culturally like that, even at that time of chiefship of the village, there was one man who everyone obeyed. Under the colonial system chiefs could do anything, he could say anything and it happens. [...] Once you become a leader a top person, you have to respect that person." (LCI-BK-1).

The literature suggests this is more a question of internalised social norms and integration within patron/client networks, than one of culture or tradition (Callaghy, 1994, Devarajan et al., 2011, Engberg-Pedersen and Webster, 2002, Mosse, 2010). Both deference and conflict avoidance in relation to the LC1 Chair is also linked to the fact that these leaders hold significant economic and judicial power within the village. The executive committee members explained that in this case the Chair continues to preside over land transactions and the village court, which are the only times when there is any official assembly of residents of the village (LCI-BK-1). A number of studies have suggested that confrontational rights-based approaches may be inappropriate in contexts where these different forms of power are intertwined in such ways (Hickey and Mohan, 2005, Patel and Mitlin, 2009).

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These dynamics were felt across the two sample parishes in Bukuuku. Conflict avoidance and deference to authority were identified as constraints to agency by an LC2 councillor and were reflected within the attitudes I encountered among residents of another two villages in a different parish (LCII-BK-1, Villagers-BK-1). Residents of two villages were unable to suggest action they could take if their LC1 Chair was not performing. There was great defeatism, someone said 'what can we do?' with resignation (Villagers-BK-1).

The LC1 Chair for the village in Mahyoro that was not doing annual work planning or holding village meetings suggested a more pragmatic reason for the absence of collective planning: 'there aren't really any village meetings, they are called but people don't come' (LCI-MY-4). Although not always cited as a reason, the frustrations of some villagers who attend meetings where nothing happens and the same issues get discussed cited above, and findings from other studies (Golooba-Mutebi, 2004, Saito, 2003) suggest that the absence of any visible gain from participation is also a critical drain on citizen agency.

Although the link wasn't made directly by research participants, historical and geographic differences between Bukuuku and Mahyoro may also have shaped the different outcomes TCSO has been able to foster in the two sub-counties. As Chapter 4 describes, Bukuuku is densely populated, with the Bakonjo mainly occupying the more remote mountain regions, and a mixture of Batooro and Bakonjo now living in the lowlands. It has experienced historic ethnic tensions and high levels of land conflict which has undermined attempts to foster economic cooperation (TCSO-FN-5, Nkata, 1998). Mahyoro is extremely remote and has not historically experienced population pressure or ethnic tensions. The findings

suggest that there has been a link between economic associational development and enhanced political capabilities in Mahyoro (expanded in section 5.3), and by extension that low levels of economic cooperation may have therefore undermined other kinds of political agency and cooperation in Bukuuku. The next village case study adds further to these points of reflection, as a more positive example of political mobilisation in response to TCSO's intervention, driven forward by a condition of marginalisation (Hickey and Bracking, 2005, Jones, 2009, Thorp et al., 2005) and social capital linked to economic association (Brett, 2003).

5.2.4 The dynamics of a politically mobilised community

Case Study 3: a remote hillside community in Bukuuku

This village had recently been divided in two as it spanned the dividing line between Bukuuku and a newly formed sub-county called Karangura. As outlined in Chapter 4, the Batooro have dominated local government and political positions in Bukuuku and Kabarole district more widely, and before 2006 there were no Bakonjo councillors on the district council (LCV-KB-1). Against this background, the mainly Bakonjo residents of this case study village have found themselves excluded from government services and at a disadvantage relative to lowland residents of the sub-county (CPF-BK-3, LCIII-BK-2). There is no graded road leading to the village and until very recently children had to travel down the mountain to access primary school, where classes are taught in Rutooro – a second language to the Bakonjo children (Villagers-BK-2).

In 2007, a local activist and member of two CBOs supported by TCSO, received training in the PRMT methodology and brought these ideas to his village. He soon

handed over to the current Bukuuku CPF (FarmerGp-BK-1), and between them, these two activists facilitated a series of village meetings focused on analysing community resource needs. In response, villagers planned for the revival of a local primary school and the construction of an access road from the low lands up to the new school to enable the transportation of construction materials. Using the social networks he had cultivated through the two CBOs, the resident activist was able to apply for some funding from a small Dutch organisation which enabled the village to build some temporary classrooms. Chairs of the school management committee, parent teacher association, and village council mobilised parents who made bricks while others offered stones and sand, and others cash (Villagers-BK-2, SMC-BK-3). The community work took one year with between 50 and 70 people working together every Thursday including men, women and children. They then managed to get 20% of their costs shared by the Uganda Wildlife Authority (the village borders a national park) and in 2008, *Save the Children* came in to support the community to build more permanent structures and facilities (Villagers-BK-2, SMC-BK-3). In 2007, while still planning for the school, the community also requested that the government come in to construct the access road but they failed to get a response and eventually constructed the road manually instead (Villagers-BK-2, SMC-BK-3).

Today, community members use the road frequently but they are still waiting for the government to grade the road and motorcycles and other vehicles cannot use it. The community have stopped maintaining it because they have 'lost interest', seeing no response from the government and regular village meetings have ceased (Villagers-BK-2). The school on the other hand, has now been taken over by government who have provided four teachers in addition to their volunteer teachers, and enrolment and academic performance is increasing each year

(school records). Parents are still collecting construction materials for the permanent class rooms and staff houses under the *Save the Children* program and work is nearly complete (Villagers-BK-2).

Outcomes for the political capabilities of the villagers are mixed. Having an active local change agent living in the village, trained by TCSO, provided the social capital (Brett, 2003) through which they were able to mobilise donor resources. By engaging in collective action the villagers were later able to bring the government in to manage the school. The villagers have therefore expanded the political networks through which they can further their interests. They were unable to achieve the same for the access road to the village. The lack of government response to their request for a graded access road and a number of other resources requested since 2007, has meant that villagers have experienced political learning about the *de facto* rules of the game, but only indirectly in response to the CPFs facilitations and with potentially negative results. They have learned that the bottom up planning process is not a channel through which they can effectively advance their interests which has undermined their initial drive for self-help. The resident community activist who worked with the CPF to introduce the PRMT principles to the village also explained that back in 2007, TCSO gave support in the form of sodas for village meetings, stationary and transport expenses for the facilitator. He suggested that community participation and activism 'is a process [that] needs continued work, it needs money' (FarmerGp-BK-1). This suggests that without TCSO's resource input, people are not prepared to organise, and that the involvement of NGOs and donors has created a 'beneficiary syndrome' in the village – a belief that without external resources nothing can be done.

In a related development, members of a Bakonjo elder's forum sought the advice of the Bukuuku CPF when pushing for the newly created Karangura sub-county. This request for a sub-county to cover the mountainous areas of Bukuuku and neighbouring sub-counties had emerged over ten years before as community leaders began to plan how to overcome their exclusion from local government decision-making (CPF-BK-3). Karangura elders explained how the CPF (a Batooro) helped to mediate in discussions between the Bakonjo and Batooro elders forums, gave the Karangura elders confidence that they were within their rights to push for a sub-county to gain representation and resources for their people, and helped them to draft their formal proposal to local government (CPF-BK-3, LCIII-BK-2). Residents in the third case study village are now hoping that the newly formed Karangura sub-county will be able to meet their outstanding demand for a graded access road to the village (FarmerGp-BK-1, Villagers-BK-2). In this example, Karangura elders were engaged in a long-term struggle for political representation in order to gain the right to participate in the development planning process at a level where resources could be secured. TCSO's role was to offer advice and facilitative and technical expertise – it was not a decisive role but one that supported an *existing process* of political mobilisation, by facilitating political learning and the expansion of political networks.

Although outcomes in the case study village and among Karangura elders have been mixed, these events clearly suggest a more effective investment of time and energy by the CPF and the other trained activist than has occurred through TCSO's good governance interventions more widely, and more recently. One facilitative factor has been the villagers and elders recognition of their condition of marginalisation, supporting a fairly widespread case for exclusion as a driver of political agency or self-help in the literature (Bianchi, 2002, Brett, 2003, Thorp et

al., 2005, Jones, 2009). Another was the presence of a locally-embedded activist who could offer sustained facilitative support over the longer-term, and his links to external networks generated by his membership of an economic association (Brett, 2003). Patronage politics has also played an undeniably facilitative role here from the perspective of the Karangura elders. A former LC5 Councillor in Kabarole district openly admitted the political motivations behind granting the sub-county to the Bakonjo leaders, stating that 'all those people used to be FDC because they felt the NRM had forgotten them, we needed to bring them back to support the party' (LCV-KB-1). The granting of districts and sub-counties on ethnic lines has been critiqued for exacerbating tensions and increasing the costs of government administration (Green, 2008, Mwenda, 2007, Tripp, 2010), but in this case it has gained an excluded group political representation and as Mosse suggests, 'getting the needs or rights of exploited people onto the political agenda is crucial. But those whose rights need to be protected have first to comprise a political constituency' (2007: 38). Finally, in terms of strategy, the findings resonate with Hickey's (2002) study of rights-based NGO intervention in Cameroon in the suggestion that CPFs may be more effective when free to respond to and engage with existing drives of political agency and key moments of political opportunity.

5.2.5 Civic education for good governance and influencing resource allocation: summary

The findings so far seem to re-affirm the social-democratic critique of participation within localised 'invited' spaces of inclusive liberal governance (Bebbington et al., 2008, Craig and Porter, 2006, Ferguson, 2006, Harriss et al., 2004). Whether training councillors or sensitising village residents about good governance, TCSO's strategy for enhanced inclusive liberal participation has failed to

conceptualise village communities or meeting spaces as heterogeneous socially stratified arenas and has therefore not addressed the socio-economic power relations that shape them. The embodiment of political, economic and judicial power within the figure of the LC1 Chair and the nature of patronage politics meaning no elections have been held at village level since 2001, seem to support Hickey and Mohan's (2005) suggestion that rights-based participatory approaches may not work in environments where political space is circumscribed in these ways. Village level findings also provide support for the notion that institutional design and rights-based information provision are not enough to create conducive conditions for substantive citizen participation in decision-making (Cornwall and Coelho, 2007, Golooba-Mutebi, 2004). Whether in Uganda this is because 'people may simply want to have strong leaders that 'know how to rule' and that are able to make decisions on their behalf' as Golooba-Mutebi, (2004: 302) has suggested, requires greater discussion and analysis after further data has been explored.

5.3   Economic Associational Development

This section provides tentative support for the small body of evidence in the development literature which demonstrates that rural producer organisations can (with support from NGOs or other facilitating actors) reshape power relations and gain greater influence over resource allocation by forming savings and livelihood based associations which build political capital and influence (Agarwal, 2010, Bebbington, 1997, Jeppeson, 2002, Ramesh, 2007, Webster, 2002).

Given the minimal amount of economic associational development engaged in by TCSO in Bukuuku, findings relating to this intervention area have mainly been generated through interactions with farmers in Mahyoro, as well as members of two marketing associations from other sub-counties and TCSO staff. Project

documentation including successive evaluations was also reviewed and two weeks of fieldwork were spent with an effective coffee cooperative in Kasese not connected to TCSO to generate a sense of the wider possibilities for cooperatives in the region. The discussion of outcomes is preceded by an overview of how TCSO's agricultural interventions have unfolded in Mahyoro in partnership with the community-based sustainable production organisation (CBOMY) referred to above.

5.3.1 Economic associational development in Mahyoro

CBOMY began life as a small group of farmer-trainers who were interested in trying to bring more economic development to remote Mahyoro sub-county. TCSO carried out a year-long process of needs assessment and appraisal and then worked with these leaders as one of their 'Middle Level Farmer Groups' (MLFGs) to bring greater focus to their ideas and build their institutional capacity (CSO-Reg-2, TCSO-SM-4). In 2002, they gave a grant of 4.6 million shillings for some vanilla and cocoa trials with which CBOMY were able to buy and distribute seeds to farmers and start their own nursery (CBO-MY-1, CSO-Reg-2). They won a 9 million shilling government tender for their cocoa seeds which enabled them to build their own 7 million shilling offices, rooms and meeting hall and started a seed bank that now has 8 tonnes in circulation (CSO-Reg-2, TCSO-SM-4). In 2004, TCSO went on to support CBOMY (by now a registered NGO though still run by local farmers) with an upland rice initiative which has led to the establishment of a successful rice marketing association with 40 group and 120 individual members, a store, and a huller house (CBO-MY-1, CSO-Reg-2, TCSO-SM-4). TCSO's capacity building work with local farmer groups and CBOMY itself has also supported the development of an MFA with 17 group members and an information

centre – all linked to CBOMY but owned and governed by local farmer groups (CBO-MY-3). Many of the local savings and farmer groups that now make up the membership of these three farmer-owned institutions have been given capacity-building training and/or grants by TCSO (acting as a channel for international donor resources) (CBO-MY-1,3,4). TCSO's faith in the capacity of the original farmer-trainers, and the capacity building work they carried out, brought CBOMY to a stage where it was possible for TCSO to start building links between them and international donors who have continued to provide support to CBOMY as an independent organisation (CSO-Reg-2).

5.3.2 Outcomes for political capabilities in Mahyoro and more widely

Research with farmer groups and associations suggested TCSO have supported a process of political learning alongside socio-economic development and mobility (Williams, 2004). This process has in turn, reshaped political networks by encouraging members to take up a variety of leadership positions, and select and campaign for leaders more likely to represent their interests (Williams, 2004).

Members of groups and associations felt that as their households are seen to advance economically by other members of the community, they come to be seen as hard-working and well-informed (FarmerGp-MY-3, 5, 8, 9). Famers also reported learning how to give advice, how to relate to people, gaining confidence in dealing with others and leading, and an understanding of issues of representation and accountability through participation in their groups and the associated information and training received (FarmerGp-MY-3, 7, 8, 9). This learning combined with socio-economic advancement creates both motivation and

confidence within individual farmers to stand as leaders, and the external support and encouragement for their nomination and election as community and political leaders. As a member of a Marketing Association explained:

"From trainings we gained experience and knowledge of how to lead people. When you involve in the trainings you get exposed and you are able to interact with different people, so you are able to interact effectively with the people we lead. People saw us as hard working and also people look at the way you behave in the community and even how you can advise them... When we had trainings from TCSO we were able to train others and build people's confidence in us." (MA-NK-1).

Another farmer who had become a member of the parish NAADS procurement committee and chair of a school management committee explained how the knowledge he gained from TCSO training, and the change in his behaviour within his household and the village, led to an increase in social standing and support for him to act as a leader in other spheres of development: 'when we got these trainings in groups under [TCSO], we actively started practicing and people in the village are able to recognise us for what we're doing' (FarmerGp-MY-5). Another leader suggested that it was his commitment to his group and solidarity within the group that ensured members support for his own election as a local councillor (FarmerGp-MY-9). Five out of the seven sub-county level NAADS Farmers' Forum members were members of CBOMY affiliated groups and associations at the time of fieldwork (CSO-Reg-1). Members of all five groups I engaged with were able to provide examples of people from within their groups who had gone on to take up positions on NAADS Farmers' Forums (at village, parish and sub-county level), village health teams, parent teacher associations, school or health unit management committees, election as NRM flag-bearers for LC1 to 3 council positions or appointment to the executive committees of these councils, or to positions within village or parish level NRM party infrastructure (FarmerGp-MY-2,3,6,7,8).

Each of these groups also had members who were already on their LC1 executive committees by the time their groups formed which suggests a certain level of socio-economic status among members and this has also been highlighted in evaluations of TCSO's group-based approach (Internal, 2005a and 2009a). Despite this limitation, there was a strong sense from these groups (FarmerGp-MY-2, 3, 6, 7, 8) and from CBOMY staff (CSO-Reg-2) and the local CPF (CPF-MY-1) that participation in economic organisations was cultivating leadership among people who would not have formerly have had the confidence or the notion to engage in decision-making spaces.

The research evidence supports other studies that suggest women's participation in cooperatives and increased access to information and training among women and men can contribute to shifts in attitudes and behaviour with regards gender roles (Agarwal, 2010, Baluku, 2009, Ramesh, 2007, Webster, 2002). Although not directly a political capabilities outcome, this has created enabling conditions for an increasing number of women to engage either in political campaigning or political leadership. It is, in other words, closely linked to the process of political learning experienced through group membership described above, and also perhaps to the case in the literature that socio-economic advancement creates space in people's lives for political participation (Thorp et al., 2005, Agarwal, 2010). A CBOMY staff member explained for example how:

'it is hard to track change inside the household. We see women and men working together in the fields, we see women selling produce at the market. In the past a woman would never go to the market to sell a cash crop, so when we see a woman carrying the rice, the coffee, to the market, we see it as an indicator that something at least is changing' (CSO-Reg-2).

This kind of rank-order change is difficult to attribute directly to the work of any one organisation, but certainly farmers and workers at CBOMY and TCSO feel that their training and support have contributed to the process (CSO-Reg-2, CBO-MY-1, FarmerGp-MY-2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8). A former staff member of CBOMY explained how these changes in confidence levels and gender roles were in turn resulting in higher numbers of women getting involved in politics to the point where it was sometimes difficult for CBOMY to carry out their work and was undermining commitment to the MA and MFA: 'In 2002, few farmers were involved in community leadership at different levels. This season we've had lots of problems because lots of our members are involved in politics especially women. If they aren't standing then they are campaigning for others' (CSO-Reg-2).

As this account suggests, political campaigning by men as well as women has increased among members of supported groups, adding evidence for Kabeer and Mahmud's identification of a 'NGO mobilisation effect' (2010: 69). Dissatisfied with the performance of the former LC3 Chair, farmers from these groups lobbied the Chair of CBOMY (who had been an LC3 Chair before 2001) to return to politics so that he could better represent the interests of farmers. He agreed and was successfully elected in March 2011 (LCIII-MY-2). There were five further cases highlighted by research participants of members of farmer groups encouraging one of their leaders to participate in either village, parish or in one case district councils and, where necessary, campaigning to get them elected (LCV-MY-2, LCIII-MY-2, FarmerGp-MY-8, FarmerGp-MY-9, LCV-MY-2).

There was evidence of the same links at work between association and representation among members of the MAs I engaged with, and in Bukuuku (FarmerGp-BK-1 and 2, TCSO-FN-37 and 38). The one MLFG TCSO had

managed to work with in Bukuuku had a female chair who went on to become the Vice Chair of the sub-county council in 2006 as well as Chair of the sub-county and then the district NAADS Farmers' Forum. She attributes this advancement to training she received from TCSO and the support of the members of her group (FarmerGp-BK-2).

These positive outcomes are offset to some degree by three key limitations to the outcomes TCSO has been able to achieve through economic associational development which reflect challenges raised within the brief review of cooperative literature in Chapter 2 and discussed below. Firstly, TCSO has not avoided the common problem of group-based approaches favouring the active poor (Thorp et al., 2005), with model farmers and CPFs benefitting far more than poorer members of the rural communities where they work. A 2007 evaluation concluded that learning was failing to trickle down from model farmers to affiliate groups (International-2) and data in 2011 suggests that this trend has continued. There was clearly a gap between the level of knowledge, skills and socio-economic status attained by model farmers and CPFs compared to ordinary members of farmer groups. For example, one model farmer in Mahyoro was engaged in subsistence farming (but was also a sub-county councillor) when TCSO first trained him. He now earns between 10 and 15 million shillings[22] a year from his farm which is also now a training centre used by the district local government and various NGOs (CPF-MY-3). Contrast this with one of the women's groups in Mahyoro who, with 25 members and after seven years have managed to increase their savings in the MFA from 100,000 to 2.5 million shillings.[23] Other members of farmer groups have still benefitted however as described above and there are also ways in which this investment in a small number of community leaders has

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[22] Approximately GBP £2.7 thousand to GBP £4.1 thousand.
[23] From approximately GBP £27 to GBP £685.

advanced the interests of rural farmers. Both social democratic (Sandbrook et al., 2007) and liberal democratic perspectives (North et al., 2009) on economic transformation highlight the importance of more elite organised social and political actors making room for a wider level of participation in market and political opportunities. With assistance from TCSO, several CPFs and model farmers have gone on to form a regional agricultural training organisation run by farmers for farmers and are beginning to give voice to rural farmers within regional deliberative fora as Chapter 7 will describe. TCSO is also attempting to address the exclusion of the chronic poor from their initiatives to date with their *Micro Enterprise for the Very Poor* pilot. In Mahyoro, the 17 individuals supported at the point of fieldwork had managed to form their own savings group, all members report increases in confidence in participating in collective social events like meetings, and one member has taken up a position on his village elders' committee (Internal, 2011a, CPF-MY-1).

A second and fundamental challenge that is raised repeatedly within empirical studies and policy papers focused on how to facilitate economic transformation in sub-Saharan Africa (Braverman et al., 1991, Flygare, 2006, ILO, 2008, Wanyama et al., 2009) is how to foster ownership among cooperative members. This was also linked by staff (TCSO-FN-5 and 6) and in another research study (Businge, 2010) to problems with mismanagement and corruption. A 2009 evaluation of 14 MLFGs and their affiliates found that 43% of the 210 farmers interviewed felt 'lack of cooperation between members' was a major challenge to progress with only 17% of these farmers marketing their produce collectively, and 83% continuing to sell on an individual or household basis (Internal, 2009a). Neither leaders not staff of TCSO/CBOMY were able to foster effective links between the marketing and micro-finance associations and associational development had not enhanced

political capabilities among farmers to the extent that they could broker relationships and advance their interests with buyers independently of TCSO (TCSO-FN-3, 37 and 38, International-1). TCSO had become a new broker and mediator within these relationships so that farmers remained dependent on staff to negotiate their position with buyers rather than attaining the skills to advocate on their own behalf (International-1, TCSO-FN-3, Feldmen, 2003, Townsend, 2004, Miraftab, 1997). Although these constraints relate primarily to economic viability and sustainability, these characteristics are fundamental to the long term development of political capabilities in terms of farmers being able to build a solidaristic economic force capable of shaping the actions of state, market or political actors (Thorp et al., 2005, Ferreira and Roque, 2010, Webster, 2002).

The third major challenge for TCSO was how to support a process of empowerment among women through their participation in economic associations. Although TCSO's MLFG approach focuses on ensuring a majority of women participants (Internal, 2009a), one reflection session with the full staff team suggested that women's empowerment remains one of their weakest areas of progress (TCSO-FN-39).

The evidence presented so far suggests firstly, that TCSO is indirectly facilitating political agency by supporting the development of producer cooperatives, and secondly, that farmers are reshaping their own political networks by becoming more selective about their representatives and taking action to secure their positioning. There is no evidence to suggest however, that the kinds of support provided by TCSO and CBOMY has impacted on patterns of representation in terms of the kinds of issues being raised, alternative approaches to representing interests or in terms of issues being framed in new (and more enlightening) ways

(Williams, 2004). Rather, despite multiple constraints, farmers are gaining a degree of socio-economic mobility, and some of the necessary skills, information and confidence for participation within the existing inclusive liberal governance system. This system is still subject to the many constraints outlined in the discussion of bottom up planning under section 5.2. It is nonetheless a step in the right direction if Mosse (2007) is right to suggest that political representation is ultimately the only way for disadvantaged groups to secure their interests.

5.3.3 Political-economic and strategic dynamics shaping outcomes

These outcomes can be linked both to political-economic dynamics and organisational strategy and capacity. The remote location of Mahyoro sparked motivation among a small group of community leaders for self-help. These individuals have worked hard to catalyse and facilitate increased production, commercialisation and better organisation among subsistence and small holder farmers. The development and on-going presence of the organisation they established with assistance from TCSO has provided a locally-embedded support structure to enhance and facilitate socio-economic change in the area. Their partnership work has begun to overcome mistrust of associational action linked to a history of enforced cooperation, corruption and mismanagement (Elders-MY-1). There has also historically been an abundance of land available for agriculture, without the levels of population pressure and history of ethnic conflict that has impeded cooperative endeavour in Bukuuku (Nkata, 1998) and other areas (Businge, 2010, CPF-OTHER-4).

Other areas of the region have not always benefited from this kind of positive conjuncture of political economy and agency. Studies of effective collective action

among poor or disadvantaged communities often identify a history and culture of associational action as a key driver of change (Joshi and Houtzager, 2012, Webster, 2002, Shankland, 2010) and this is clearly absent in rural Uganda. The legacy of failed cooperatives continues to undermine associational agency in other parts of the region and this has become mixed up with local level ethnic and land tensions undermining a spirit of cooperation (TCSO-FN-5, TCSO-SM-3, CPF-OTHER-4). Combined with the low levels of capital available to farmers with small land holdings (UNDP, 2013), this creates a highly unfavourable situation for effective formation and ownership of farmer associations. Farmers can't wait for better prices through collective marketing so they sell on an individual basis to middlemen, the MFAs therefore have low loan capital because farmers have little money available for savings (TCSO-FN-36, 37 and 38). Farmers are unhappy with the MAs and MFAs because they are not benefitting either from loans, or from higher prices, because the loans aren't enough to meet their basic needs while they wait for a better bulk price (TCSO-FN-38, International-1). Farmers therefore do not feel a sense of ownership over or motivation towards their groups and associations because the benefits are not significant enough. This results in poor levels of monitoring of associational leaders which coupled with a learned culture of corruption and the pressures of daily survival, leads to mismanagement of funds and sometimes the collapse of the associations, in turn perpetuating mistrust of cooperation (TCSO-FN-38, Businge, 2010, TCSO-FN-6).

Just as other studies have found (Bano, 2012, Bianchi, 2002, Devine, 2006) donor-driven interventions have more often exacerbated than ameliorated these problems. TCSO's original strategy of channelling donor finance via grant-giving to farmer groups resulted in groups and associations being set up in response to the promise of capital investment and created a culture of dependency on donor and

NGO finance which has undermined local agency (Businge, 2010, TCSO-FN-3).

TCSO staff felt that this has been the most negative outcome of their interventions

to date (TCSO-FN-39). Although TCSO has now adjusted its approach to focus on

information provision, advice, and linkages within the market value chain, other

NGOs continue to provide grants and 'facilitation' expenses for community

meetings and attitudes remain largely unchanged (CPF-OTHER-4, TCSO-FN-39).

The difference with CBOMY in Mahyoro, was that there was an existing group of

local activists who had identified a need independently and then sought out help to

realize their own vision rather than organizing in response to potential funding.

Staff also felt that TCSO's overarching aim of community empowerment had been

undermined by universalist donor agendas which fail to take account of local

context (Businge, 2010, TCSO-FN-6). In Kabarole district, self-help groups first

emerged on a clan basis but rather than 'working with the grain' as Kelsall (2008)

and Booth (2012) have recently advocated, donors pushed TCSO towards

encouraging different ethnic groups and neighbours within the community to work

together. This led to many groups failing, at least in part, because of intra-

communal ethnic and land tensions (TCSO-FN-6). Staff also felt that donors had

done little to promote women's empowerment (TCSO-FN-9) with progress

measured according to quantitative targets as one project worker explained:

> "Unless you are motivated to go the extra mile and ask the real questions
> about what is going on you don't learn anything from donor targets and
> reporting... for example - what is the value addition at an individual level for
> women participants – do they have increased livelihoods and increased control
> over their livelihoods? Have they gained knowledge and skills? You can
> measure and say the household income has increased, but the women won't
> have control over that income so for them there is no change."

Staff struggled to explain their inability to advance women's empowerment beyond

the entrenched social relations and gender roles that characterise the majority of

rural households and the above donor dynamics. The evidence suggests that - as with fostering agency among farmers, and ownership over groups and associations - this is linked partly to TCSO's approach. Evaluations and research studies have found that a lack of follow up capacity and the absence of key activists or staff members at a local-enough level, and for sufficient amounts of time have been important constraints on TCSO's effectiveness (Internal, 2005a, 2006a, 2010b). Neither have model farmers and CPFs been adequately trained in how to catalyse agency for cooperative action at a local level. Training sessions are delivered as one-off lecture style technical training sessions (TCSO-FN-37 and 38). There is an absence of well-facilitated and continuous reflection, planning, action and review cycles that have assisted farmers and other disadvantaged groups to catalyse and sustain effective collective action elsewhere (Baluku et al., 2009, Bennett et al., 1996, Bianchi, 2002). Where some studies have found a joint focus on social justice and livelihood concerns to be most effective for social justice outcomes (Bianchi, 2002, Kabeer et al., 2010, Thorp et al., 2005), with TCSO's approach the focus has been purely economic, apart from limited amounts of top-down 'sensitisation' on the importance of sending children to school or women participating in leadership roles (TCSO-FN-37 and 38). More positive outcomes have been generated when alternative approaches are used. Progress among participants in TCSO's initiative for micro-enterprise development among the extreme poor has been linked to the effective facilitation of visioning and action planning among participants, and importantly the continuous follow up support provided (TCSO-FN-36, TCSO-SM-2). CPFs and model farmers have also benefitted from long-term inputs of training and reflection as part of their role within TCSO, as well as exposure to alternative ideas and practices through participation in regional events and fora, and exchange visits to other farms and associations across and beyond the region (CPF-MY-3).

These reflections are further supported by fieldwork with an effective microfinance and coffee marketing association in Kasese district (CSO-district-5) that wasn't supported by TCSO, whose history and strategic approach have been documented elsewhere (Baluku et al., 2009, OxfamNovib, 2013, BJCMFS, 2010). There are clear links to enabling factors in Mahyoro and to the drivers of self-help within the village case study and elders' forum in Karangura sub-county in section 5.2. This cooperative is located in a remote mountainous region and predominantly inhabited by Bakonjo. It was started up in the late 1990s by locally-embedded actors on a clan basis (since expanded), and has benefitted from a highly motivated founder-coordinator who continues in post today. The cooperative has accepted external assistance and advice from an international donor and a British academic turned consultant. Advice has been focused on the development and then thorough integration of a PAL methodology specifically for the organisation, and donor funding has only been accepted for initiatives targeting the chronic poor or in support of documentation and international profiling. A fundamental difference between this organisation and those supported by TCSO has been members' central focus on gender relations and social change as well as livelihoods, with an integral Gender Action Learning System (GALS) carried forward by a team of activist-trainers, who pass on these skills to new members via local support bodies for training, monitoring and evaluation at a parish level. Members reap significant financial gains and the cooperative has just begun exporting coffee. There have been significant shifts in gender relations in some member households including joint decision-making, joint management of finances, and joint ownership of land. The collective 5,000 members or clients of the cooperative and its associations are now a political force to be reckoned with, having mobilised members to finance a political process which has resulted in

state commitment to extend electricity to their county enabling use of a new electric coffee huller machine. In terms of political capabilities for influence over resource allocation, empowered in part by shifting gender relations, members of this cooperative have experienced political learning, expanded their political networks, and found new ways to negotiate and channel their claims and interests.

The preceding analysis provides support for arguments in the literature that marginalisation can create a drive for self-help (Jones, 2009, Thorp et al., 2005), that cooperatives may have greater outcomes for political capabilities when focused on social justice as well as livelihoods (Bianchi, 2002, Kabeer et al., 2010, Thorp et al., 2005), and that associations experience greater solidarity and sustainability when enabled to develop organically on the basis of the immanent emergence of agency rather than in response to external development agents (Bano, 2012, Bianchi, 2002, Igoe, 2003). The findings and analysis also suggest that those seeking to enhance political capabilities among farmers should be focused on sustained facilitation of locally-determined development strategies (Bano, 2012, Igoe, 2003), by locally-embedded actors (Chhotray, 2008, Uphoff and Wijayaratna, 2000).

5.4   Political capabilities for influencing resource allocation in Rwenzori

In relation to the debates that opened the chapter, the findings suggest that, within the context of rural Uganda, strategies focused on more effective citizen participation within the invited spaces of inclusive liberal governance are unlikely to gain significant influence over resources for disadvantaged groups. Participation within economic associations – when the right mix of enabling factors are present

– can take rural communities closer to linking representation with social justice and economic transformation in Hickey's terms (2010: 1152).

While some analysts have defended the potential of formal invited governance spaces for citizenship building on the grounds that these are spaces where disadvantaged groups can 'cut their political teeth'; (Cornwall and Coelho, 2007: 8, Hickey and Mohan, 2005), the findings here suggest that this can also work in reverse (and perhaps more effectively in the context of rural Uganda). Farmers can learn a range of skills from participation in groups and associations which can build their political capabilities for greater effectiveness as representatives in other more formal arenas. This representation does not at the present time necessarily result in significant influence over resource allocation because of the character of politics and the *de facto* workings of the political system. However, by enhancing socio-economic mobility and political learning, and supporting the emergence of associational power this strategy at least begins to tackle disadvantageous power relations and therefore foster more conducive conditions for the emergence of social democratic development.

The analysis suggests that NGO and donor strategies must pay attention to local context and history. The discussion suggests that intervening within existing processes of agency and change, while paying attention to 'the strategies employed by the poor themselves' (Mohan and Hickey, 2004: 63), is likely to be more effective for political capability development than introducing pre-designed programmes and structures linked to financial grants (Bano, 2012, Feldman, 2003, Igoe, 2003, Miraftab, 1997, Townsend et al., 2004).

6. Political capabilities for social accountability: inclusive liberal participation and created spaces for local-problem solving

6.1   Introduction

This chapter engages with the 'new accountability agenda' (Goetz and Jenkins, 2005) explored briefly in Chapter 2, and particularly with concerns that social accountability initiatives may be thwarting the development of existing democratic institutions and processes (Jenkins & Tsoka, 2003), or failing to challenge structural inequalities between citizens and political elites (Harriss, 2001; Chandhoke, 2003). The discussion examines the extent to which TCSO has enhanced citizen capabilities to hold the state accountable for resource expenditure, and increased state capacity for responsiveness. The first strategy investigated is civic education with parents/service users, councillors, and management committee members within primary schools and health centres about their roles and responsibilities within inclusive liberal governance processes. The principle focus of this intervention is on encouraging local contributions of time or money towards better health and education services, and raising awareness about how to monitor expenditure and resource use and report problems up the inclusive liberal governance structure. The second strategic approach examined is TCSO's convening of sub-county dialogues which as Chapter 4 describes, bring together civil servants, political leaders, and community leaders to discuss and deliberate problems with health, education and development infrastructure and services more widely. The third approach to enhancing social accountability discussed here is TCSO's Private/Public Expenditure Monitoring (PPEM) research and associated advocacy work including the convening of district level dialogues for the deliberation of research findings, similar to those held at sub-county level.

The findings suggest that TCSO strategies have not catalysed more demand-side pressure for social accountability, but have contributed to processes of political learning (Williams, 2004) among local elite representatives, such as local councillors and management committees. By integrating intervention within the invited spaces of inclusive liberal governance with deliberation within the alternative, created space of sub-county dialogues (Cornwall, 2002), TCSO is also beginning to trigger some localised and incremental improvements to service provision. Findings relating to the PPEM research and associated district level engagements, demonstrate that organisational legitimacy has been gained at district and national levels and the additional research evidence has enhanced advocacy efforts at sub-county level, but as elite-led processes, these strategies have not re-shaped entrenched power relations between elite and less wealthy members of rural society or between parents/service users and the state (Williams, 2004).

The final section of the chapter explores the reasons behind some of these constraints including problems underpinning their approach (such as engaging in civic education rather than participatory action-learning as discussed in Chapter 5); and constricted political space for claims-making and responsiveness within a highly hierarchical culture (Golooba-Mutebi, 2004) and a semi-authoritarian political context (Tripp, 2010). A number of questions arise from the discussion in relation to class and representation which echo some of the issues raised by Törnquist et al. (2009). These include whether elite representation is a an acceptable substitute for 'direct participation by the immediately concerned people' (Törnquist et al., 2009: 6); what constitutes legitimate representation in the absence of electoral mandate; what can be said to distinguish a 'local elite' from

an 'ordinary service user' in the context of rural Uganda; and how these issues

affect the ability of poorer members of a local community to express their interests

and hold state actors accountable for service delivery.

In conclusion, the chapter suggests that elite-led representation without direct

popular participation has not increased the political capabilities of the poor or

adequately represented their interests, but that this does not preclude the potential

for local elites to negotiate improvements to service provision that may benefit the

poor.

6.2   Intervention outcomes

6.2.1   Civic education with local councillors

Despite the large amount of resources that have been invested in TCSO's rights

and governance programme[24] and the five years of implementation by the time

fieldwork commenced, it was difficult to find any concrete cases of local councillors

and residents carrying out systematic monitoring of schools, health centres or

public works in either Mahyoro or Bukuuku sub-counties. Local councillors in both

areas were able to explain clearly the step by step process for monitoring that they

had been taught by TCSO and stressed that before TCSO's training they didn't

know that this was part of their role as leaders (LCIII-BK-1, LCII-MY-2, LCII-BK-1).

They claimed to be putting this knowledge into practice, but when asked to provide

examples of monitoring activity and holding public servants accountable, leaders

struggled to offer any detail beyond their own individual and occasional visits to

the local primary school, or ad hoc monitoring of construction works – as one

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[24] Approximately GBP £150 thousand of European funding between 2008 and 2010 (TCSO-FN-4).

parish councillor said, 'if I see they are working on it I go there' (LCII-MY-1). None of the local councillors who participated in the research were working in tandem with local residents to carry out coordinated monitoring work.

One Parish Councillor in Mahyoro, who had benefitted from TCSO's training, described monitoring the construction of a latrine in his area on face value rather than on the basis of contractual information such as a bill of quantities (BoQ). He could see that sub-standard work was being carried out and called the Sub-County Chief to suggest he refuse to pay the contractor. The Chief ignored this request and the toilet collapsed a few months later. The Councillor felt that there was nothing further he could do in this case because the Chief was beyond his field of influence, and though speaking in general terms, also suggested that the Chief had probably benefited from the poor quality work: 'When the construction of the latrine takes 5 million, they have to take those that cost less so they put it in their pockets' (LCII-MY-1). In a similar vein, when asked about the terrible state of the main road coming into the sub-county (which was almost impassable for anything but a four wheel drive vehicle) and whether there had been any mobilisation to have action taken about the problem, the local CPF could only reply: 'that one is a central government road' (CPF-MY-1). In other words, there was nothing the community could do about it because it was beyond their sphere of influence. Neither the parish councillor nor the CPF seemed able to strategise about who had the power to resolve the problems under discussion and how they might be influenced to take action, there was a firm sense of hierarchy for demands for 'answerability' or 'enforcement' and neither these nor other respondents seemed to have any drive to upset the established order (Goetz and Jenkins, 2005).

These outcomes suggest that while local councillors have undoubtedly experienced a degree of political learning (Williams, 2004) in terms of having an increased understanding about their duties as a result of TCSO's interventions, this learning has not translated into significant increases in accountability. In line with more radical social democratic critiques of participatory development interventions, the findings suggest that TCSO's civic education strategy for increasing the effectiveness of formal processes and 'invited' governance spaces has not addressed local power relations or triggered councillor-led community mobilisation (Mohan and Stokke, 2000; Mosse, 2007; Moore, 2001).

6.2.2 Civic education with management committees and parents or service users

TCSO's civic education work has had some limited but positive results for the effectiveness of school and health unit management committees but has achieved little for the direct participation of other service users and parents. These outcomes will be examined through a case study of a Bukuuku-based primary school before comparing these to wider findings in Mahyoro and Bukuuku.

Case Study 4: a Bukuuku-based primary school

This community-founded school was governed by successive PTAs until the late 1990s when the committee handed the school over to the government under UPE. A former PTA chair explained that 'the responsibility that the PTA had for managing each and every thing at the school is no longer there, only that if there is a need at the school that they can't provide, the PTA comes to discuss how can they contribute' (PTA-BK-1). TCSO began engaging with the school in 2007 over a conflict between the Head Teacher, the SMC Chair (a local pastor) and the PTA

Chair. The PTA Chair and other members of the local community were lobbying for replacement of the Head Teacher on grounds of under-qualification and amidst accusations that the Head and the pastor were embezzling money. The PTA called in the District Chair, the District Education Officer (DEO) and the Inspector of Schools and a clash ensued between the District Chair and the DEO with each taking different sides in the dispute (the political leader that of his constituents, the civil servant that of the government employees). Eventually the District Chair closed the school for a week, transferred the Head Teacher and most of the staff to other schools, appointed a new Head Teacher and SMC, and arranged for new PTA elections (Teacher-BK-1, NRM-BK-1, CPF-BK-2, SMC-BK-1).

The District Chair refused a proposal by a CSO staff member and the local CPF for a conflict mediation process based on a dialogue with all affected parties, implying that TCSO was overstepping the boundaries of their role as a non-governmental body (CPF-BK-3). By this point in early 2008, many parents had taken their children out of the school, parents had become largely disengaged from the running of the school, and the replacement teachers who had been sent by the DEO were performing poorly in terms of attendance and motivation. The CPF met with the new leaders and administrators to advise them on how to tackle some of these issues. By the point of fieldwork he had delivered three training sessions, two at sub-county level and one at the school, and is now invited to all parents meetings to carry out awareness-raising about rights and responsibilities (CPF-BK-3).

The SMC Chair claims that TCSO's training has given members a much better understanding of their roles in relation to ensuring the accountable use of resources including approving the arrival of UPE releases from the district,

participating in deliberative discussions over school development with the Head Teacher and PTA Chair, and monitoring school development through regular visits and by holding meetings with parents (SMC-BK-1). The new Head Teacher claimed that several SMC members visit the school to monitor attendance and classes and relevant meetings to interact with parents, not only the Chair (which was the case in some other schools) (Teacher-BK-1). The SMC Chair has been able to resolve problems with two teachers at the school because of TCSO training in handling poor performance. He also explained that SMC members meet with parents by school year as well as at general parents meetings each term to give advice about monitoring their children's school books so they know if teachers are performing lessons or not and can report to SMC members whether a teacher has taught a particular subject on a particular day (SMC-BK-1).

In practice, the SMC is not managing to enforce downwards accountability from the school to parents, although there is some degree of answerability (Goetz and Jenkins, 2005). Although SMC members approve the arrival of UPE releases they have no thorough oversight of how that money is spent other than the reports of the Head Teacher which could easily be falsified and teacher absenteeism has been a problem going back to 2007 that has remained unresolved (SMC-BK-1, Teacher-BK-1). CPF training doesn't seem to have advanced the planning, prioritisation or mobilisation skills of the SMC (which includes the head teacher and PTA Chair).   It is the teachers who mobilise parents and convene their meetings although SMC members do interact with them during the meetings. Observation of a joint SMC/PTA meeting and analysis of school meeting records revealed that members are still discussing issues of fence, gate and latrine construction, community trespassing on school property, and low levels of parental contributions and attendance at meetings that have been central to the minutes

since 2008 (SchRecs-BK-1, SchObs-BK-1). There is a lack of systematic discussion about the list of different works that need doing, how to prioritise them, or how to involve parents in the process of prioritisation and implementation so that they own the action that needs to take place and have an interest in ensuring it does.

Outcomes from TCSO sensitisation among parents have been extremely limited. Attendance at general parents meetings has begun to increase but not to pre-2007 levels (PTA-BK-1). The SMC Chair admitted that 'very few [parents] would come to look at what's happening at the school' as a result of their interactions with parents during meetings (SMC-BK-1). The Head Teacher and SMC Chair give reports on school finances and development during general parents meetings, but this is not in response to parents demanding for the information, rather the drive is in reverse, the teachers struggle to mobilise parents to attend the meetings (SMC-BK-1, Teacher-BK-1). Parents make commitments in meetings which they then fail to honour (SMC-BK-1, Teacher-BK-1, SchObs-BK-1). Parents are not holding the school accountable for their use of resources but neither are local citizen representatives within the SMC, or teachers, able to hold parents accountable for their commitments to the development of their children's school. Despite two CPF training sessions with the new PTA, only the Chair turned up to any meetings in 2010 (SMC-BK-1, Teacher-BK-1, SchObs-BK-1). Interviews and observations suggested that the new committee members had joined the association to 'save face' during the meeting when elections took place, or in the hope of financial gain, but then dropped out when they recognised the cost to their time and the lack of recompense (SMC-BK-1, Teacher-BK-1, SchObs-BK-1). The PTA Treasurer is supposed to monitor the money that parents contribute to the school but in practice they were simply signing multiple empty pages of a receipt book so that

the Head Teacher could issue receipts to parents and meet their policy of PTA oversight (SchObs-BK-1). A new PTA has now been elected but TCSO's strategy in relation to the school, and the school's own approach to working with the PTA has not changed.

According to discussions with stakeholders from four other schools in Bukuuku and with the CPF and local leaders in Mahyoro, these outcomes were fairly typical in schools across both sub-counties. Targeted TCSO training has successfully increased SMC's understanding of their roles, led to increased engagement and participation in monitoring (particularly of teacher and pupil attendance), and deliberation regarding parental contributions, and ensured that head teachers are meeting at least minimum answerability requirements such as giving reports to parents during general meetings each term. As an SMC member from another school in Bukuuku explained: 'at least you find that now the SMC knows their roles. If the Head Teacher is not holding meetings the SMC get together and call on them for a meeting. Members check for accountability of UPE releases quarterly. Head teachers used not to call SMC to approve budget each quarter when the UPE funds were released' (LCI-BK-2). But SMC monitoring was not linked to any direct outcomes in terms of enforcement. Teacher absenteeism for example was a continual problem and although SMC members could challenge teachers or attempt to negotiate for improved behaviour, actions agreed during SMC/PTA meetings and CPF reports suggested that they were either unwilling or had no authority to take more punitive action (CPFreports-MY-1, CPFreports-BK-1, Sch-Summary).   There were also continued low levels of awareness about the meaning of accountability – the SMC member just quoted is also a former LC1 Chair and now a sub-county councillor, but still defined accountability in terms of checking that money has come in, not monitoring that it has been spent according

to budget (Sch-Summary). Above all, it was clear that TCSO's focus on increasing the effectiveness of participatory governance bodies, and civic education with parents about their rights and responsibilities had not had any significant outcomes for levels of interest or capacity to engage in holding teachers, SMCs or PTAs accountable for their use of UPE funds or parental contributions (Sch-Summary).

Similar outcomes were found at the sub-county health centre in Mahyoro, and these themes are supported by data relating to civic education work by another regional NGO (CSO-Reg-FN-1). Staff were at least providing information to the committees on budgets and were cooperating with committee members for their monitoring and signing off of the arrival of funding, drugs and equipment (HealthW-MY-1, HUMC-MY-1). Through monitoring followed by negotiation with staff, the HUMC of Mahyoro HCIII had begun to see a gradual improvement in staff absenteeism and punctuality, but as with the case study school above, these issues were an on-going problem and the committee members lacked the authority to enforce sanctions (HUMC-MY-1). Service user engagement beyond the HUMC was almost non-existent. There were village health teams in place but health centre staff felt they didn't have the resources to support their information function and at Mahyoro HCIII, the HUMC couldn't even think of a role for them to play stating: 'there would be no need, most of the things government has decided to do by itself' (HealthW-MY-1, HUMC-MY-1).

TCSO have not focused on building the capacity of the VHTs but instead, the local CPF in Mahyoro appeared to be carrying out a similar substitute role. As a senior worker at the HCIII explained: 'VHTs were established by Government and are supposed to function as HC1s. They have a role to educate the community as well

as supply HCIIs and IIIs with information.' Expressing his appreciation towards the local CPF he went on: '[He] is very important to us at the facility, he provides information to the community, if we need mobilisation we use him... people didn't know what services we were offering, he took the information like immunisation, vitamin A supplementing... whatever communication we give him it has gone to the community' (HealthW-MY-1). The health worker partly attributed the dramatic increase in service uptake at the HCIII to this information role played by the CPF - in August 2010 they saw a 107% increase in new clients, and in relation to family planning services he explained that 'mothers are coming to demand these services whereas before they were having to go out and convince the community.' Similarly, several primary school stakeholders emphasised the important role that the CPF there had played in bringing information and ideas from other schools leading to a cross-fertilisation of ideas and creating a spirit of competition and a drive for improvement: '[He] has made several findings in his research to all the different schools. It becomes a competition as to what should we do next. That's why you see two of our pupils passed in the first grade this year' (SMC-BK-1, LCI-BK-2, LCII-MY-1). This information role may not be resulting directly in increased provider to client accountability, however if people are not even accessing local services, or have no sense of ownership or passion about their entitlement to that service or service quality then there is no drive for demand-side accountability pressures.

In summary then, civic education with parents, service users, and participatory governance bodies cannot be said to have increased 'the power of the poor within service provision' (WDR, 2004), but it has made some headway towards increasing the political capabilities of management committee members (Williams, 2004). In the case of education, an increased number of parents are engaging

with their school but in a nominal and passive manner, there is no evidence that TCSO have increased parents' capacity to challenge and demand sanctions where teachers are not performing. SMCs have experienced a process of political learning (Williams, 2004) within the terms of their assigned roles, in that they now understand what those roles are, but a significant process of empowerment is not apparent whereby before TCSO's intervention they were unable to hold the school staff members accountable for their actions and now they are able to do so. Dialogues with errant teachers for example have only ameliorated rather than put a stop to inappropriate behaviour, and there is a low level of financial oversight by SMC or PTA members.

The next set of outcomes about the sub-county dialogues that TCSO have facilitated considers whether TCSO have been able to increase social accountability through the creation of an alternative deliberative space at a higher level of engagement.

6.2.3   Sub-county education dialogues

The social accountability literature suggests that engaging citizens and service providers in collaborative 'local problem-solving activities' improves understanding and can increase the quality 'of public programmes and policies' (Cornwall and Coelho, 2007: 5; Booth 2012). TCSO has attempted to facilitate such a process via their sub-county dialogues which bring together civil and political community representatives and state actors to highlight problems within the health or primary school sector, share ideas, and collectively deliberate solutions. A former CDO for Bukuuku explained how the local CPF would 'work hand in hand' with her to organise and facilitate sub-county dialogues, sharing topics to facilitate. She listed

elders, opinion leaders, LC1 chairs and village development committee members, clan leaders, and religious leaders as the kinds of community representatives who would be mobilised to participate, and agreed that this had resulted in a majority of male participants although one of the two development committee members from each village had to be a woman (SubC-CS-BK-1). Observation and interviews suggest that the kinds of issues discussed in relation to education include school drops outs, teacher and pupil absenteeism, poor levels of parental engagement, and poor academic performance (TCSO-FN-34, Dialogue-MY-1, CPF-BK-2, CPF-MY-1). TCSO have also been able to support discussions with evidence from their PPEM research.

The sub-county dialogues are viewed positively by political leaders, civil servants and civil society actors and have begun to achieve a number of outcomes. A 2009 review of TCSO's civic education strategies with local political leaders found there was 'agreement on the use of... dialogue meetings as effective strategies because they provide on spot feedback, sharing of experiences, an analysis of situations, interface between stakeholders and communities' (Internal, 2009c). Sub-county dialogues have enhanced understanding amongst all stakeholders about their respective responsibilities for ensuring quality education, and built stronger relationships between education actors at different levels (ParishChief-BK-1, SMC-BK-1, HUMC-MY-1, LCII-MY-2, LCIII-BK-1). One civil servant gave an example of a SMC member who, following a dialogue, felt confident enough in their role to travel to the sub-county offices and report a case of defilement at their school to the chief (SubC-CS-BK-1). The same person explained how the dialogues were beginning to overcome the culture of blame that can mean problems are simply passed from one person to another without responsibility being taken or a resolution being developed: 'parents were blaming teachers and teachers were

blaming parents for not packing food for their children. Teachers were saying that there is moral decay among children because government and parents have prevented them from using corporal punishment. They then were able to reach an understanding about use of alternatives like making them kneel down for 5 minutes or write apology letters' (SubC-CS-BK-1). In this example, participants were able to reach a collective understanding about the responsibility of different stakeholders and make commitments about how to resolve the problem. Councillors and SMC participants highlighted how the dialogues were also an opportunity to learn about the approaches of other schools in resolving problems like child drop outs or poor academic performance and introduce similar strategies in their own schools (SMC-BK-1, LCI-BK-2, LCII-MY-1).

The dialogues have also created a drive to move beyond requests for answerability or learning exchange towards enforcement. After successive dialogues in 2007 and 2008, TCSO agreed to fund and facilitate a series of meetings with a smaller group of education stakeholders to draft a sub-county education bill, which was enacted in December 2008 (LCIII-BK-1, ParishChief-BK-1, CPF-BK-3). The issues targeted by the bill and the solutions developed are telling of the elite basis of participation within the education dialogues that led to its development however. It is designed to tackle pupil absenteeism, school drop outs and child labour rather than teacher absenteeism or poor staff performance, and focuses on sanctions against parents and children, rather than the ability of parents or civil society actors to hold schools or local government accountable for their use of education resources (BSLG, 2008).

On the other hand, both CPFs and LC1 committee members had been able to collect the experiences and views of the parents of service users that they had

come into contact with during village meetings or parents meetings around the sub-county, as had some PTA and SMC chairs, and felt that they had been able to feed these views into the discussions (CPF-BK-1, LCI-BK-2, SubC-CS-BK-1). Absenteeism and poor staff behaviour towards clients were topics of debate in education and health dialogues and in the case of Bukuuku HCIV for example, action was taken in response, as the former CDO explained: 'at the HCIV nurses were abusing mothers who had delivered... The nurses apologised and these days the numbers of people going there to give birth has increased' (SubC-CS-BK-1). School stakeholders participating in a sub-county dialogue in Mahyoro were finding that academic performance was improving and attributed this to learning they had gained from these fora and trainings, while heads of the five primary schools engaged in Bukuuku claimed that attendance at parents meetings had increased since they had begun to implement ideas they had gained from TCSO facilitated events and trainings (Sch-Summary).

TCSO's sub-county level intervention has therefore achieved mixed results. TCSO have been able to work with state and civil society actors to begin to address some of the shortcomings of the primary education sector in ways which have improved answerability. TCSO has also achieved this through the facilitation of negotiation and collaboration rather than confrontation and demands-making, thereby potentially avoiding some of the traps highlighted by critics of the new accountability agenda. By creating a new alternative space for deliberation, yet at the same time working within existing invited spaces such as participatory governance boards, and existing governance structures, TCSO are avoiding any challenge to 'the growth of formal democratic institutions' and are not making public challenges which might 'erode trust in public officials' (Goetz and Jenkins, 2005). On the contrary, they are increasing the capacity of these various

stakeholders to engage in accountability processes by sharing information and analysing the local situation. From a grass roots perspective however, TCSO have created an elite-led and male dominated space which is not directly increasing the power of the poor within service provision or engaging them directly in challenging the power of political elites.

6.2.4 PPEM and District Dialogues

Outcomes from TCSO's PPEM research and related district dialogues are presented firstly through the lens of their health research in Kamwenge district and then by examining responses from district level officials in both Kamwenge and Kabarole.

Case Study 5: Mahyoro HCIII and health sector staffing in Kamwenge

Before a new Clinical Officer was appointed to Mahyoro HCIII in May 2010, the centre was performing poorly. During community meetings and sub-county dialogues facilitated by the local CPF, community leaders raised problems such as negative attitudes of staff towards patients, long waiting times, staff absenteeism leading to the centre being closed in the middle of the day, under-staffing, poor availability of medication, lack of outreach services and poor uptake of existing services such as HIV testing and family planning (CPF-MY-1, HealthW-MY-1, HUMC-MY-1). The PPEM research into value for money in the health sector between 2007 and 2008 enabled these issues to be more systematically documented - both in relation to Mahyoro HCIII and other health centres across the district - and then communicated through a district dialogue in Kamwenge town in 2009. As the director of a partner NGO explained: 'It is not bringing anything completely new, it is bringing new details. For example PRMT highlighted the

issue of expired drugs in health centres and PPEM was able to talk about the reasons, the details, what drugs are they? It gives you the evidence. PRMT would focus on the local health centre whereas PPEM covers all the health centres in the region' (CSO-Nat-5). Two of the most critical issues to be raised during the dialogue were shortages of staff and medicine (TCSO-staff-1). A district-level civil servant explained that the local government had struggled to either identify Ugandan staff with sufficient qualifications for senior posts[25] or, where the qualifications exist, finding staff who are prepared to work in the remote rural areas that characterise much of Kamwenge District (District-CS-KM-2). In response to pressure from the District Health Team, lobbying by local councillors and civil servants, and with the added evidence and momentum created by the PPEM research and district dialogue, in January 2010 the District Services Commission gained authorisation from the Ministry of Health for money that had been budgeted for senior salaries to be spent on employing a higher number of more junior staff to fill the gaps at health centres across the district (District-CS-KM-1, District-CS-KM-2).

Between January and May 2010, the number of health centre staff in Mahyoro increased from 5 to 14 (for the HCII and HCIII combined), the existing 'in-charge' who had been in post for over ten years was transferred, and a new Clinical Officer appointed (CPF-MY-1, HealthW-MY-1, HUMC-MY-1). In the words of a district health official the new 'in charge' has 'transformed' Mahyoro HCIII. They described greater 'respect towards patients', and that the 'waiting time of patients has decreased, there are more outreaches', and that midwives are better 'equipped with skills for maternal child health.' As well as the 107% increase in

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[25] the Ministry had a policy in place that ring-fenced health appointments for Ugandan nationals.

new clients referred to above, by August 2010, approximately 300 mothers were being examined per month (HealthW-MY-1).

Although still only at 79% capacity, after the increase in staffing, Kamwenge district stood above the national average for health staff (LC5-MY-3). Both the LC5 Chair and an official from the District Health Team expressed a sense in which, although the staffing shortage was already well known among district political leaders and civil servants the PPEM research combined with lobbying from local councillors, sub-county chiefs and religious leaders, added to a sense of urgency in getting the gaps addressed, as the LC5 Chair put it: 'it added on our zeal to solve the problem' (District-CS-KM-1, LC5-MY-3). In addition to an increase in more junior staff, the research provided the LC5 Chair with added evidence to support his negotiations with the Ministry of Health to allow the district to recruit doctors from abroad to fill the gap in senior staffing. In Ntara sub-county, there is now a Kenyan in post at the HCIV and according to the former LC5 Chair, Kamwenge is the only district where central government are allowing people from overseas to take up positions within the civil service (LCV-MY-3).

Other action has been taken by politicians and civil servants at a district level in response to the district dialogues where the results of the PPEM researches have been discussed. An official within Kamwenge district health team explained how she used the research evidence to educate health workers during 'support supervision' visits (District-CS-KM-1). A former LC5 Councillor responded to the Kamwenge District dialogue by putting pressure on a local health worker to improve her attitude towards patients and has now heard reports that their behaviour has improved (LCV-MY-1) . An LC5 Councillor for Kamwenge highlighted how TCSO's education research had identified an unequal distribution

of teachers when 'in most cases local government doesn't have the resources to carry out research' to identify this kind of problem (LCV-MY-3). Finally, in Kabarole district, the LC5 Chair formed a 'district council committee for education' in response to the PPEM research. The committee visited high performing schools in Bushenyi district and used the research to develop 'an enabling law - the District Education and Sports Ordinance - to address problems we are finding with parent/child relations, children working in markets instead of in schools, early marriage, not taking lunch' (LCV-KB-1). The law had not been implemented by the time the LC5 Chair lost his seat in the 2011 elections however, and at least one TCSO staff member felt it was unlikely to survive the leadership transition: 'if we don't follow up and enforce those things can just remain there and when the leadership changes those things can also go.' (LCV-KB-1, TCSO-staff-3).

By taking on the role of researcher and/or dialogue facilitator, CPFs and TCSO staff have effectively positioned themselves as representatives of rural service users and parents which might be interpreted as a double-edged sword in terms of democratic outcome. Goetz and Jenkins (2005: 94) highlight the potential democratic shortfall of professional survey-style approaches to demand-side accountability which have 'the disadvantage of divorcing the enquiry process from any mobilization or participatory process involving the inhabitants of low-income neighbourhoods'. They suggest that 'the absence of a mobilised constituency behind the embarrassing facts revealed... limits their potential to force officials into a strong response.' There is certainly a sense in which CPFs and TCSO staff are experiencing political learning by gathering evidence and presenting and negotiating around that evidence, while the rural residents who they are seeking to 'empower' remain passive sources of data. On the other hand, there were aspects to the PPEM enquiry process which educated participants on their rights within

health and education services and encouraged reflection (Internal, 2008f) which may have contributed, along with other PRMT exercises, to an incrementally increasing sense of citizenship (Corbridge, 2007). The use of a survey also ensured that service users could share their experiences without fear of recriminations from local elites (Goetz and Jenkins, 2006: 89), although in doing so they have circumvented rather than reshaped local power dynamics with little long-term effect beyond the single research exercise.

As one off exercises the PPEM research and associated dialogues were inherently constrained in what they could achieve for the political capabilities of service users and providers in social accountability terms. The District Sports and Education Ordinance may have offered potential for longer-term capabilities-enhancement but this has been stalled by political transition. The findings nonetheless provide support for Robinson's conclusions that firstly, budget and expenditure monitoring interventions can 'improve the utilisation of development resources' for the poor at a local level' and secondly that the presentation of budget monitoring work at local and national level forums 'attended by politicians, government officials and civil society organisations... leads to a wider and more inclusive debate on the use of government funds for development purposes' (2007: 21). Though clearly an elitist space the district education dialogues brought together 'PTAs, school management committees, LC3 Chairpersons, sub county chiefs, MPs, CAOs, heads of department, key CSOs, head teachers and their deputies' to discuss the gaps identified by the research and discuss possible solutions (Internal, 2009c) and there is no other forum in existence that brings together this combination of actors from the sub-county and district level to discuss and respond to social accountability issues in this way. The outcomes suffer however from being ad hoc responses that have not been monitored and followed up on, which again could be

linked to the absence of a mobilised constituency behind the initiative. At the point fieldwork was completed however, discussions had recommenced about further research exercises and dialogues at the district level to follow up on progress made since the initial research was carried out (TCSO-FN-3).

6.2.5 National PPEM Symposium

TCSO staff and national civil society actors all agree that in terms of influencing resource allocation or policy at a national level the 2009 PPEM symposium was a failure. The event was hijacked by political interests with representatives of different political affiliations blaming each other and elders within the small group of state actors present blaming the younger generation for a lack of responsibility (TCSO-FN-14). Although the lead staff member at TCSO claims that one of the MPs represented a parliamentary committee on health, and a representative from the Inspectorate of Government was present, there are no representatives from the state health sector recorded on the list of attendees from the event (TCSO-FN-14). One national civil society actor suggested that another problem was poor strategising in relation to the evidence collected and the audience targeted: 'Having a national symposium about too local experiences made it difficult to make sense of nationally. But if we had 14 regions coming in with the same story it could have helped us to expand to other sectors and see how we can deliberately capture some comparative issues' (CSO-Nat-2).

The research initiatives in Acholi and Rwenzori and the symposium itself have however had some positive outcomes for civil society building and the fostering of alliances across the public/private divide - two key drivers of enhanced social accountability highlighted in the literature (Joshi, 2007; Lardiés and Claasen 2010;

McGee and Gaventa, 2010; Robinson, 2006). The development and use of the tool within both regions has enhanced the research and advocacy skills of civil society actors who have been engaged in a process of political learning. Although it has taken some time for relevant actors to follow up on the momentum created by the symposium, MoFPED and the national NGO Forum have now re-convened discussions on how to further develop the PPEM tools in a way that will enable CSOs across Uganda to generate data that can be accepted as valid evidence by Government. If TCSO hadn't taken the initiative to continue developing and piloting PPEM as a social accountability tool the consortium may never have been revived. And finally, while there were no notable outcomes for better health services from the symposium, the experiences of health service users at a very local level were communicated directly to national level politicians and policy-makers through video testimony during the symposium. The 2009 symposium can be considered an early attempt where strategies and techniques are tested out, in future and as part of a more strategic intervention with a broader national evidence base, this could become a new channel for national influence by local service users and hence has the potential for future shifts to patterns of representation if not networks of power at the local level.

6.3 Rural political economy and strategies for enhanced social accountability: analysis

The discussion so far suggests that TCSO strategies for enhanced participation within inclusive liberal governance structures have not catalysed more demand-side pressure for social accountability, but have contributed to processes of political learning (Williams, 2004) among local elite representatives, such as local councillors and management committees. By creating an alternative space for

local-problem solving among these elite representatives, TCSO is also moving discussions onwards from issues of answerability to questions of enforcement and fostering greater reflection and more inclusive (if not particularly cross-class) debate (Goetz and Jenkins, 2005, Mitlin and Bebbington, 2006). At a district level, the PPEM research and dialogues have facilitated political learning among elites by providing space for evidence-based reflection and debate and have at least provided supporting evidence for action to be taken that may benefit poorer service users (Robinson, 2007). Ultimately however, these strategies have not re-shaped entrenched power relations between elite and poorer citizens or between parents/service users and the state (Hickey, 2010, Mosse, 2010).

This section will now examine some of the key drivers and constraints shaping these outcomes which require further analysis in order to address the question of whether TCSO is contributing to increased social accountability and hence more supportive conditions for social democratic development. These include the nature of local government reforms and populist politics, the presence or absence of incentives and sanctions for good or poor performance, socio-economic and political power relations and hierarchy, and the capacity of Ugandan NGOs to negotiate complex social and political terrain to facilitate 'deeply empowering' processes of popular participation rather than elite representation for increased social accountability (Farrington and Bebbington, 1993).

6.3.1 Access to information and community ownership

Access to information about government policies, budgets, and expenditures and information-based strategies have been widely accepted as key to processes of democratisation and an arena in which NGOs can play an important role

(Corbridge et al., 2007; Goetz and Jenkins, 2005; WDR, 2004). This was a fundamental obstacle for TCSO in their design of the PPEM intervention however. Deciding it would be too difficult to get accurate budget and expenditure information on the primary health and education sectors, the surveys focused on ratios of teachers to students, students to latrines or amounts of particular kinds of drugs and numbers of staff at health centres. There was no monitoring of expenditure against budget as an anti-corruption style investigation might be expected to operate.

Access to information was also a major problem for local councillors and CPFs who were attempting to put the principles of 'poverty resource monitoring' into practice in their areas. It is the district local government who awards contracts for construction works within the sub-counties to private companies. The bills of quantities (BoQ) for these works are held by heads of departments, usually the district engineer, and the private contractor. It is the sub-county local government's responsibility to hold briefing sessions with communities in the areas affected by the work. These are aimed at providing detailed information like a BoQ about the work that is supposed to take place, and creating a sense of public ownership over the resources being invested thereby facilitating motivation and interest among communities or their representatives (civil or political) to monitor the work (SubC-CS-BK-1, LCI-BK-2).

Village and parish councillors complained that the sub-county local government does not inform them about new interventions, while sub-county level civil servants and political leaders insisted that neither the district officials nor the private contractors provide the sub-county local governments with this information. In the case of a bridge construction project, an LC1 Chair in Bukuuku explained that 'the

sub-county contracted people and they came and started doing the work without notifying the residents' and that as a consequence, the community have not participated in maintaining the bridge because they now view it as a government resource not something that belongs to the community (LCI-BK-2). The sub-county also introduced a gravity water flow system in their village but neither local residents nor the LC1 Executive were provided with any information about the materials that should be used: 'we didn't know what type or size of pipes they were supposed to use, they didn't give us a bill of quantity. After the work was done the water didn't reach the village. Now we have been struggling with the sub-county to rectify the problem ever since'. This 'struggling' has consisted of the LC1 Chair individually, and occasionally, raising the issue in person with the Sub-County Chief or LC3 Chair when they come into contact.   A former Sub-County CDO explained that: 'As CDO, I'm supposed to sensitise the community about the work to be done but the district don't give the information, we even don't know the name of the construction company' (SubC-CS-BK-1). A repetitive cycle is thus formed whereby villagers and parish leaders blame the sub-county, the sub-county blames the district, and the district either doesn't respond or blames the centralised nature of resource allocation without any resolution to the problem of accessing specific breakdowns of resource allocation down to project/construction level (SubC-CS-MY-1, SubC-CS-BK-1, LCV-MY-3, LCV-KB-1). None of the actors I engaged demonstrated any sense of responsibility to chase up that kind of information, to maintain pressure on those above them in the system until they provide the information, or to work with the community if necessary to create the necessary pressure to get the information released and organise others to act upon it - including TCSO staff and CPFs. This may be linked to a recognition that formal processes are unlikely to be effective when it is the informal patronage system that actually dictates how contracts are agreed and resources distributed

(Francis and James, 2003). The discussion of outcomes for councillors above also suggests that local leaders are constrained by social and political cultures of hierarchy (Golooba-Mutebi, 2004), and this both drives and is compounded by exclusion from the closed space (Cornwall, 2002) of contractual negotiations between district or sub-county officials and private contractors. Despite the fact that a number of other NGOs across the region are attempting to tackle this problem of access to budgetary and contractual information, TCSO have not strategized for allied civil society or civil/political action in response as might be expected of the lead rights and governance agency in the region.

6.3.2 Interests, incentives and sanctions

At the root of TCSO's strategy is multi-stakeholder education about roles and responsibilities. This assumes that the fundamental cause of poor governance and low-levels of claims-making is a lack of information and training about the Ugandan framework for decentralised service delivery and development. The findings suggest that a complex network of interests, incentives and an absence of sanctions are some of the most critical factors, which resonates with many other recent social accountability studies in Africa and across a range of developing regions (Booth 2011; Brett, 2003; McGee and Gaventa, 2010; Rowlands, 2008). A former LC3 councillor in Mahyoro described how parish chiefs are failing to carry out basic duties including: instructing people to do community work and monitoring if it is done or not; monitoring hygiene within the community; investigating cases of school drop outs; or collecting annual license fees for rice huller machines and a local maize mill (LCIII-MY-1). He also suggested that the Sub-County Chief is failing to enforce these duties among the Parish Chief and that he himself was unable to apply pressure on the Chiefs to take action. There are a number of

aspects to this problem. Firstly, civil servants lack the carrot of professional development and adequate remuneration. Health workers, sub-county officials and local CSO leaders all attributed a lack of motivation to these issues (SubC-CS-BK-1, ParishChief-BK-1, HealthW-KM-1, HealthW-MY-1, CSO-Reg-9). One nurse explained for example: 'I qualified as a registered nurse in 2007, but I've never been promoted to my cadre to reach my salary scale. So actually I need some strength on that' (HealthW-KM-1). Secondly, civil servants rarely suffer top-down sanctions but rather are protected by the patronage-based political system which transfers workers suspected of poor performance or wrong doing rather than seeking resolution through dialogue or prosecution (Teacher-BK-1, TCSO-staff-4, Internal, 2008c, TCSO-FN-32, CSO-Reg-16). This is illustrated by the school case study above where the former LC5 Chair transferred all the staff, dissolved the governance bodies, and brought in new people. The local CPF felt that this strategy created a distance between the school and the community and suggested that a conflict resolution process might have enabled wrong-doing to be established and people to be held visibly accountable while also maintaining links between the school and the community through those members who were not involved in the dispute (CPF-BK-3). Thirdly, horizontal accountability mechanisms are weak because, from the perspective of local councillors (and in the words of one LC3 councillor): 'you have to be polite and humble to get votes' (LCI-BK-1, LCIII-MY-1, LCIII-MY-2); and from the perspective of one health management committee member: 'we don't have the authority to punish the staff' (HUMC-MY-1). Finally, local village residents are unlikely to hold chiefs or councillors accountable for the performance of duties that result in financial costs to their household such as the collection of fees or enforcement of their child's attendance at school (LCV-MY-2, LCIII-MY-2).

A number of analysts have suggested that a decisive factor in the effectiveness of social accountability initiatives is the degree to which service providers are embedded within the communities in which they serve (Hossain, 2009; Unsworth, 2010). Frequent rotations of government staff mean that civil servants are often not embedded within their communities of operation and hence not subject to demand-side accountability pressures through social ties to fellow clan or church members as in certain other developing contexts (Hossain, 2010; Tsai, 2007). Neither does their job security rest upon the quality of service delivery because of the lack of alternative services and the lack of local autonomy over resources and policy-making (Brett, 2003, Goetz and Jenkins, 2005, Francis and James, 2003). Finally, training for health workers and teachers in how to engage the public – another important driver of effective participatory governance and social accountability (Anand, 2011, Brett, 2003, Francis and James, 2003) - was non-existent, and although the district education offices are supposed to provide this for SMCs, in practice provision was sporadic because of a purported lack of resources (SubC-CS-BK-1, District-CS-KB-1, HealthW-MY-1).

The social accountability literature suggests that analysis of beliefs and attitudes by development actors, and the facilitation of analysis among local communities about their own interests in public service provision and the potential benefit of participation in service accountability mechanisms are key success factors for initiatives (Brett, 2003, Rowlands, 2008, Thompson, 2007). In a wider sense, Mosse has suggested that development actors have an important role to play in 'translating' policy models and program designs 'into the different logic of the intentions, goals, and ambitions of the many people and institutions they bring together' (2005: 232). The findings suggest that TCSO's analysis of the socio-political terrain has not enabled them to negotiate the heterogeneity of 'intentions,

goals and ambitions' at work. Instead, their strategy continues to be one of *informing* stakeholders in the development cycle from village up to district level about their roles in the existing development process according to government policy, with the expectation that this will result in behaviour change and increased effectiveness.

6.3.3   Populist policy-making

The challenges of populist policy initiatives (Booth, 2011) and politicised health and education policy, including the abolition of user fees and linked to the prerogative of regime survival (Higgens and Rwanyange, 2005; Ssewankambo et at, 2008, Tripp, 2010), were directly shaping what TCSO was able to achieve for social accountability in the sample sub-counties. A health worker in Mahyoro explained how the promise of an HCII for every parish is resulting in even greater staff shortages as the same human resource base is expected to cover a wider number of facilities (HealthW-MY-1). Political campaigning about UPE was undermining TCSO's awareness raising efforts about the continued need for community contributions and quality monitoring. A Bukuuku parish councillor explained in relation to the local CPF: 'He has tried to sensitise people through meetings but parents have turned a deaf ear. They understand that government has given them free education and there is no need to pay anything' (LCII-BK-1). Other respondents also described how parents see UPE as a gift from government not an initiative funded out of the public purse that they should hold their school or local government accountable for (LCII-BK-1, TCSO-staff-4, TCSO-FN-11, CPF-MY-1).

While some studies link financial contribution (through user fees or direct taxation) to political agency for demand-side accountability (DFID, 2011, Di John, 2007, Paler, 2011, Ssewankambo et al., 2008), the findings suggest that this is also linked to governance arrangements that give people a meaningful role to play. At the state-run schools encountered during the research, parents are passive recipients of information during meetings and PTA committees defunct or ineffective (Sch-Summary, Teacher-BK-1). Yet the PTA committees in the case study school above and the community-founded school discussed in Chapter 5 have been extremely active when they have had an influential role to play. When the case study school above was privately funded, and in the years immediately following the handover to government, parents were highly engaged in planning for the schools development, even contributing physical labour (PTA-BK-1). The school in Chapter 5 still has the same PTA committee that has seen the school through all the recent changes and their own handover to government. They have maintained a central role in the life of the school because they were ultimately the school founders and still recognise the need for community mobilisation (SMC-BK-3).

6.3.4 Social hierarchy and the politics of representation

The discussion of outcomes has raised questions about the relative merits of direct popular representation as opposed to representation by elites, and the conflict between social hierarchy and demand-side accountability. Social accountability analysts identify the need for interventions to be sensitive to language and culture, to develop strategies for overcoming social inequalities and hierarchies, and to pay attention to how socio-cultural factors like class, gender and ethnicity will affect participation, voice, and state responsiveness (Cornwall et

al., 2011, McNeil and Malena, 2010, Ringold et al., 2012, Rowlands, 2009). The findings suggest that TCSO has not strategized for these issues but raise questions about whether elite representation within a restricted political space is nonetheless an effective route to greater accountability.

As Chapter 5 also attests, TCSO's strategy for enhanced social accountability through civic education does not engage with questions of hierarchy and power and therefore, as other studies of civic education have found, might increase participants' knowledge but is unlikely to significantly alter behaviour (Bratton et al., 1999, Finkel and Ernst, 2005). Like the LC2 councillor in the case of the collapsed latrine above, most rural parents and service users will not engage in monitoring or even asking questions of teachers or health workers because they are seen as their social superiors, better educated and with higher incomes (TCSO-staff-3, TCSO-FN-34, LCI-MY-5). A health worker in Mahyoro explained how his predecessor was a 'small king' within the community whom local residents lacked the confidence to challenge, and who was in any case protected from being held to account for his poor performance by his friendships with the local political leaders in the sub-county (HealthW-MY-1). Poorer members of a community may also be more concerned about the economic costs of participation (Hickey and Mohan, 2004, White, 1996) in social accountability processes than accountable service provision – as a PTA member of the above case study school asked: 'What if the parents I have to mobilise live far from me? Am I expected to give up my time to travel to see them?' (SchObs-BK-1). At the other end of the social spectrum, richer parents have the exit option of sending their children to private schools or buying drugs from private clinics which reduces demand-side accountability pressures (Brett, 2003; Di John, 2007). In relation to health, they

may also be less prone to illness – as a member of a VHT suggested: 'Those are the rich... they rarely get sick.' (VHT-MY-1).

By focusing on management committees and councillors, TCSO has clearly targeted local educated elites rather than poorer members of their communities of operation – a common feature of non-governmental civic education initiatives in Africa (Bratton et al., 1999). The Chair of a women's group in Mahyoro explained for example, why their members might be on VHTs but were not members of management committees: 'they have different...some have their money, have their things, others are educated, me I'm not educated so there is a very big difference.' (LCI-MY-5). Chapter 5 also discusses the links between socio-economic development and selection for social and political leadership positions.

Yet, against the context of Ugandan social hierarchy and the absence of effective incentive and enforcement mechanisms within local government, this strategy is understandable and has produced some positive outcomes for answerability. By bringing local level actors like management committee members, head teachers, and parents (in the guise of LC1 councillors) into contact with sub-county leaders and officials through the dialogue process, TCSO are facilitating local deliberation and problem solving in ways that have led to the development of locally-relevant solutions of benefit to a range of households. TCSO's strategy might be more effective in enhancing the political capabilities of lower income households if management committees had stronger links with and mandate from parents and service users through associations like PTAs and VHTs, or other more organic local associations. TCSO could therefore be focusing their efforts on building more effective links and the capacity of these local associations, however, without appropriate incentives and sanction mechanisms within service providing

institutions the literature suggests that gains here too would be limited (Anand, 2011, Brett, 2003, Booth, 2012, Goetz and Gaventa, 2001).

6.3.5 Discord between strategic vision and donor-driven practice

TCSO's attempts to engage with the above political-economic opportunities and constraints have been characterised by a somewhat over-ambitious agenda that has also been thwarted by the constraints of donor aid.

Chapter 4 provided a brief account of the ways in which TCSO's participatory approaches and good governance interventions have been shaped by donor agendas and financial management practices. The effects of these on CPFs ability to facilitate participatory action learning that results in greater citizen agency and state responsiveness can be seen in the programme outcomes discussed both in Chapter 5 and here. Firstly, the original objective of the PALS approach - to empower rural citizens to gain greater control over the decisions which affect their lives, and greater downwards accountability from the state and civil society (Table 4.1, Internal, 2005c) - has been displaced, partly in response to a need to demonstrate measurable outcomes to donors. As a staff member explained: 'now we should be able to see the impact because we are working with committees. We train a committee, they take some action, we see the impact' (TCSO-staff-3).

The move away from open ended facilitation of situational analysis among village communities is also linked to a continual denial of what might constitute a realistic scope for this kind of intervention which donors have been complicit in. It is also linked to problems with the conceptualisation of the role of Community Process Facilitator. When CPFs first began working with communities using the PRMT

toolkit, they were trying to help local residents identify and collect evidence of needs or problems in relation to local services, infrastructure and resources and raise these with the relevant leaders and providers. TCSO staff and CPFs struggled to support communities partly because of the diversity and breadth of the issues that emerged (TCSO-staff-3), a challenge also identified by other studies of PAL approaches (Farrington and Bebbington, 1993). However, this was also because the constant pressure to demonstrate results meant that the role of CPF was not implemented as first imagined. CPFs were intended to be grass roots change agents – volunteer activists from within a local community acting both for and with their fellow community members (TCSO-FN-24). By building the information and facilitation capacities of these resource persons, TCSO imagined that it would therefore be contributing to a long-term sustainable process of change (TCSO-FN-24). In practice, CPFs operate at a sub-county level, not as locally embedded actors within the village or parish community where they live. There is no 'train-the-trainer' strategy, so their knowledge and skills are not spreading around the community to catalyse political agency or mobilisation around service provider accountability. This perpetuates dependency on their information, skills, and links to institutional channels within and beyond the sub-county for the expression of community views and interests. With the most recent intervention, rather than reducing the number of communities CPFs work within and investing more in depth professional development, the geographical scope of the intervention has been increased from 9 to 23 sub-counties, requiring the training up of 14 new CPFs in the space of 36 months by only 2 members of staff (Internal, 2008b). These developments suggest that both TCSO and successive donors have underestimated the complexity of the processes they have been engaging in and the level of local-embeddedness and facilitative expertise

required to make them effective (TCSO-KI-2, TCSO-KI-3, Farrington and Bebbington, 1993, Kaplan, 2000).

This underestimation is by no means exclusive to TCSO and its donors. It is a common trend within the implementation of civic education initiatives globally which are highly dependent on experienced facilitation of active, participatory methodologies if they are to be effective, and are often implemented by actors lacking the opportunity or support to gain these skills (Bratton, 1999, Finkel and Ernst, 2005).

6.4 Social accountability through participatory governance, research and dialogue: summary

A number of initial conclusions can be drawn in relation to the debates that opened the chapter. Firstly, neither TCSO's civic education nor research-based advocacy strategies have encompassed approaches which might begin to reshape the 'networks of power' or 'patterns of political representation' (Williams, 2004) which undermine processes for social accountability at local or district level in the region. If anything, these have been reinforced by investing the majority of programme resources into working with local elites. As analyses from across the liberal/social democratic divide suggest however, elites play an important role in expanding space for alliances and participation by formerly excluded groups (North et al., 2009, Sandbrook et al., 2007). In a political-economic context where citizen agency and citizen-led action are hard to find or catalyse, and contradictory to accepted social mores and behaviours, elite-led change is at least a start on the road to building 'a sense of being a citizen' as Corbridge observes in relation to village education committees in Bihar (2007: 197).

Further to this, 'elite' is a shifting and relational category. Some of the community leaders that TCSO has trained and convened within sub-county and district dialogues occupy a middle ground in terms of social status between less educated village residents and educated civil servants – the Chair of one of the case study schools in Chapter 6 was a local clan leader for example, other members I engaged with were educated enough to read and write but had not studied beyond primary school. Some of these actors also have a dual positioning as both community members/users and governance actors/providers which can only serve to enhance the depth of the political learning generated. In this way, although TCSO is perhaps achieving little for the political capabilities of the poorest, they are contributing to incremental empowerment and shifting citizen/state relations among different social strata within the spectrum of socio-economic status that makes up rural society in Uganda.

The increased effectiveness of management committees and emergent attempts at elite but local cross-sector problem solving strategies that focus on political learning and convening deliberation between local leaders of different kinds has the effect of enhancing rather than eroding 'existing democratic institutions and processes' (Goetz and Jenkins, 2005) by contributing to political learning and to some extent, creating new patterns of representation (Williams, 2004). While perhaps guilty to some degree of de-politicising citizen/state interactions, the dialogue approach appears to be a positive coalitional pathway to bringing state, political and civic actors together to bring changes to services that will benefit poor service users – particularly when reinforced by robust mixed methods research evidence. This resonates with the findings of SDI affiliates that collaboration is

preferable to confrontation when focused on wider and longer term processes for change (Patel and Mitlin, 2009).

Also, by virtue of their own semi-elite status at a local and rural level, CPFs have been able to form strong working relationships with sub-county leaders which have created fertile ground for the sub-county dialogue process. Staff of TCSO have been able to cultivate effective relationships with district and national level civil servants and politicians because of their own often highly elite status and by exploiting their 'mutual needs' (Patel and Mitlin, 2009). TCSO has supplied useful evidence and information, a communicative channel, and/or opportunities to learn about development programmes and resources, while politicians or civil servants have given their time and in some cases their commitment to civil/state/political cooperative endeavours).

The danger, as these social accountability initiatives seem to suggest, is that working with elites becomes the only strategy to the detriment of other potential popular sites of agency like local associations. This play off between fostering direct popular representation and focusing on shifting attitudes and practices among local leaders is a consistent theme throughout the research findings and is illuminated further within the final set of findings in Chapter 7.

7 Political capabilities for agenda-setting? The creation of alternative deliberative spaces

7.1 Introduction

This chapter explores how TCSO has attempted to scale up its influence over state and civil society development planning and government accountability processes to regional and national levels in ways which are contributing to a more locally-responsive, if not quite social democratic, development process. It addresses two related debates in the development literature concerning whether NGO or civil society proliferation can be equated with democratisation (Fowler, 1993, Mercer, 2002) and the degree to which elite and urban-based civil society actors in post-colonial contexts are able to effectively represent the interests of the poor by shaping the ideas and actions of political society and state actors (Chatterjee, 2004, Corbridge, 2007, Houtzager, 2003, Lavalle et al., 2005, Mitlin and Bebbington, 2006).

Partly in response to the opportunities and constraints TCSO have experienced at the local level, but also driven forward by the regional vision of the organisation's leadership, and positive, partnership oriented donor relations, TCSO has successfully positioned itself as the lead 'development broker' in the Rwenzori region (Lewis and Mosse, 2006).[26] This has enabled the organisation to pursue three key strategies with some positive outcomes for democratic development in the Rwenzori region. Firstly, through a combination of capacity building and the convening of spaces for civil society actors to analyse the local development context and identify development priorities, TCSO have helped to cultivate one of

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[26] Lewis and Mosse characterise 'development brokers' as 'social actors who specialize in the acquisition, control and redistribution of development "revenue" (2006: 12).

the most active civil society zones in Uganda (International-2). Secondly, by convening cross-sector leadership retreats and fora, TCSO have created unique deliberative spaces capable of softening deeply divisive historical ethnic tensions, building new, or stronger, relationships between civil, political and state actors, and fostering political will and cooperation for locally-driven development planning. Thirdly, by facilitating the production of high quality locally-generated research evidence and convening cross-sector, and to some degree, cross-class spaces for research analysis and evidence-based planning, TCSO are beginning to involve a broader range of actors in generating 'new ways of thinking about development' that have the potential for 'shifting the state' (Mitlin and Bebbington, 2006: 10).

These three strategies and their related outcomes provide the structure for the chapter. The next section focuses on TCSO's civil society building role. While holding some sympathy with Mercer's (2002) critique of equating NGO proliferation with democratisation, the evidence suggests that TCSO have played a major role in building up one of the most active civil society sectors in Uganda and that within these developments there are incremental changes at work which are important for democratic development. Framed once again through the lens of political capabilities (Williams, 2004) and invited/created space (Cornwall, 2002), this section reveals how civil society actors in both rural and urban spheres have benefited from processes of political learning, leading to the emergence of new leaders, relationships and capacities. These developments have in turn begun to shape patterns of representation, at least within civil society, and, through the emergence of a shared 'Regional Development Framework' (RDF) for civil society actors, have also begun to shift networks of power between local civil society actors and international donors. The deliberative spaces that TCSO have created in pursuit of this regional development framework have enabled the emergence of

new ways of thinking about and understanding how to approach development that are gradually moving regional development coordination towards a more grass-roots orientation.

The second set of findings focuses on TCSO's initiation of another created space in the form of annual cross-sector leadership retreats and the leadership fora that have emerged out of these deliberations. Here, the evidence addresses questions regarding the capacity of civil society actors in fragile and post-colonial contexts to effectively represent poor people and to shape the thinking and actions of political and state actors (Chatterjee, 2004, Corbridge, 2007, Houtzager, 2003, Lavalle et al., 2005). The findings suggest that, by building a strong reputation and effectively reading the political opportunities, TCSO has been able to bring regional political and state leaders together to focus on development outcomes rather than ethnic competition and to encourage debate based on locally-relevant and locally generated evidence. This resonates with Craig and Porter's (2006) case for a 're-territorialisation' of development policy. The findings also support arguments for civil society actors to focus on a balance of critique and collaboration with the state and the importance of building 'continuous interfaces' and alliances with state and political society actors (Chhotray, 2008: 277; Lavalle, Acharya et al. 2005).

The final set of findings focuses on TCSO's role as a research institute and specifically their facilitation of the emergence of a Regional Think Tank in partnership with a local university. Although still subject to Chatterjee's (2004) critique of civil society as an elitist sphere, the Think Tank represents an attempt to build stronger links between grass roots experience and knowledge and district and regional leaderships. Regional stakeholder forums for analysis of locally generated research evidence have created space for multiple perspectives and at

least begun to bring very locally-based leaders into debates about how to use development resources. The evidence supports arguments in support of civil society engaging in research as a means of generating alternative ways of thinking about development and framing development debates both by adding legitimacy to civil society agendas and bringing more robust evidence into wider development debates (Bázan et al., 2008), and the importance of deliberative spaces for dialogue and reflection which include previously excluded groups for changing the terms of development debates and influencing policy and programme design (Mitlin and Bebbington, 2006).

The chapter concludes with an analysis of the drivers and constraints that have shaped these outcomes and a drawing together of what the chapter signifies for TCSO's capacity to shape development in a more social democratic direction. Overall, the findings suggest that although TCSO have achieved much through civil society capacity-building, the cultivation of cross-sector deliberative spaces and generating multi-scaled strategies for change (Mosse, 2007, Ringold et al., 2012), they have so far struggled to foster alliance building between poorer rural farmers and state or political elites, or to build strong and robust processes for bringing issues of power and disadvantage into development discussions (Gaventa and McGee, 2010, Joshi, 2008, Unsworth, 2010).

7.2 Intervention outcomes

7.2.1 Civil society building and the Regional Development Framework

It would be impossible to capture the full 'spider web' (CSO-Reg-5) of outcomes that have resulted from over a decade of TCSO civil society building although a

number of key outcomes can be evidenced through a political capabilities analysis (Williams, 2004). In terms of political learning, civil society actors at both grass roots and urban elite levels have acquired a wide range of skills. Interview data suggests these include skills for community mobilisation, organisational development, engaging in advocacy, and reflection and analysis about what development is and how to make it work, as well as how to foster more substantive processes for accountability and representation (CSO-Reg-15, CSO-Reg-7, CSO-Reg-2, CSO-Nat-2, CSO-district-2). By creating space for civil society actors to come together and deliberate, TCSO has enabled local actors to identify their own priorities and take action in response. In 2002, they brought model farmers together from across the region who decided to form their own agricultural training organisation, and regional civil society actors together who decided to tackle priorities of corruption, peace and justice, and farmer access to information by forming three regional networks or coalitions for tackling these issues (CSO-Reg-4, CSO-Reg-9, CSO-Reg-7). TCSO provided each of these organisations with office space, start-up funding and capacity building support enabling them to become independent organisations able to raise their own sources of funding (CSO-Reg-4, CSO-Reg-8, Internal, 2005b). TCSO have also invested in capacity building of district NGO networks across the Rwenzori region both in terms of organisational development and advocacy skills such as training in PRMT. Of the two networks engaged during the research, one now has 90 CSO members and the other 100 (CSO-district-2, CSO-district-4). As detailed in Chapter 3, TCSO have worked with over 500 farmer CBOs since 2007 alone (Internal communication, 270711). Some structures that TCSO have initiated have fallen by the wayside, been subject to internal corruption, or have simply lost their relevance amidst a changing context (TCSO-SM-6) but as Roque and Shankland highlight with particular reference to fragile and post-conflict contexts, NGOs like TCSO

play a crucially important role in creating the space and opportunity for 'mutation' and 'experimentation' within civil society which, while not always successful, does enable structures and leaders to emerge that can begin to shift relations between civil society and state actors (2007: 222-3) as detailed below.

Mercer (2002) warns against conflating proliferation with democratisation, however, some of these organisations have gone on to contribute to democracy deepening in the region. Chapter 5 examined the links between economic development with farmer groups and social and political empowerment. Farmers within the regional agricultural training organisation have acquired skills and knowledge which have enabled them to act as a bridge between elite urban NGOs and farmers on the ground, training and mobilising farmers for collective cooperation and linking them up to further training and grants from these larger organisations (CSO-Reg-2). By 2010, this organisation had a membership of 50 training groups across the (then) five districts of the Rwenzori sub-region and had a turnover of almost 275 million shillings (annual report). The anti-corruption organisation now operates in 30 sub-counties across the now seven districts of the Rwenzori region and has approximately 450 active monitors on the ground, had 118 million shillings of working capital in 2010, and between 2005 and 2010 was able to recover goods or money to an estimated value of 3.5 billion shillings through the anti-corruption efforts of its membership and staff (CSO-Reg-7, CSO-Reg-13, annual report). One of the organisation's leaders described how TCSO training and mentoring support had been key to the effective management of the organisation at certain key points in its development (CSO-Reg-8). Civil society actors at district and national level refer to TCSO's 'grooming' of civil society leaders and this is a key point of pride and achievement for TCSO's founding director (CSO-Nat-2, CSO-district-2, TCSO-KI-1).

TCSO capacity building has also catalysed shifts in the 'networks of power' between civil society and state actors in both rural and urban spheres. Farmer associations trained and supported by TCSO and CBOMY have grown confident in challenging the behaviour of NAADS officials in Mahyoro. A former staff member of CBOMY described how 'farmers are able to speak out about their needs and concerns and this has been part of a long, long process. Training has led to confidence building. Farmers in the village used to just accept anything but now they will speak out' (CSO-Reg-2). This has included farmers refusing to display NAADS signposts in front of plantations they have developed without assistance and CBOMY refusing to sell coffee seedlings to NAADS officials who were planning to offload them onto farmers in the dry season because it was the end of the financial year and they needed to 'complete their accountabilities to government' (CSO-Reg-2).

There have been two large demonstrations within Fort Portal Municipality in the last ten years that have both been attributed to TCSO advocacy training (TCSO-KI-2, TCSO-staff-3, Internal, 2007a). In one case, approximately 300 activists congregated outside the Resident District Commissioner's (RDC) office demanding that the district government take action to reduce the high crime levels along the Fort Portal to Kampala road. The following day a police patrol car had been assigned to monitor the road. In another, civil society leaders mobilised residents to demonstrate against poor quality work that was being carried out by a Chinese company on the Fort Portal to Kasese road (TCSO-KI-2, Internal, 2007a). In a move illustrative of TCSO's attempt to balance critique and collaboration, senior TCSO staff adopted Fowler's (2000) 'fourth position' of mediator between state and civil society. They went to the district offices and lobbied councillors to

participate believing that it would be more productive for civil society and the local political leadership to work together to get the work done properly, which is indeed the outcome that was achieved (TCSO-KI-2, TCSO-staff-3). Additionally, TCSO publicised the issues through their civil society radio talk show which encouraged leaders to explain to the public what action they were going to take to hold the Chinese company to account (TCSO-staff-3).

The civil society talk show is another created space through which TCSO have re-shaped power relations between civil society and the state, by bringing together cross sector panel members for discussion and response to phone-ins from the public (Internal, 2003a, Internal, 2005b). There is a widespread feeling among cross-sector development actors that they have provided a vital channel for politicians and local government to be held to account for development governance in Rwenzori but in the process also built the capacity and confidence of civil actors to speak out (LCV-KB-1, CivSerDistrict, CPF-OTHER-4, CSO-district-2, CSO-Reg-11). One often cited outcome of the shows is the exposure of a former LC5 Chair's alleged corruption over land contracts resulting (in part at least) in his decision to stand down before the 2006 elections (LCV-KB-1). An LC5 Councillor in Kabarole district also highlighted how the civil society radio programmes fulfil a criteria of 'mutual need' (Patel and Mitlin, 2009) by providing leaders with a channel through which they can communicate with constituents amidst a context of very limited local government funds for public communications and debate (LCV-KB-1).

As well as shifting power relations between citizens/civil society and the state, with the Regional Development Framework (RDF), TCSO have begun to reshape the balance of power between local farmers and urban elites and between Ugandan

civil society and international donors. They have done so through creating 'spaces for dialogue' that other civil society studies have shown can 'create new ways of thinking about development which influence public debate as well as programme and policy design' (Bebbington et al., 2008, Mitlin and Bebbington 2006: 10). On one hand, participants in the open space processes that enabled the code of practice and then the framework to be drafted, have been predominantly urban-based civil society elites which, from the perspective of Mamdani's (1996) citizen/subject dichotomy and Chatterjee's (2004) civil/political society critique calls into question their ability to effectively represent the interests of the rural poor. On the other however, a small number of CPFs, and representatives from farmer organisations (mainly advanced farmers running their own agricultural CBOs) also participated actively and, though they may be elites within their own local spheres, they are nonetheless community leaders from the grass roots and comparatively non-elite within the deliberative space they were participating within (TCSO-KI-2). This suggests a small but significant shift in patterns of representation within donor-funded civil society development planning processes, bringing greater influence for more locally rooted actors over the approaches and interventions that gain financial support.

The code of practice also attempts to overcome some of the power constraints that have hampered development in the past through an overarching focus on listening to what people want, and a professed commitment to participatory action learning. The extent to which CSOs actually comply with this code or have the capacity to do so in terms of the skills and experience to facilitate these kinds of processes does remain to be seen however. In the draft RDF, the code of practice has become a voluntary adjunct to a wider programme of interventions, it is inspirational rather than prescriptive and there is no clear emphasis on how

capacity will be built for the civil society participants in the framework to approach their development interventions from a more participatory and accountable positioning (Internal, 2011d).

The RDF does signify a potential break with the traditional top-down donor model by engaging international donors in funding development interventions that have been designed by local development actors according to best practice development principles that have emerged from analysis of what is actually happening within the local contexts they are working within. And as Guijt (2008) highlights, international flows of aid to local organisations based on substantive rather than tokenistic partnership and long term programmatic funding plays a key role in building towards effective development alternatives.

There are concerns however that TCSO's role as broker of the RDF and a key actor within the steering group that makes funding decisions might exacerbate ethnic tensions with certain Kasese based CSOs who feel that donor agencies have favoured Kabarole based NGOs staffed mainly by Batooro elites (Businge, 2010, TCSO-SM-3). This has created resentment towards TCSO in particular, as a key channel of international donor funds since the early 2000s, and tensions already heightened by ever increasing numbers of CSOs and corresponding competition for resources (TCSO-FN-15, TCSO-SM-3). Staff and advisors of TCSO have been concerned by the survivalist rather than developmental motivations behind many of the participants in the workshops that contributed to the RDF (TCSO-FN-3, International-1). One international actor involved in regional development processes felt that this will be a major problem for the effective future management of resources attached to the framework: 'it will create a lot of jealousy, competition, and conflict... the idea is that there is a committee who

would manage the funds, but externally it will still be seen as TCSO who are the decision-makers... Instead of being a motor for regional development, I can see TCSO finding themselves at the centre of a series of conflicts.' (International-2). These concerns were echoed by another opinion leader (informal communication). These tensions call into question the logic of neo-liberal discourse about civil society as a neutral democratising force and supports analyses like Chabal and Daloz's (1999) and Fatton's (1992, 1995) which highlight the tendency of African civil societies to promote 'sectional claims' (Fatton 1995: 71).

7.2.2 Leadership retreats and fora

Outcomes from the annual leadership retreats and related leadership fora are supportive of arguments in the literature that NGOs in post-conflict and post-colonial contexts can act as channels for the interests of the rural poor and shape the ideas and behaviour of state actors and political society (Chhotray, 2008; Corbridge, 2007); the importance of civil society actors pursuing 'a dual strategy of simultaneous critique of and engagement with the state' (Chhotray, 2008); and the need for 'continuous interfaces' and alliances between civil, state, and political actors (Chhotray, 2008: 277, Houtzager, 2003, 2005). Firstly, the three day retreats constitute a new space where civil society actors can gain confidence and skills in engaging with civil servants and politicians from sub-county up to national level, both formally during scheduled debates and informally during breaks, meals and evening socials, and build greater receptivity to civil society ideas and approaches (TCSO-FN-1, CSO-Reg-5, CSO-Reg-11) Achieving the convening power necessary to turn out such a broad range of actors as a Ugandan NGO acting within restricted political space for civil society manoeuvring is no small feat (Barkan, 2011, Hickey, 2005). As one national NGO actor emphasised: 'how

many of us are able to get Ministers and MPs together without allowances to sit

down and discuss together?' (CSO-Nat-2).

Engaging these actors in collaborative debate and informal spaces has enabled

new cross-sector relationships and alliances to develop across the region, as a

staff member of CBOMY explained:

'Something you can easily see is cooperation between civil society and
government in the region... We began to make real partnerships. For example, at
CBOMY, we would never report to the sub-county, only to our donors, but after
that we saw that they were partners. Before [the leadership retreats] we were
never invited at budget conferences. Now we are invited at sub-county and even
at the district. The agricultural sector in Kamwenge now participate so much and
this opened up after the [retreats]' (CSO-Reg-2).

The same person also contrasted the relationship building fostered at the

leadership retreats with more confrontational approaches they have attempted to

use in the past within their local political context, suggesting that cooperation is a

more effective strategy for engaging the state: 'we tried an advocacy campaign in

our sub-county around 2004/2005 but we were misunderstood and our

approaches were not very good. Our local government were not used to being

questioned.'

Secondly, the retreats and leadership fora have been important steps in at least

beginning to overcome political divisions and ethnic tensions and work towards a

cooperative vision for the region. Simply getting district leaders, MPs and cultural

representatives from both the Ruwenzururu and Toro regions sitting down in a

room together is a sign of significant progress within the context of the Rwenzori

region as one participant explained:

'The most important achievement was the idea that regardless of tribe or district
there was a use in coming together and sharing. In the MPs forum, about two

thirds of them were people who wouldn't normally be in the same room... a combination of FDC and NRM, and a degree of personality clashes in some cases. The notion that you could come together and advocate as a region, share frustrations and hopes – for some this was quite a new concept.' (TCSO-KI-2)

In the initial stages of development the RDLG and the MPs Forum were dogged by concerns over what resources they could access to support joint planning and, in some cases, financial self-interest among leaders who wanted 'allowances' in exchange for their attendance. Both fora then collapsed when the founding director entered competitive politics (TCSO-KI-2). Before its dissipation however, the MPs Forum was able to mobilise for a regional caucus of MPs in parliament which lobbied for financial support for a new regional university (which was to become the lead actor in the regional think tank) and was successful in gaining 500 million shillings[27] a year for three years for the new institution in support of the education and human resource development priorities highlighted by the leadership retreat in 2008 (TCSO-KI-2, LCV-KB-1). Several retreat participants highlighted on-going ethnic tensions underpinning the 2010/11 election period as evidence of the limited ability of these annual events to combat historical divisions within the region (CSO-Reg-11, TCSO-SM-3, LCV-KM-1). Now that the dust has settled on the election period however, TCSO have been able to revive the RDLG and the MPs Forum with a new set of leaders and the added advantage of the founding Director's participation as an MP, who has also been a key driving force for the initiatives. And, as a local religious leader suggested: 'a seed has been planted, things are beginning to change' (CSO-Reg-11).

The leadership retreats are an example of TCSO's aptitude for reading the political opportunities - a skill widely recognised as key to NGO effectiveness in shaping more democratic development processes (Fowler, 1997, Michael, 2004, Pollard et

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[27] Approximately GBP £137 thousand.

al., 2008, Törnquist, 2002). TCSO were quick to identify the shift to multi-partyism as both a challenge and an opportunity to tackle some of the constraints project staff were encountering on the ground. On the other hand, these original intentions were also reshaped relatively quickly by political realities. Their initial mobilisations for a retreat focused on governance, peaceful elections and accountability garnered poor results in terms of interest and attendance from political leaders and state officials, but when they shifted the focus of the debates to economic development and cooperation over resource allocation and planning, the regional leadership became increasingly engaged in the process (TCSO-SM-2, TCSO-SM-3). Political acumen among TCSO's leaders has generated gains for greater ethnic cooperation for regional development based on evidence and experiences from the grass roots, but has not enabled TCSO to tackle issues affecting accountable and effective service delivery at local levels like poor access to contractual information, or staffing levels and drug distribution within education and health services (TCSO-FN-2, Internal, 2007b, Internal, 2008e, Internal, 2011g). Increasing state accountability to citizens has not appeared prominently on a retreat agenda since the first retreat in 2006 (TCSO-FN-2, Internal, 2007b, Internal, 2008e, Internal, 2011g). Nonetheless, TCSO has played the card of 'mutual need' effectively (Patel and Mitlin, 2009). Local governments and MPs do not have the resources to convene these kind of events but political leaders do have a vested interest in bringing resources and development to their constituency areas. Through the leadership retreats and fora, and initiatives like Think Tank research and regional stakeholder forums, TCSO is providing government with information and relationships with other development actors that can enhance their performance.

So far, the evidence suggests that TCSO have effectively adopted Fowler's (2000) 'fourth position' as mediator between state, political and civil society, and that as Corbridge, 2007 and Chhotray, 2008 suggest, they have been able to reshape relations between these actors. The third set of outcomes addresses questions as to whether in doing so they have been able to overcome Chatterjee (2004) and Mamdani's (1996) concerns that as elite urban 'citizens' they are unable to effectively represent or channel the interests of poor rural 'subjects' within these new deliberative spaces.

The focus of the third leadership retreat on 'development pathways' and constraints brought attention to the lack of evidence-based planning and coordinated resource allocation by both NGOs and government, and catalysed a degree of receptivity on the part of the leadership towards research evidence generated by either civil society or academia (Internal, 2008e, TCSO-SM-3). Through deliberations about the need to understand experiences of development at grass roots level, TCSO were able to generate interest and support for a regional Think Tank that could generate this evidence and link in directly with the RDLG but also for the regional framework discussed above. Outcomes from the Think Tank initiative will be examined below, but the intended approaches and methodologies underpinning both Think Tank research and the regional framework are concerned with participatory action research, attempting to understand ordinary rural communities experience of development down to the household level, and bringing that understanding to the attention of district and national civil, political and state leaders (Internal, 2008c, TCSO-SM-2, TCSO-SM-3, TCSO-FN-1).

The lack of direct participation by grass roots community leaders does mean that the interests of the poor are only ever represented and interpreted by elite actors within the retreats and the new leadership structures they have created. The question is whether or not this restricts the democratising potential of these interventions. Many researchers suggest that NGOs can build state capacity for responsiveness by aggregating and channelling civil society claims-making, and by equipping state officials with necessary information and awareness to create more conducive conditions for collaborative planning and implementation processes (Gaventa, 2004, Goetz and Gaventa, 2001). The cultivation of strong relationships with state actors through collaboration is also recognised as a key strategy for scaling up alternative development approaches (Atack, 1999, Uvin and Miller, 1996). The key question here is perhaps how TCSO actors who are attempting to represent the interests of rural farmers and communities within these deliberative spaces manage the two way channel of representation and accountability with the CBOs and farmers groups they work. The answer at the present time is that these channels are simply not in place at all and there is no political learning or empowerment occurring at the grass roots or any incremental moves towards enabling this kind of change to occur.

7.2.3 Think Tank initiative

The establishment of the Rwenzori Think Tank has the potential to reshape the political space for grass-roots led development in the region in two important ways. Firstly, TCSO have created a process through which both leaders and rural farmers can set development priorities, ensuring a degree of political buy-in while also – in theory at least – beginning to bring development interventions closer to addressing the needs of the poor (Internal, 2011f, TCSO-FN-40). Secondly, for the

first time in the Rwenzori region, an NGO is bringing together cross-sector and to some degree cross-class stakeholders to look at evidence generated at a grass roots level and analyse and reflect together on what that means for the decisions they need to make (Internal, 2011h-j). Importantly, this in turn is leading to reflection about the need for more empowering approaches to development interventions (TCSO-FN-40, TCSO-FN-36). These are currently process outcomes rather than substantive redistributive achievements but the development literature suggests they have the potential to take development in a pro-poor direction. Critics focused on the capacity of civil society to generate development alternatives that benefit the poor stress the importance of creating 'spaces for dialogue, enabling greater reflection and also fostering new avenues for grassroots organizations and social movements to influence policy directly' (Bebbington et al., 2008: 25). Bebbington et al. find that the relative success or failure of NGO attempts at alternatives are shaped more strongly by non-material factors than the 'political economy of aid' such as 'the building of relationships with other actors, and, perhaps less obviously, a strong engagement with ideas, research and knowledge' (2008: 23). Mitlin and Bebbington highlight the importance of dialogue, debate and reflection for cultivating 'new ways of thinking about development which influence public debate as well as programme and policy design', and critically, the need to create 'public spheres in which issues linked to poverty become debated, debates in which a broad range of actors can participate'(2006: 10). And there is a clear consensus in the literature that cross-class and cross-sector alliances are more likely to be effective than single actor interventions (Fox, 2005, Joshi, 2008, Manor, 2004, McGee and Gaventa, 2010, Unsworth, 2010).

It is possible to illustrate these outcomes and some of their limitations by examining research and advocacy work focused on the agricultural sector. Agriculture (particularly food production) was identified as a priority sector for Think Tank research by leaders at the annual retreats along with education and health (Internal, 2008e). In 2009, TCSO held a meeting with a small number of key civil society actors to identify relevant participants for a regional stakeholder consultative meeting and 'farmer groups, model farmers, marketing associations, NGOs, district agriculture department, private sector, secretaries for production, and the media from the five districts in the region' were selected (Internal, 2009f). The consultative forum that followed identified three research priorities: investigating 'adaptation and response mechanisms' to climate change at small holder farmer level; analysing value chains for maize and garlic to generate value addition and identify markets for farmers' produce; investigating soil fertility as a potential cause of on-going reductions in banana production[28] (*ibid.*). Once the research had been conducted, the regional stakeholders were reconvened for collective, participatory reflection and analysis of the draft research findings and action plans were developed for three sets of actors 'local government', 'CSOs', and 'farmers' themselves. Key individuals from within these sectors committed their names as lead people for each of the actions agreed (Internal, 2011i, Internal, 2011j). In this way, state, political and civil society leaders including locally-based farmers were all involved in priority setting which generates interest in and motivation for analysis and follow up.

As in Uganda more widely (Hickey, 2005), there is a widespread discourse among government and civil society elites in the Rwenzori region that subsistence farmers have failed to commercialise because they are 'lazy' and can't be 'bothered' to lift

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[28] bananas or *Matooke* are a staple food in Uganda and this was therefore a serious concern.

themselves out of poverty (LCI-MY-1, TCSO-FN-7, TCSO-SM-2, TCSO-staff-1).

The Think Tank process for the agricultural sector has generated an interesting

ideological shift in the way that local actors are now analysing their difficulties in

changing the behaviour of subsistence farmers. The Think Tank action plans for

the agriculture studies have largely proposed rather generic technical solutions to

technical problems which on their own do not suggest that TCSO have been able

to generate 'new ways of thinking about development' (Mitlin and Bebbington,

2006: 10). Accumulatively however, the research studies have generated debates

about socio-cultural constraints and attitudes so that when the time came to

analyse the study on falling banana production, a more nuanced analysis than that

of the 'lazy peasant' began to develop (TCSO-FN-40, TCSO-FN-3). A follow up

group of government, NGO and MMU actors came together to attempt to separate

out 'technical' problems for banana production such as 'pests and diseases', from

'attitude' problems such as low levels of interest in commercial (rather than

subsistence) banana production and the failure of the model farmer approach

used by NAADS and many NGOs which relies on people 'copying' the practices of

their neighbours without the same financial inputs (TCSO-FN-2, TCSO-FN-40,

TCSO-SM-3). This follow up group began identifying more searching questions

that needed to be asked such as: 'How do the farmers see the purpose of banana

production?', 'What are the interests of the farmers?', 'Are individuals setting

goals?', 'How can we build a case with the farmers?' (TCSO-FN-40). At the point

the fieldwork ended, the group were planning another regional stakeholders' event

for actors to come together and identify an approach to increasing food production

that began at the level of understanding the mindset and attitudes of subsistence

farmers in order to facilitate self-reflection and conscientization processes (*ibid.*).

These ideas about socio-cultural constraints that have arisen at regional

stakeholder events have also been central to deliberations about the code of

practice underpinning the regional framework and came out strongly during the most recent leadership retreat with an (admittedly rather vague) resolution for 'identifying and implementing social/cultural mobilisation initiative(s)' (Internal, 2011g). In this way, new ideas and ways of thinking are emerging out of the processes TCSO is facilitating at regional level among civil society and state actors that reflect an emerging engagement with structural as well as technical development constraints.

The fact that TCSO have been able to draw together such a broad range of actors to deliberate on the research findings suggests that through their partnership with an academic institution and by engaging these participants in setting priorities, TCSO have built legitimacy for their research findings which is key to effective influence (Bázan et al., 2008, Pollard and Court, 2008). As important as the legitimacy of the process and the quality of the findings however, is the ability to develop and implement a strong advocacy strategy (Bázan et al., 2008, Pollard and Court, 2008). Current developments suggest that the actors leading on the Think Tank initiative are at least cognisant of this challenge and attempting to build towards it. The very fact of having an action plan in place with cross-sector leads committed by name to particular actions is no small achievement, but both state and civil society actors have highlighted limited autonomy and resources – either from donors or central government – as constraints on their ability to carry these actions forward. It is important not to view Think Tank research and advocacy in isolation however, but as a facilitative mechanism which links in with and underpins the processes taking place through the regional framework, leadership retreats and related fora analysed above. As demonstrated, these spaces do hold the potential for influence over international donor funds and national government actors so the incremental cultivation of new ideas about, and analyses of, the

drivers and constraints experienced by subsistence and small holder farmers is an important part of this emerging puzzle.

It must be acknowledged however that it is easy for government officials and political leaders to sign up for actions within public fora, but much harder for them to follow up on these promises in practice. At the most recent retreat, leaders – including a Commissioner for the Luwero-Ruwenzori Development Plan – committed to tying these resources in with the RRDF. In practice, there is no clear plan for how this will be achieved and low expectations about the amount of resources that will actually reach the relevant districts (informal communication).

7.3 Analysis of drivers and constraints

The evidence presented above suggests that TCSO have been able to shape the development landscape of the Rwenzori region in a more cooperative, locally responsive direction by bringing together historically hostile political leaderships, and cross-sector, and to a limited extent cross class, actors to generate new civil and political structures for development leadership and new ways of thinking about how to do development that can support and feed into those structures. This section will examine the drivers and constraints that have enabled these developments to emerge from effective and visionary leadership and strategising within TCSO, to the tensions and dynamics within the donor, civil society and political environment that TCSO have been working within.

7.3.1 TCSO vision, values and strategy

There is a widespread recognition among development actors of the strategic, value-driven and visionary leadership provided by TCSO's founders, and particularly the founding director, as a key contributory factor to the organisation's ability to cultivate regional convening power and negotiate enabling donor relations for the organisation and the Rwenzori region more widely (International-1, International-2, CSO-Nat-2, TCSO-KI-2). Several observers identified the founding director's ability to see beyond the needs of TCSO itself to the rest of the region, his commitment to nurturing local talent and providing space for new leaders to consolidate their ideas and projects, and to taking an open and facilitative approach to channelling information about funding and relationships with donors as key to the effective development of a strong civil society sector in the Rwenzori region (TCSO-KI-1, International-1, International-2, CSO-Nat-2, CSO-district-2).

The founding director's strong stance on the financial self-interest driving much of Ugandan civil and political society in the form of 'allowances' and other perks for attendance at meetings and events, and a founding drive to work from the grass roots up has also played a part in his ability to build up a strong national and international profile and to build political will for the leadership retreats (TCSO-FN-15, TCSO-KI-1, CSO-Nat-2). He described how he battled against this within TCSO by keeping wages comparatively low and trying to ensure staff stayed in basic accommodation during fieldwork. One staff member of a national NGO was shocked to discover when he first became familiar with TCSO in 2005 'that senior staff are paid 900,000 UGX per month which was the same as what a program officer would receive' at a national level (CSO-Nat-2). Leaders at the national NGO forum became impressed with reports on what TCSO were achieving for civil

society in the Rwenzori region and saw an 'impressive integration within the society'. In addition a staff member explained how:

'what [founding director] has done, was to be present in many processes without looking disempowered... sometimes organisations that come from up country are limited by the fact that they will say 'oh if you don't offer transport refund I can't come'. That disempowers them because, if I give you transport refund I'm sort of the one who brought you. But I think [TCSO] has been very careful, many times it has come to the policy table... just as an organization that is interested in influencing and I think for me that is a particular thing that has been done by [founding director]' (CSO-Nat-1).

This national profiling and the recognition gained of their strong values among key European donor agencies enabled TCSO to take up the mantle as the lead NGO for the region and to channel millions of shillings into the region for the development of civil society (International-1, International-2, CSO-Reg-11). It also resonates with civil society literature emphasising the importance of strong value-driven leaders for the cultivation of national and international profiles and the interdependency between profiling and the ability to generate flexible and programmatic funding (Fowler, 1995, 1999, Michael, 2004, Smillie and Hailey, 2001). TCSO has however given into pressures from donors and from too many staff leaving for better paid jobs by increasing salaries to a more competitive level (TCSO-KI-3, informal communication).

It would be inaccurate to paint TCSO as immune to the survivalist and competitive culture within Rwenzori civil society. In the wake of cuts to Dutch aid, a member of senior management stressed during their 2010 annual reflection: 'we have to be doing better than our partners otherwise things will become too competitive' (TCSO-FN-25) and observations of staff meetings suggest that there was a sense within the organisation that other smaller organisations simply weren't as capable as TCSO staff (TCSO-FN-3). Local and international CSO actors expressed concern that TCSO had been effective at building up civil society, yet were

continuing to try and fulfil multiple roles within the sector including economic development work with farmer groups, governance and rights awareness programmes, and research-based policy and programme advocacy, placing them in competition with the organisations they had helped to get off the ground instead of stepping back into an advisory/consultancy role (CSO-Reg-4, CSO-Reg-7, CSO-Reg-11, International-2). This also contributes to intra-sectoral tensions potentially undermining the viability of the regional development framework and the claims of one national actor that Rwenzori civil society 'have all sorts of networks and are not fighting each other as in other places' (CSO-Nat-2). On the other hand, a key source of legitimacy for TCSO at national and international levels has been their ability to maintain a presence on the ground while also engaging at a policy level (CSO-Nat-2, TCSO-KI-3), while other observers have highlighted TCSO's presence at the grass roots as a key source of power: 'the state doesn't know what to do with TCSO because they have such a grass roots supporter base, people would react if TCSO was closed down' (TCSO-FN-15). In this way TCSO has become subject to the dilemma that Michael (2004) illuminates. On the one hand, NGOs are expected to have strong integration at a community level, but if they become successful and experience significant growth they are accused of losing their connection to the grass roots. TCSO to date has decided not to give into this pull away from community level work but is suffering internally as a result from high demand on limited staff capacity.

The varied and multi-faceted nature of TCSO programmes and their regional visioning has created high levels of pressure on senior managers which has channelled their energies into external processes and away from internal communications and relations (TCSO-FN-3, TCSO-staff-3). The challenges of managing organisational growth and leadership transition while maintaining

internal trust and confidence, has taken its toll in recent years with a number of staff feeling under-valued, disconnected from management and strategic planning, and some staff even leaving the organisation (TCSO-FN-3, TCSO-staff-2, TCSO-staff-3, informal communications with staff). There is a sense in which senior managers run ahead doing all the thinking, analysis and planning while the rest of the staff simply carry out their projects according to the log frames that have been designed for them to follow. By the time of their annual reflection in 2010, TCSO staff had still not been introduced to the principles within the code of practice, or the plans for the RDF, and few were very familiar with the theory of change underpinning Think Tank research. The literature suggests that organisations that are unable to foster a democratic and participatory culture internally are far less likely to be able to do so in their external operations (Bratton, 1989, Fowler, 1997, Smillie and Hailey, 2001). Certainly there is a capacity deficit within the organisation in relation to facilitating empowering and inclusive processes or fostering a democratic and participatory culture, both internally and in terms of working at the grass roots as Chapters 5 and 6 have demonstrated.

7.3.2 Enabling donor relations

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 highlighted how certain European donors have shaped and bounded TCSO's rights and governance interventions. In contrast, TCSO's core donor, a Dutch co-financing agency,[29] has played an empowering role, remaining open to experimentation and committed to a focus on citizen-led rather than top-down development approaches and most recently programmatic rather than project-based funding. A senior manager at TCSO explained that this donor 'has no strings attached to our programmes. Many of these innovations that have come

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[29] who provided 32% of TCSO's overall income in 2007 and 2008, 53% in 2009, and 48% in 2010.

up have been because they have given us a chance to try out.' (TCSO-SM-2).
While this is driven by the agency's own ethos, TCSO has also been credited with
cultivating this relationship by being 'open' and 'honest' and building a relationship
'based on trust' (International-1). With continued cuts to the Dutch aid budget
(NMFA, 2011), and the tradition of co-financing initiatives under threat (Guijt,
2008), the future does not look as bright. This agency now has to generate 25%
of its own funding which is tied to the particular conditionalities of those financial
sources, while the Dutch government is making increasing demands for
'deliverables' and 'targets' 'as pressure increases to see tangible returns on aid
expenditure' limiting their capacity for flexibility (International-1).

7.3.3 Intra-elite relations and the character of political society

The findings above have, like much of the development literature, questioned the
elitist nature of the deliberative spaces and structures that TCSO have cultivated.
However, the educated elite nature of the TCSO staff base and the relationship
building skills of certain key members of staff have in fact been key to some of the
achievements they have made, which supports arguments in the literature that
elite positioning is key to the negotiation of strong relationships with government
and to the mainstreaming of people-centred development approaches (Bratton,
1989, Fowler, 1991, Uvin and Miller, 1996, Wils, 1995). It took persistence and
dedication to reach a point where political and cultural leaders from the
Ruwenzururu and Toro kingdoms could sit down together in a room and discuss
how to make development work for their people. As a key organiser recounted:
'we would agree meetings with the LC5 but then he would say, 'oh sorry, I'm in
another meeting.' We kept trying until he gave us another day in his office and we
went back again. We had to explain a lot in terms of our good intentions especially

for the people of the Rwenzori region, this is what we've done for the people in this place' (TCSO-SM-3). TCSO have also been able to capitalise on strong intra-elite ethnic relationships. The same staff member explained how in another district, TCSO 'has a good relationship with the people there. Actually the mother of the king comes from there and we speak the same language, we share the same cultural totems, the same clans.' The same ethnic ties facilitated a 'very supportive' relationship with the political leadership in Kabarole district, upset only by the entry into politics of the founding director (*ibid.*).

As described in Chapter 4, the Rwenzori region is an NRM stronghold which has facilitated strong intra-elite ties between party cadres across the civil/political divide (CSO-Nat-3). TCSO has also been able to capitalise on comparatively strong central government representation in the region by mobilising four Ministers to attend the retreats in as many years because they are also local MPs.[30] There are mixed feelings among local stakeholders about the degree to which the strong NRM presence in the region has shaped TCSO's ability to find the balance between critique and collaboration that some analysts find key to democratic capabilities within NGOs (Chhotray, 2008, Patel and Mitlin, 2009). One international actor felt quite clearly that TCSO's approach had changed over the years becoming less confrontational and more 'docile' towards the state over time and linked this change to the founding Director's move into the NRM (International-2). Another civil society actor with a long history of partnership work with TCSO felt that this had been a deliberate governmental move to weaken civil society: 'the government looked at what was happening in Rwenzori civil society and thought "let's pull him out of there and make him our own"' (CSO-Reg-11). Yet, several observers have stressed the fact that TCSO have had to tread a very

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[30] based on triangulation of a review of event attendance lists with the views of former participants expressed during informal discussions.

careful line and have pushed things as far as they could without risking state interference or dissolution (TCSO-FN-2, TCSO-FN-15, CSO-Reg-11). And although some observers feel that the founding Director is now 'lost' as a positive force for regional democratisation (CSO-Reg-11), he is playing an active role in the reconvened MPs Forum suggesting that the momentum for stronger civil-political cooperation in the region will be sustained.

7.3.4   Centralised power

Finally, the challenge of cultivating political will and limited autonomy and resources at a local level and among non-ministerial MPs must be recognised as a fundamentally influential factor shaping what TCSO has been able to achieve so far and the extent to which processes like the Think Tank regional stakeholder forums and the leadership retreats can have a significant impact on development possibilities in the region. Receptivity exists among some local government officials for alternative ways of approaching development, a District NAADS official participated in the follow up group for analysis of findings on falling banana production described above for example. But during the deliberative fora, local government officials have had to raise the limitations on what they will be able to do with the information being generated – as mentioned above, their hands are tied by the centrally designed programmes they are working within like NAADS, and pre-defined targets for resource allocation and outcomes (TCSO-FN-40). As Francis and James suggest, without increasing the state resources available for local rather than central decision-making, and a shift in the 'values and awareness' of those with vested interests in the status quo, it is difficult to see how significant changes to state approaches to development can occur (2003: 336).

7.4 Conclusions

This chapter has demonstrated that TCSO have been able to shape development planning processes in a more locally-responsive direction through the cultivation of elite-led and dominated deliberative spaces and civil society building. TCSO has significantly increased and diversified the number and type of civil society actors working to empower rural communities and to hold the state accountable for resource allocation and use. It has effectively brought together a wide range of actors in new spaces to deliberate and reflect upon new kinds of knowledge and built political will for cross-ethnic and civil/political cooperation and for better development outcomes for rural communities. Although many of the outcomes are process outcomes rather than constituting fundamental policy change or reform they are important incremental movements in a more social democratic direction in terms of getting elite actors to reflect more deeply upon locally generated evidence about the experiences of people at the grass roots. New relationships have been formed across the civil/political divide and political learning has taken place among urban elites in civil, political and state spheres but also among some locally-based community representatives who may not be the poorest but do live and work among poor rural communities (Williams, 2004). This learning builds the capacity of some of these locally rooted and civil actors to engage in future struggles for more grass-roots oriented decision-making. In some limited ways, networks of power and patterns of representation are therefore being reshaped between local and international actors and rural community leaders and urban elite actors within civil society (Williams, 2004).

There are, however, three key areas that TCSO have not been able to tackle through the processes presented above. Firstly, although TCSO's focus on district and national leaders was initially viewed as a means of overcoming some of the barriers staff and activists were experiencing at the grass roots, such as the politicisation of public services and poor levels of state accountability, TCSO have not been able to bring these issues to centre stage to date within cross sector spaces like regional stakeholder forums and the leadership retreats. Staff have had to be careful to frame agendas and debates in ways which focus on sectoral or procedural development concerns rather than political concerns. Given that in following this route, TCSO have managed to consistently build greater cooperation and political buy in to their leadership retreats and fora (with the exception of the 2010/11 election period), and to evidence-based planning, this can perhaps be interpreted as a sensible strategy within current political space.

Second, the strength of these processes has been largely in the generation of ideas, approaches, and priorities by a broad range of cross-sector and to some degree cross-class development actors based on reflection, debate and analysis and information generated from among rural communities. The literature is clearly supportive of the importance of ideas in shaping subsequent action and 'shifting the state' (Bebbington et al., 2008, Guijt, 2008, Mitlin and Bebbington, 2006: 10). However, organisational capacity among civil society actors and political-economic realities within the Rwenzori region and Uganda more widely do pose a significant barrier to the effective pursuit of advocacy strategies in response to Think Tank research, implementation of the code of practice in relation to the RDF, and committed follow up to resolutions made at the leadership retreats or by the RDLG and MPs' Forum. TCSO and civil society more widely do not yet seem to have

strategies in place for how they will overcome some of these resource and capacity constraints.

Third, and as highlighted in Chapter 2, a key challenge for NGOs seeking to democratize development is how to make representation – either by NGOs or by elected government representatives – meaningful to the ordinary people seeking realisation of their rights or satisfaction of their needs (Harriss et al., 2004, Törnquist, 2002, Törnquist et al., 2009). There is a clear gap between the work that Rwenzori civil society is doing at a strategic level to create a shared approach and to engage the regional leadership, and the work that these CSOs are doing at a grass roots level to build the capacity of farmer organisations and the democratic consciousness of rural citizens. At present staff and trainers from the farmer-owned regional agricultural training organisation, organisations like CBOMY in Mahyoro, and other model farmers, are acting as the link – in terms of direct participation – between these village and regional levels of reflection and action which is an important and significant development. However, there is a lack of emphasis on the kinds of two way channels for downwards accountability and popular representation that Törnquist et al., (2009) find to be critical to democracy deepening. This relates back to the point raised in Chapters 5 and 6 however, about the absence of a strong farmers' movement in the Rwenzori region (and Uganda more widely) or even strong networks and alliances among small holder farmers for such channels to link in with. Houtzager (2003, 2005) and Sandbrook et al. (2007) stress the importance of such movements among the poor and small holders respectively, and alliances between these networks and political parties or reformist state actors, for fundamental redistributive change to occur. Future TCSO and civil society strategies may need to focus on how to tie these two levels

of operation together to bring greater legitimacy and power to the new approaches they are attempting to cultivate.

Overall however, the chapter has shown that at the present time, and in contrast to Mercer's (2002) critique, civil society proliferation and development in the Rwenzori region can be associated with incremental processes of democratisation. It has also provided support for Corbridge's analysis that civil society can 'blossom' 'in close relationship with the political societies that Chatterjee and some others would prefer to see as wholly distinct arenas', and bring the kinds of incremental shifts in state/citizen relations that create potential for pro-poor change (2007: 198).

8 Can NGOs cultivate supportive conditions for social democratic development? Synthesis and thesis conclusions

'We cannot direct the wind, but we can adjust the sails.' Bertha Calloway

8.1 Overview

This research project set out to investigate the capacity of NGOs to cultivate supportive conditions for social democratic development by applying Williams (2004) political capabilities analysis to the work of a Ugandan research and development NGO. Specifically, it has assessed the extent to which different NGO strategies have catalysed political learning, and reshaped political networks and patterns of political representation in ways which have fostered supportive conditions for the realisation of rights, increased popular capacity to influence decision-making, and increased receptivity to power sharing among political and economic elites. The strategies investigated have been civic education for good governance; economic associational development; civil society building and the creation of deliberative spaces. Underpinning this analysis, has been an exploration of the ways in which the organisational capacity of the case study NGO and the political-economic environment of contemporary Uganda have shaped the nature of these strategies and their outcomes.

The chapter begins by synthesising the research findings about strategies, outcomes and explanatory factors into a concluding analysis which is informed by the key dimensions of the analytical framework outlined in Chapter 2 and addresses the three wider debates within development theory and practice that this thesis has engaged with. The first of these debates is concerned with the extent to which the inclusive liberal good governance agenda has created space

for incremental shifts in state/citizen relations which empower disadvantaged groups (Corbridge et al., 2005) or whether it has legitimized a de-politicization of development interventions (Bebbington et al., 2008, Townsend et al., 2004). The thesis suggests that good governance strategies such as civic education, which focus on enhancing the effectiveness of existing liberal democratic processes for citizen influence over development planning and social accountability, can foster a degree of political learning among rural elites in Uganda. However, because they engage with formal *de jure* rather than patronage-based *de facto* rules of the game, and therefore fail to reshape political networks or patterns of political representation, they are unlikely to enhance the political capabilities of the rural poor. In these ways, and in this case, civic education for good governance does not therefore significantly alter state/citizen relations but rather offers support for a limited form of liberal democratic development.

The second debate relates to arguments that participatory development initiatives that fail to address socio-economic power relations cannot result in substantive empowerment for disadvantaged groups (Hickey and Mohan, 2004, Mosse, 2010, Mansuri and Rao, 2013). The thesis findings provide further support for this assertion. In the case explored here, NGO strategies targeted at micro-enterprise and economic associational development are generating better outcomes for political capabilities among the rural poor than attempts to enhance inclusive liberal participation. This is because they tackle socio-economic disadvantage and hence local networks of power in a predominantly subsistence economy, while also engaging farmers across the socio-economic spectrum in processes of political learning which can lead to political representation. In contrast, TCSO's civic education for good governance strategies operate on the assumption that information provision about rights and responsibilities will be enough to encourage

more inclusive participation without attempting to address the socio-economic power relations that often curb the political agency of disadvantaged groups.

A third relevant concern within the literature is how to create mechanisms for direct popular representation and integrate these with existing forms of representation by elites in pursuit of a more equal distribution of decision-making power and greater receptivity to power sharing among political and economic elites (Törnquist et al., 2009, Sandbrook et al., 2007, Mosse, 2010). The findings suggest that NGOs that are able to create new alternative spaces for problem-solving which build strong relationships across civil and political society (Corbridge et al., 2005, Evans, forthcoming, Heller, 2011) may be able to generate more inclusive deliberation and decision-making about public resources. Such spaces gain further legitimacy and effectiveness when they include both formal and traditional forms of representation (Booth, 2012), and when deliberation is focused on consideration of robust research evidence concerning the views and experiences of grass roots actors (Bazan et al., 2008). Positive experiences of these kinds of deliberative space can then create receptivity – if not for shared decision-making – then at least towards the inclusion of a wider set of voices (Mitlin and Bebbington, 2006). Engaging local and regional elites in analysis and planning does not enhance the political capabilities of the poor in the short-term. However, as North et al. (2009) have highlighted, the expansion of political space for a broader group of elites in deliberative and decision-making processes can create potential for the forging of relationships and alliances with reform-minded actors within the existing order and other marginalised social groups (like organised small-holder farmers) over time.

A summary section then draws out key lessons from this synthesis in relation to the political capacity and political economy dimensions of the analytical

framework. This leads into a brief discussion about the prospects for a more redistributive development process in Uganda at the current juncture and the potential roles that NGOs might play in supporting the emergence of this kind of change. The thesis concludes with a series of reflections for NGOs that are interested in a redistribution of power towards marginal groups and are intervening within post-colonial contexts with predominantly agrarian economies and semi-authoritarian, patronage-based, political regimes. It suggests that these kinds of organisations might find it helpful to focus on negotiating their ideological autonomy from external agendas and fostering the analytical and operational forms of capacity required to make timely and astute readings of the political opportunities in the specific socio-economic and political environments in which they are operating. In contemporary rural Uganda, the findings from this case study point towards a need to move beyond strategies for engagement with inclusive liberal governance (Craig and Porter, 2006) towards a closer engagement with the politics (Booth 2012, Hickey, 2009b) and political economy (Sandbrook et al., 2007) of progressive change.

8.2   Civic education for good governance

8.2.1 Outcomes

TCSO's civic education approach which attempts to mobilise rural citizens to participate within inclusive liberal governance spaces has not gained greater influence for disadvantaged groups over resource allocation or generated more effective processes for social accountability. In resonance with other studies of civic education strategies, the approach has had more beneficial outcomes for rural elites than poorer parents or service users (Finkel and Ernst, 2005, Bratton et

al., 1999), with local councillors and management committee members experiencing a limited degree of political learning. Councillors have a better understanding of their roles as leaders although they were not systematically putting this knowledge into practice, and management committee members had generated increased answerability among rural teachers and health workers although they lacked any enforcement power (Goetz and Jenkins, 2005). There was no evidence of significant shifts in thinking among parents and service users as a result of these interventions. Parents were not holding schools accountable for resource use, and neither were teachers or management committee members able to hold parents accountable for their commitments to the development of their children's school. This lack of ownership was raised as a fundamental stumbling block to the cultivation of social accountability. In positive cases of village level mobilisation for planning and collective works such as the mountain village in Bukuuku, the LC1 Chair holding regular meetings in Mahyoro, or the elders' forum successfully pushing for a majority Bakonjo sub-county, Community Process Facilitators (CPFs) had contributed their skills and knowledge within existing moments of agency and change triggered by other processes than TCSO's good governance interventions such as enterprise and associational development and the long term struggle for recognition of a minority ethnic group.

The findings also cast Golooba-Mutebi's conclusion that poor levels of citizen participation in decentralised planning can be traced back to a desire among Ugandan citizens for 'strong leaders that know how to rule' and can 'make decisions on their behalf', as over-simplistic (2004: 302). This case suggests that civic education for good governance has, in and of itself, failed to catalyse political agency or greater social accountability because of multiple and interlinking context and capacity factors. There is an absence of substantive mechanisms for

influence or enforcement within governance structures, or of tangible benefits to participants from the opportunity for inclusion (Brett, 2003, Thompson, 2007). There are poor incentives for social accountability within the formal system which is undermined by an informal system of patronage politics (Brett, 2003, Francis and James, 2003, Booth, 2011). The strategy does not attempt to challenge the structure of socio-economic power relations that constrain agency (Cooke and Kothari, 2001, Mosse, 2010, White, 1996), and this is linked partly to an absence of facilitators skilled and experienced in robust PAL methodology (Farrington and Bebbington, 1993, Finkel and Ernst, 2005), and partly to the conflict between teleological donor agendas and the necessarily open-ended nature of effective approaches to grass roots empowerment (Guijit, 2008, Thomas, 2008).

8.2.2 The 'inclusion delusion' of decentralisation

The findings support the framing of Uganda's decentralised planning system as an 'inclusion delusion' masking an increasing drive for centralised control and Presidential patronage (Craig and Porter, 2006, Francis and James, 2003, Green 2008, Tripp, 2010). The planning process is obstructed by the patron-client motivations of representative councillors who are more interested in being able to demonstrate they have brought resources into their local constituency than in improvements to access and quality in service delivery. The absence of elections at LC1 level since 2001 alongside the continuation of NRM primary elections in 2006 and 2011, has enabled the ruling party to retain loyal supporters down to the village level while constraining the development of opposition party infrastructure. Yet, the presence of competitive political parties is identified by many analysts as a key driver of local accountability and of social democratic change (Blair, 2000, Francis and James, 2003, Sandbrook et al., 2007). There is a suggestion that

local government resources – both human and financial – have been diverted into NRM election campaigns (Kasfir, 2012, Tripp, 2010; SubC-CS-BK-2) and a lack of genuine commitment to bottom up planning is manifested in low levels of unconditional resources invested at district and particularly sub-county level, and tokenistic budget consultation processes. The continued operation of districtisation as a patronage strategy (Green 2008) is evident in the case of Karangura sub-county being granted on an ethnic basis in order to bring residents into the NRM.

8.2.3 Technocratic governance of populist policies

The findings provide further support for Francis and James (2003) characterisation of a 'technocratic mode' of governance involving centralised resources and a highly managerialist approach (Townsend et al., 2004) to their distribution which undermines community ownership of, or influence over, local services. TCSO's social accountability interventions have focused on informing participatory governance actors, teachers, local councillors, and local parents and service users about their roles and responsibilities. Like Booth (2011) and Brett (2003), the findings suggest that demand-side or participatory strategies for greater social accountability can only bring limited outcomes for political capabilities among the poor when the institutional channels for accountability are weak and the political environment undermines community ownership of services. Since the abolition of PTA and health service user fees in 1997 and 2001 respectively, parents and service users have no substantive role to play in ensuring the effective delivery of primary health care and education and the remaining participatory governance channels in the form of management committees have no enforcement power (Tripp, 2010).

The findings here demonstrate that most parents and service users are therefore not interested in participating, and that management committees are unable to influence critical issues like staffing and drug distribution. Management committees and PTAs have no power to impose sanctions and can only ameliorate rather than put a stop to poor performance among staff. In addition, widespread political campaigning on the basis of free education for all has further undermined localised drives for ownership and participation. Several studies highlight how it is this deficit in 'community spirit' that is endangering the effectiveness of UPE as much as resource constraints resulting in overcrowding and lack of classrooms (Dauda, 2006, Higgins and Rwanyange, 2005: 12).

The findings reinforce suggestions that local level civil servants are not fulfilling their roles effectively in part because of a lack of incentives for downwards accountability and better quality service provision (Tripp, 2010). Job security is not based on performance but on patron-client relations. Where suggestions of corruption or poor quality provision arise, teachers or local chiefs are simply transferred to other posts. This culture of regular transfers also means that civil servants are not socially embedded within their communities of operation and therefore not subject to informal social ties of accountability (Joshi, 2008).

In Rwenzori, as elsewhere in Uganda, civil servants also lack motivation because of low levels of remuneration and a lack of opportunities for professional development (Higgens and Rwanyange, 2005, Tripp, 2010). Local governments suffer from leakage of funds through corruption and there is poor access to information about government contracts because civil servants seek to supplement their income through dealings with private contractors. It is therefore

not in the interest of those involved in these processes to promote transparency. The case of the Sub-County Chief refusing to follow up reports of poor quality work on latrine construction (Chapter 6), and the implied difference to local finances made by increased transparency from a newly appointed CAO in Bukuuku (Chapter 5) are two examples of these processes at work. The upwards accountability of local civil servants under the 'technocratic mode' also undermines political agency among local councillors who feel they lack the authority to influence state actors and therefore either don't attempt to do so, or do so half-heartedly – perhaps making enquiries but doing little to follow up particular cases – as in the case of the gravity water system in a Bukuuku village (Chapter 5). TCSO can train people on how participatory governance mechanisms are supposed to work but without a transformation of the incentive and resource constraints outlined above and the motivations and values that prevail within public service, this strategy is likely to continue to yield poor outcomes for social accountability.

8.2.4 Political agency and social stratification

The findings suggest that TCSO's civic education for good governance initiatives do not address the underlying causes of low levels of political agency among subsistence farmers. The evidence demonstrates how poorer members of communities lack the confidence and social standing to participate in collective processes, with tenants and labourers afraid of speaking out in front of and especially in contradiction of their landlords or employers; young people feeling unable to participate on an equal footing with their elders; and the less educated or wealthy feeling unable to question or challenge their social superiors – be they teachers, health workers or politicians. The combined judicial, financial and political powers and political affiliation of the LC1 Chair also discourage village

constituents from holding these leaders to account for their responsibilities (despite these powers having little influence beyond the village) which is underlined by a culture of deference to those in power tied to a history of political turmoil and repression (Chapter 5). Accountability processes and leadership performance are also constrained by intra-elite friendships between councillors at different levels and between councillors and civil servants (Chapters 5 and 6). These findings are reinforced by other studies. Jones (2009) highlights how decisions in the village court are made according to notions of seniority and propriety not just evidence and more broadly, Hickey and Mohan (2004) suggest that it may be counter-productive to promote participatory approaches where political and economic power are intertwined and captured by elites. These hierarchies of power are further entrenched by elite attitudes towards poorer farmers who are not considered capable of identifying their own priorities or to be educated enough to question the actions of professionals (Chapter 6).

Mamdani has suggested that a crucial weakness in the NRM's RC, and later LC, system of governance was in a failure to pay attention to social differentiation within the village by assuming that all members of the village would be able to participate equally within the LC1, in this way he claims 'political reform went hand in hand with social conservatism' (1996: 209). Similarly, Tripp (2010) highlights how the construction of the LCs as the sole means of popular political participation on the basis of residence rather than identity has undermined a drive for identity or interest group formation, and promoted patronage politics by encouraging electoral contestation based on personality rather than issues. TCSO have not adequately analysed or responded to this background in ways which address socio-economic differentiation and relations of power and disadvantage within a village or parish community. By operating within existing 'invited' spaces (Cornwall, 2002) of

decentralised planning or participatory governance TCSO may be legitimizing a status quo within which rural elites control any local decision-making and resources and urban elites have control over resources from the centre, rather than strategising how to tackle the power dynamics underlying the subjectification of rural citizens (Mamdani, 1996). Non-elite rural citizens participate within TCSO's interventions as passive recipients of information not as organised political agents who are linked by relationships of trust, cooperation, or shared interests, unlike the kinds of relationships that can be observed in the findings about economic associations in Chapters 5 and 7.

8.2.5 TCSO political capacity

TCSO capacity for astute political-economic and cultural analysis has been constrained in part by socio-economic pressures on staff, the dynamics of donor aid, and also the availability of staff with the necessary skills and experience to analyse and respond effectively to a highly complex environment. Socio-economic pressures on some staff drain energy away into consultancy work, and skew organisational strategy as fundraising becomes driven by job retention and maintaining organisational profile (Dicklitch, 2003) rather than guided by principles and vision which might result in more selective partnerships with donor agencies focused on more programmatic development approaches (Fowler, 1997, Bebbington et al., 2008, Guijt, 2008). This is desirable in order to overcome the emphasis of many donors on the achievement of pre-designed and quantifiable outputs and outcomes which, as Chapters 4, 5 and 6 all demonstrate, can undermine drives towards the facilitation of deeply empowering action learning processes among rural communities (Andrews et al., 2012, Bebbington et al., 2008, Kaplan, 2000). The findings also inevitably point towards gaps in strategic

and operational capacity. Although some staff are clearly aware of the socio-economic power relations that constrain agency at a local level, they had been unable at the point of fieldwork to develop strategies to effectively engage poorer members of rural communities in development planning and accountability. Although the PRMT methodology was originally motivated by the desire to empower rural communities by engaging them in PAL processes, the strategy had become skewed towards measurable training outputs. This happened partly because of continued pressure to meet donor demands for measurable outcomes (again as described in Chapters 4 to 6), but also because of low levels of capacity to facilitate these processes among staff and CPFs. Senior staff and donors also seemed to underestimate the degree of training and experience required to make these processes effective (Farrington and Bebbington, 1993, Finkel and Ernst, 2005).

While Corbridge et al. may be right in their assertion that to some poorer members of developing societies, the good governance agenda 'is better than nothing' (2005: 203), the findings suggest that more transformative outcomes will require Ugandan NGOs to engage in strategies that tackle the societal power relations and incentive structures that make inclusive liberal governance ineffective. This will require a more value-driven approach to negotiating organisational autonomy, a re-orientation from project-based to more programmatic funding among donors, and may also involve difficult choices between funding and staff retention (such as losing staff because of having to turn down financial support that obstructs the organisation's strategic vision). It will also necessitate a focus on the political economy of development rather than liberal democratic institutions and processes. These findings do not negate the critical importance of formal channels through which organized citizens can engage state and political actors (Evans,

forthcoming, Heller, 2011). However, NGOs interested in social democratic development outcomes should be considering how to work with disadvantaged and disorganized citizens so that these channels can become meaningful to them, or other channels can be created or experimented with (Engberg-Pedersen and Webster, 2002). In accordance with Golooba-Mutebi (2004), providing opportunities for political participation within the existing system is not enough on its own.

8.3 Economic associational development

8.3.1 Outcomes

By supporting the development of agricultural and savings cooperatives, TCSO has contributed to the fostering of more supportive conditions for the realisation of rights and begun to build greater control over decision-making for subsistence and small-holder farmers. Members of cooperatives have experienced political learning through group dynamics and the trainings they have received. Increased incomes and access to finance have enabled some farmers to develop enterprises and access health care and education. This socio-economic development has gained some farmers increased respect which combined with the political learning they have experienced has enabled them to take on leadership positions with some degree of influence over the decision-making that affects their lives and those of other members of their associations and communities. Farmers associated with CBOMY (the sustainable production CBO in Mahyoro discussed in Chapter 5) have developed a sense of collective confidence, evidenced by their autonomous behaviour in their interactions with NAADS officials. Some of the farmers who have gone on to act as leaders within their associations and communities are also

now capable of engaging with state, civil society and political actors at regional level through participation in Think Tank regional stakeholder forums suggesting one avenue through which Ugandan NGOs can marry elite and popular representation within agenda-setting fora (Lukes, 2005, Törnquist et al., 2009). These shifts mark incremental expansions in the political networks of some of the farmers that have benefitted from TCSO interventions and new patterns of political representation in the form of farmers taking on leadership positions and having new channels for sharing the experiences, and even representing the interests, of subsistence and small-holder farmers at a regional level. The chronic poor have only recently been engaged through TCSO's interventions, and in small numbers, but with positive outcomes both in immediate material terms and in wider social terms such as increases in confidence, the formation of savings groups between participants. There was also a mix of socio-economic status among the farmers and associational leaders engaged during fieldwork that have benefitted from TCSO's support, they have not all been local elites.[31]

While this strategy clearly works to increase the ability of farmers to realise their social and economic rights as well as increasing their influence over resources it does not serve particularly to increase receptivity to power sharing among political or economic elites. Neither does the acquisition of representative roles within political or state structures by former subsistence farmers automatically result in effective representation of the poor or even of small-holder farmers. Further research would be needed to ascertain data about the quality of the representation/accountability dynamic resulting from their taking up these roles.

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[31] based on qualitative data generated during our interactions and/or observational data about their living conditions.

These findings add to a small body of evidence highlighting links between economic association and political capability enhancement (including but not limited to: Kabeer et al., 2010, Ramesh, 2007, Thorp et al., 2005, Webster, 2002), and draw further attention to the gap in this literature for sub-Saharan Africa. Perhaps particularly, and together with findings about farmer participation in TCSO's created deliberative spaces at regional level, the findings make the case for more research into what makes the difference between the ability of farmers (and their support NGOs) to reshape political networks; and their ability to find new channels of representation that change the culture of how issues can be represented, in what ways and by what kinds of actor.

8.3.2 Political economy and political capacity

The research findings and wider literature suggest a number of reasons in support of the conclusion that economic associational development is more transformative in political capabilities terms than strategies for enhanced inclusive liberal participation. Political action by the poor has been found to be more effective if based around a common class or ethnic identity than based on residence (Moore, 2001, Tripp, 2010). Increased incomes enable the poor to be more effective politically (Thorp et al., 2005) as suggested by the advance in socio-economic status that has preceded the assumption of community leadership positions among farmers in Mahyoro. Cooperative action that is catalysed around savings or material survival promotes solidarity motivated by the intertwining of self and collective interests and the development of relationships of trust and accountability – as cited by farmers who have gone on to become political representatives (Mitlin, 2004, Thorp et al., 2005). Conditions of marginalisation or the absence of the state - such as in the remote location of Mahyoro before the existence of

agricultural extension services - have been found to create a drive for self-help (Jones, 2009, Thorp et al., 2005). TCSO has also engaged existing groups rather than attempting to set up new structures, providing inputs of expertise and resources to an organic and incremental process of change which a series of observers have identified as more effective for empowerment outcomes (Booth, 2012, Hickey, 2002, Moore, 2001).

The positive outcomes for farmers in Mahyoro are linked strongly to the presence of CBOMY. TCSO built upon existing reserves of political agency in the form of a small group of highly motivated rural elites who formed a 'middle level farmer group' and wanted to advance development in the sub-county. The civil-society building support provided by TCSO combined with on-going training and inputs to farmer groups in the area, created a locally-rooted support structure for farmers which combined with TCSO information and asset-based support has created a more conducive environment for cooperative enterprise and savings in the sub-county.

Other areas of the region do not have a local support structure like CBOMY and as Chapter five highlights, the outcomes from TCSO's economic empowerment interventions across the region more widely have been limited, with weak group solidarity and high levels of mismanagement and corruption arising as common problems. The findings suggest that beyond the mistrust of cooperative endeavour that followed the collapse of the cooperative movement in the 1970s (Chapter three), this is linked in part to strategic approach and levels of operational capacity within TCSO. TCSO staff do not facilitate the kinds of conscientization processes with members of farmer groups that have been found to be effective catalysts of group agency and solidarity in other cases (Bianchi, 2002, Bennett et al., 1996,

Baluku et al., 2009). CPFs mobilise members of groups or marketing associations together for lecture-style training sessions focused on information provision rather than analysis and reflection. The comparatively more positive results that TCSO has achieved with their micro-enterprise for the very poor pilot supports the notion that approaches which engage individuals and groups in PAL cycles of situational analysis, planning and action, may be more productive for enhancing political capabilities in the long-term (Bianchi, 2002, Bennett et al., 1996, Baluku et al., 2009). This is because the project was born of effective power analysis about the exclusion of the chronic poor from TCSO's other development interventions, and was designed specifically to tackle their position of disadvantage (Bianchi, 2002, Kabeer et al., 2010). Beyond the initial cash transfer, this has been achieved by facilitating these individuals to think about what they want to do, and continuously reflect on what they are achieving and plan what to do next. Their groups are formed in response to a self-identified need to overcome their existing barriers to savings-based micro-finance groups and develop their own strategy to meet this need i.e. forming their own groups for their own motivations (Bano, 2012, Bennett et al., 1996, Bianchi, 2002).

TCSO has a strong reflexive and self-critical culture, recognised as an important capacity for development organisations (Kaplan, 2000, Fowler, 1997), including an awareness of their own patron-client positioning among some communities and an emergent understanding of the problems inherent in the sense of trusteeship towards the rural poor among some staff (Li, 2009). Their programmes and strategies recognise the disadvantaged positioning of women, people with disabilities and the chronic poor, and their more recent strategies – particularly targeting the extreme poor – do attempt to address these conditions of disadvantage. Yet, there is also a mismatch between organisational ideals and

behaviour and organisational culture. Staff spend very limited amounts of time at village and household level and show a reluctance to interact with and really understand the experiences and priorities of local people. This has been highlighted in successive evaluations but no action has been taken in response. It may be that the CPFs as locally-embedded actors, are better placed to facilitate reflection and analysis and provide mentoring support at the individual, household or village group level but as other studies highlight (Farrington and Bebbington, 1993, Kaplan, 2000) they require a greater investment of training and support to build their capacity to catalyse agency and provide regular follow up advice and process facilitation.

The development literature suggests that an organized movement among small holder farmers aligned with a left of centre political party can be a viable conjuncture for social democratic change (Herring, 2003, Sandbrook et al., 2007, Webster, 2002). However, the research findings and the literature suggest this is still a long way off in Uganda. Ugandan NGOs need to find ways to support the emergence and development of local membership organisations and federations while allowing them to progress at their own pace and without creating dependency on their expertise or resources (Bano, 2012, Bennett et al., 1996). This will also require a shift among donor approaches away from the pressure to demonstrate short-term outcomes and towards more programmatic open-ended funding agreements that build in scope for more localised mentoring and support provision.

8.4   Creating deliberative spaces at sub-county and district level

8.4.1 Outcomes

The political learning TCSO has achieved among local elites has to some extent been consolidated by the convening of sub-county and district dialogues which support ideas about created spaces fostering a more empowered participatory practice and alternative ideas or approaches (Cornwall, 2002; Mitlin and Bebbington, 2006), and the importance of local problem-solving initiatives for better public goods provision (Booth, 2012). The dialogues constitute an elite-led and male dominated space which is not directly 'increasing the power of the poor within service provision' (World Bank, 2004), or engaging them directly in challenging the power of political elites (Mosse, 2007). Yet, they have created a new pattern of representation through which existing but often ineffective representatives (like local councillors and management committee members) or new kinds of representative (such as CPFs) can feed in the views and experiences of parents or service users to debates with sub-county or district leaders (Williams, 2004). By bringing actors from across political society, the civil service, and civil society together to deliberate evidence and discuss solutions, TCSO is reshaping political networks by building relationships between actors that wouldn't normally have the occasion to exchange ideas (Williams, 2004). This has the potential to foster receptivity towards, if not a more equal distribution of decision-making power, a broader perception of the experiences of different kinds of citizen and the merits of inclusive deliberation and decision-making. That receptivity depends on the extent to which participation is a positive experience and decisions are made and implemented, but the data suggest that a range of actors had positive experiences of the dialogues at both sub-county and district level and actions were

taken in response if not always to an effective conclusion. The Bukuuku Sub-County Education Bill and the Kabarole District Education Ordinance are also evidence of the *potential*[32] for these created spaces, processes of learning and shifting patterns of representation to generate gains for enforcement as well as discursive problem-solving or increased answerability in the form of information sharing.

8.4.2 Strategic relationships, collaboration, and evidence-based legitimacy

Intra-elite relationships are widely recognised as a channel for civil influence over state and political actors (Bratton 1989, Crook, 2001, Fowler 1991, Uvin and Miller, 1996, Wils, 1995). Staff of TCSO have been able to manipulate their own status as educated elites to mobilise civil servants and politicians for participation in district dialogues. There are a range of income and education levels among CPFs but they have been able to use their status as informed activists – and in some cases as former local councillors – as well as the political learning they have gained from regular interaction with urban civil society elites, to foster positive relationships with a range of leaders from the village up to the sub-county level. The creation of space for intra-elite deliberation and problem-solving at sub-county and district levels engages with both formal and informal governance systems through the inclusion of political leaders and civil servants but also clan and religious leaders and elders. Although there was no tangible evidence of the interests of the poor being advanced through these cultural or traditional channels, the inclusivity was recognised as a strength in the dialogue approach by participants and recent literature suggests that working 'with the grain' of existing

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[32] Neither policies were effectively implemented but they were steps in the right direction, demonstrating that given the right political conditions the dialogue process could have generated new enforcement mechanisms leading to better access to services for rural citizens.

cultures and traditions can be a positive route towards better public goods provision in sub-Saharan Africa (Booth, 2012, Kelsall, 2008).The co-facilitation of dialogues with government actors has built both government and civil society legitimacy and capacity, supporting the case in the literature for low-income groups to adopt a collaborative rather than a confrontational stance in their pursuit of better public goods outcomes in patronage-based contexts (Booth, 2012, Patel and Mitlin, 2009). The findings and literature suggest this is particularly the case where the absence of substantive incentive and enforcement mechanisms within formal governance processes is unlikely to enhance downwards accountability (Booth, 2012, Brett, 2003). The dialogue approach therefore suggests that Ugandan NGOs can engage in social accountability initiatives without undermining existing democratic institutions and processes (Goetz and Jenkins, 2005). Research evidence provides legitimacy as to the validity of the issues being debated (Bázan et al., 2008, Pollard and Court, 2008) and meets mutual needs across civil, political, and state divides (Patel and Mitlin, 2009) by making debates over public goods more inclusive, supplying political leaders with evidence for claims-making of civil servants (as cited by an LC5 Councillor in Kamwenge district) and civil servants with evidence for claims-making from more senior departments or ministries (as in the case of health sector staffing in Kamwenge district).

Outcomes have inevitably been constrained by the character of decentralised governance in Uganda discussed above and in more detail in Chapter 3. Deliberations about health or education service quality will have little or no influence over how resources are distributed because these decisions are made from the centre. In the case of health workers in Kamwenge, the PPEM research only contributed evidence towards an existing process of negotiation and

deliberation, and it is likely that the same decision would have been made with or without the dialogue process. The dialogues have focused both on issues of accountability and parental/service user responsibilities. However, the only two enforcement mechanisms that research participants discussed were focused on controlling the behaviour of parents and children. This suggests that research and inclusive dialogue are not strong mechanisms for the enforcement of social accountability within a patronage-based political system where power is highly centralised, even if these strategies have some positive outcomes for political capabilities.

8.5   Civil society building & creating deliberative spaces at regional level

8.5.1 Outcomes

The combined strategies of civil society building, deliberative space creation and locally generated research evidence have resulted in the emergence of new leaders, relationships and structures for a more grass-roots orientation to regional development planning. Within these processes and the created spaces that TCSO has cultivated, civil society actors have benefitted from political learning, there has been a shift in power relations between state and civil society, new patterns of representation have emerged in the form of more frequent and substantive representation of rural farmers by local rural elites, and a potential shift in international/local power relations is emerging in terms of agenda-setting for regional development planning (Williams, 2004, Mosse, 2010, Lukes, 2005).

Through the building of civil society capacities, relationship brokerage and channelling of international funds, TCSO has contributed to the proliferation of

development focused civil society organisations across the region working to empower rural communities and hold the state accountable for resource allocation and use. Leaders have emerged who are capable of challenging government for accountability and responsiveness in rural and urban spheres as evidenced by the demonstrations in Fort Portal, the civil society radio shows, and shifting relations between farmers and NAADS officials in Mahyoro. The Open Space processes leading to the formation of the Rwenzori Development Framework (RDF) have encouraged regional civil society leaders to plan on the basis of locally-generated evidence of grass roots experience and these new ways of thinking have cross-fertilised within the other regional deliberative spaces TCSO has convened. These outcomes provide support for the inclusive liberal case for linking civil society proliferation with democratisation (Hadenius and Uggla, 1996, World Bank, 2004), but by no means suggest that elite, non-membership, NGOs should be the preferred recipients of donor resources. Rather, the findings suggest that increased organisational capacity among popular membership organisations, leading in turn to the ability to federate and act as popular representative bodies (Webster, 2002, Agarwal, 2010. Mitlin, 2004) able to interact directly with market, state or political actors beyond the local level (Webster, 2002, Baluku et al., 2009, Ramesh, 2007), holds greater potential for increased political capabilities among rural citizens. NGOs like TCSO have the potential to perform a mediating function (Fowler, 2000) between these different kinds of actor at different levels of operation and governance.

By bringing farmer representatives into new deliberative spaces with state, political and other civil society actors through the Think Tank regional stakeholder forums and fora related to the Regional Development Framework (RDF), TCSO is already at least giving disadvantaged groups a greater voice within regional development

debates and decision-making about resource allocation (if only in relation to donor rather than state resources). The political learning experienced through participation in these spaces among farmer representatives and civil society actors also builds their capacity to engage in future struggles for more grass-roots oriented decision-making (White, 1996). Both the Think Tank and RDF promote a more conducive environment for the realisation of rights by rural communities by seeking to promote development approaches that build upon grass-roots led processes of participatory action learning rather than externally defined agendas. New ideas and ways of thinking are also emerging out of the processes TCSO is facilitating at regional level among civil society and state actors that reflect an emerging engagement with structural as well as technical development constraints.

Through the leadership retreats, civil society actors are learning how to engage with state and political actors from sub-county to national level and new relationships and alliances are emerging from these interactions which create potential future political opportunities (Cornwall and Coelho, 2007, Williams, 2004). TCSO is shaping the attitudes and behaviour of elected leaders and state officials in terms of building political will for cooperation across traditionally hostile ethnic and political boundaries for the benefit of rural communities in the region as well as receptivity to Think Tank research evidence and the experiences of civil society actors working at the grass roots. In this way they are beginning to tackle some of the negative effects of patronage politics while manipulating its own logic – i.e. appealing to their need to demonstrate positive outcomes to their clients or constituents by focusing on how to bring resources into the region as a whole and how to make development work for everyone's benefit. The opportunity created by promoting a more programmatic approach while 'working with the grain' of

patronage politics provides support for the case made for 'development patrimonialism' and collaborative problem-solving by locally-embedded actors (Booth, 2012).

A key question in assessing the long term potential of these outcomes for democratic development is whether and how TCSO and other NGOs can begin to build more transparent and stronger links between these regional processes and their work with local farmer groups and associations at the village and sub-county level. A second question is whether these spaces will ever have the potential for addressing more contentious accountability related issues such as leakage of funds and the withholding of contractual information on public services and infrastructure development at the district level.

8.5.2 Patronage, partnership and political acumen

The extent to which TCSO has been able to foster a more grass-roots orientation within regional development debates and planning processes has been significantly determined by the character of politics and political capacity within the organisation. The political acumen, relationship-building skills and value-driven leadership of the former Director led to a positive regional, national and international organisational profile, the generation of high levels of donor finance, and particularly a very positive relationship with a partnership-oriented donor. This donor has been a key enabling force in the shift towards locally-determined development approaches and interventions within the RDF. The significance of expert advisors, either well-informed about or with direct long-term experience of the political-economic and cultural context, who are able to offer advice or expertise without prescription or control, cannot be underestimated here. Their

significance in this case, adds credence to suggestions in the wider development literature that despite the complexities and inadequacy of much consultancy work (Mosse, 2005) such actors (e.g. locally-embedded/domestic consultants, academics, NGO workers) can play important supporting roles in effective development interventions and approaches (Jeppeson, 2002, Webster, 2002, Mitlin and Satterthwaite, 2007).

Patronage-politics can both create opportunities for those seeking to advance the interests of the poor and act as a barrier to pro-poor change (Booth and Golooba-Mutebi, 2011, Kelsall et al., 2010). The fact that the Rwenzori region is an NRM stronghold where patronage politics at the centre has benefitted many of the Batooro with central as well as local government appointments, has created both opportunities and challenges for civil society and TCSO in particular. Staff of TCSO have been able to capitalise on intra-elite relations within the NRM and attract national ministers to their leadership retreats, but there is also a strong suggestion that this political context has resulted in the co-optation of one of the region's strongest civil society leaders into the NRM. The semi-authoritarian tendencies of the state in the form of threats of dissolution for local CSOs have also kept civil society actors 'treading on egg shells' as one local opinion leader noted (CSO-Reg-11), while keeping development debate de-politicised. Centralised control over development resources and the dominance of the executive in parliament means that influence over regional leaders and MPs can only have a limited effect on how development interventions and services are delivered. Survivalist motivations and low levels of capacity for the facilitation of PAL-type methodologies among civil society participants in these regional processes is also likely to place a significant constraint on how well some of these plans and decisions are implemented in practice.

8.6 Political economy, political capacity and the prospects for social democratic change in Uganda

Having synthesised the findings from Chapters 5 to 7 into a concluding analysis, this next section draws some final conclusions about the political-economy and political capacity dimensions of the analytical framework introduced in Chapter 2. This leads into a brief discussion about the prospects for the emergence of a more redistributive development agenda in Uganda and the kinds of roles Ugandan NGOs might seek out in support of that agenda. The final section of the chapter then concludes the thesis by drawing wider conclusions and recommendations for development thinking and practice.

The concluding analysis suggests that it is the character of political society and the structure of societal power relations that have most prominently shaped the kinds of outcomes that TCSO has been able to achieve, and particularly the nexus between these fields. These fields overlap in terms of the ways in which socio-economic power relations have become intertwined with a history of political repression and deference to authority, and a culture of conflict avoidance, and the ways in which this shapes state/society relations and grass roots political agency. The influence of the civil society context on the outcomes TCSO has been able to achieve has been less pronounced, re-enforcing the case in the literature for studies of empowerment to focus more clearly on politics and power relations (Booth, 2012, Hickey, 2009b, Mosse, 2010) rather than assume the primary significance of 'civil society' depth and capacity (World Bank, 2004, Stiglitz, 1998). The international aid system significantly shapes both the technocratic nature of local government service provision (Craig and Porter, 2006, Francis and James,

2003) and the room for experimentation and ideological autonomy among NGOs (Bebbington et al., 2008, Guijt, 2008). NGO political capacity is therefore highly dependent upon both the political-economic and international aid environment. The analysis also provides further evidence for calls within the literature for a recognition of the complexity of facilitating grass roots conscientization (Farrington and Bebbington, 1993, Kaplan, 2000, Finkel and Ernst, 2005), and the criticality of NGOs focused on redistributive agendas engaging in careful and constant analysis of the political-economic and cultural environment they are operating within in order to develop strategies which explicitly tackle relations of power and disadvantage between citizens and between citizens and the state (Booth, 2012, Bukenya et al., 2012, Kelsall, 2008, Mosse, 2010, Moore, 2001). Figure 8.1 presents a final diagrammatic analysis of the interrelationship between the different dimensions of the framework outlined in Chapter 2.

NGO strategies alone will of course not be enough to bring transformative social democratic change to Uganda which will necessarily involve significant political and economic shifts (Sandbrook et al., 2007, Moore, 2001, Herring, 2003). Although political opposition is growing both within and outside the NRM, farmer associations remain weak and agriculture has not reached a level of commercialisation which other studies have found supportive for the emergence of social democratic agrarian movements (Sandbrook et al., 2007) or 'good governance' (North et al., 2009). Of the pathways associated with such developments, such as a political-economic shift from patronage to development patrimonialism (Booth and Golooba-Mutebi, 2011) or in the form of an alliance between a farmers movement and left of centre opposition force (Sandbrook et al., 2007) neither shows any clear sign of emerging in the short to medium term.

Figure 8.1 Cultivating supportive conditions for social democratic development

Inclusive liberalism and the international aid system

Political-Economic Environment
- **Character of political society**
- **Character of civil society**
- **Structure of societal power relations**

Analysing the strategic opportunities

Strategizing

Acting on the strategic opportunities

Structures the strategic possibilities

NGO Political Capacity & Strategies
- **Autonomy and commitment**
- **Analytical and strategic capacity**
- **Operational capacity**

Extent to which NGO strategies cultivate supportive conditions for social democratic development

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Civil society has nonetheless been found to be an important piece of the multi-faceted puzzle of such social democratic shifts (Evans, forthcoming, Sandbrook et al., 2007, Törnquist et al., 2009). The development of peasant associations is a foundational step towards agrarian change (Herring, 2003) and at the grass roots these associations appear to be having better outcomes for political capabilities among the rural poor than inclusive liberal participation. Farmer associations tackle socio-economic disadvantage and hence local networks of power while also engaging farmers across the socio-economic spectrum in processes of political learning which can lead to political representation. Supporting this kind of change is fraught with difficulties however and must be handled with great care so as not to have a negative impact (Bano, 2012, Bennett et al., 1996). The above analysis suggests that NGOs may be better focused on creating supportive conditions for farmers to self-organise, and within civic education initiatives as well, supporting existing processes of political challenge than trying to engineer processes of political empowerment themselves (Devarajan et al., 2011, Engberg-Pedersen and Webster, 2002, Hickey, 2002, Moore, 2001). Finally, although the research clearly points towards a need for a more programmatic approach to donor/NGO partnership, at the point of fieldwork, political pressures on donor agencies in Uganda were increasingly shifting their emphasis away from experimentation and towards pre-determined and measurable outcomes.

8.7 Cultivating supportive conditions for social democratic development: wider conclusions and recommendations

Ultimately, this thesis concludes that NGOs can contribute to the cultivation of supportive conditions for social democratic development, but that their strategies must be developed according to the particular temporal and spatial context they

are operating within by reading and exploiting the political-economic opportunities and acting within the boundaries of their own political capacity (as well as investing in capacity expansion). Certain guiding principles can be drawn from this study however, which may be of relevance to professionalised non-membership NGOs focused on a more equal distribution of resources and decision-making power, that are operating within the kinds of post-colonial contexts with predominantly agrarian economies and semi-authoritarian, patronage-based, political regimes that characterise much of sub-Saharan Africa.

8.7.1 Self-determination within immanent development

A clear message that emerges from the thesis is that the development industry must move away from designing development and shift towards a more nuanced understanding of development as an immanent process of cultural, social and political-economic change. The critical modernist epistemology that has guided the research seeks solutions to disadvantage in the strategies employed by local actors. This perspective is supported by repeated intimations both in the findings here and within the development literature that self-determination or locally-determined development approaches and decision-making are likely to generate more empowering development outcomes. Examples include: the problems inherent in imposing Western liberal democratic institutional forms on non-Western contexts (Ferguson, 2007); the constraints on innovation created by externally defined donor agendas, targets and timescales (Thomas, 2008); the democratic deficit created by highly centralized control of development resources (Craig and Porter, 2006, Francis and James, 2003); and the dependency syndrome among some communities and popular organisations resulting from their positioning as

'beneficiaries' of externally designed NGO interventions or grants rather than autonomous political agents (Bano, 2012).

For NGOs and their donors, this might mean considering and continuously reflecting on how interventions facilitate people to analyse their situation, make plans, and take action in response – either (and perhaps most critically) individually, as a household, as a group, or as a community. The thesis suggests that the same guiding principle also has relevance at a higher level. NGOs can provide space, opportunity and a workable process for networks of civil society organisations or state, political and civil society actors to raise their heads above their everyday practices, consider the evidence, ask questions and possibly, as a result, begin to think differently. Of course, for pro-poor change to follow, such processes also need other factors to be present including internal state reformers with the power to push alternative approaches and agendas, or powerful alliances outside the state able to exert sufficient pressure through political opposition (Sandbrook et al., 2007, Herring, 2003). A guiding principle of self-determination suggests that development actors are more likely to enhance political capabilities among disadvantaged groups by supporting them to a) make socio-economic progress, b) become organised c) develop the necessary skills and knowledge to advance their interests; and d) cultivate opportunities for direct engagement with power holders and decision-makers.

8.7.2 Popular organisation building

The thesis therefore supports Törnquist et al.'s' (2009) conclusion that 'popular organisation building' of both interest-based and identity-based membership organisations is a key facet of promoting a more substantive democracy, and

arguments in the cooperative literature for the potential of 'producer collectivities' in agrarian economies to enhance political capabilities (Agarwal, 2010, Kabeer et al., 2010). This case study and the wider literature suggest that NGOs need to support these organisations in ways which avoid creating relations of dependency or the creation of donor-driven structures that lack ownership and political agency. NGOs interested in reshaping power relations also need strategies for supporting the most disadvantaged groups to self-organize – like TCSO has attempted with its micro-enterprise initiative for the chronic poor, and to enable groups to develop at their own pace while also recognizing the power of federated structures (Bano, 2012, Mitlin, 2004, Thorp et al., 2005, White 1996). The thesis and literature suggest that groups organising around both livelihood and social justice may have the most empowering outcomes in terms of political capabilities (Bianchi, 2002, Kabeer et al., 2010), and that once again, PAL processes when facilitated by skilled and experienced activists are a proven strategy for catalysing organisational development and empowerment within local membership organisations (Bianchi, 2002, Bennett et al., 1996, Baluku et al., 2009).

There is a shortage of up to date research into the political potential of producer collectivities, (or into recent dynamics within the cooperative sector in general for sub-Saharan Africa), and into the kinds of strategies that have effectively catalysed political agency among these actors while avoiding the perpetuation of patron/client relations in particular contexts. These gaps have been highlighted in several recent studies and reviews (Agarwal, 2010, Flygare, 2006, Gaventa and Barrett, 2010, ILO, 2008, Kabeer et al., 2010). This thesis suggests that support for socio-economic and organisational development needs to be combined with the fostering of political learning which equips members with the necessary skills and knowledge to advance their interests and the ability to cultivate opportunities

for direct engagement with power holders and decision-makers – be they market, political, state or civil society actors. In a situation where disadvantaged groups are not adequately prepared for direct representation, non-membership NGOs might engage in a range of strategies to marry their representation of these groups as professional educated elites, with direct popular representation from these groups (Törnquist et al., 2009). These might include, joint representation within deliberative or decision-making fora (offering the opportunity for mentoring), establishing robust formalised links with popular membership organisations and clear processes for representation and accountability (Michael, 2004), and popular participation in priority-setting and monitoring and evaluating an NGO's interventions (Miraftab, 1997, Shah and Shah, 1995, Symes and Jasser, 1998).

8.7.3 Brokering popular / elite linkages and generating research evidence

Ideally then, supportive conditions for social democratic development involve popular actors acting on their own behalf to cultivate interfaces with power holders that will enable them to advance their interests. The thesis suggests that NGOs can play an important mediating role however in the transition to a situation where sufficient popular political capabilities exist for this to happen. NGOs have a key role to play in generating research evidence that can advance popular interests and enabling popular and civil society actors to use this to their advantage (Bázan et al., 2008). The thesis also supports arguments for the adoption of collaborative approaches which address the mutual needs of civil, political and state actors (Patel and Mitlin, 2009), or of 'moderate rhetoric' (Sandbrook et al., 2007) that does not alienate power holders, by activists in semi-authoritarian or patronage-based contexts.

NGOs interested in building receptivity to alternative ways of thinking about and doing development and ultimately a more equal distribution of power and resources need to be good at power analysis and develop strategies that engage existing power holders – again in both formal and informal terms. NGOs may help to foster government commitment to the facilitation of popular representation (Törnquist et al., 2009) by demonstrating how the integration of elite and popular representation can be mutually beneficial and potentially build support for the existing political regime. Engaging, in other words, in a strategy of 'political scaling up' of alternative approaches to governance (Uvin and Miller, 1996).

In order to facilitate linkages between popular and elite actors and to bring together state, political and civil society actors, NGOs need the kind of convening power cultivated by TCSO which was built upon its strategic hybridity – TCSO was engaged in multiple types of intervention at local, district, regional and national levels with actors from across these societal spheres. Leaders have therefore had the necessary relationships and networks and to some extent understanding of 'the rules of the game' across these different fields to mediate and negotiate new deliberative spaces that bring different kinds of actors together in new and productive ways. They were also aided by the carrot of new locally generated research evidence, and sufficient resources to carry these kinds of processes forward – assets which few other actors within the region could boast of. Development NGOs may therefore need to make a choice between selecting a particular area of expertise – like popular capacity building or research and advocacy – or building up a portfolio of interventions that can afford them the relationships and the convening power for a more holistic approach. The danger with the latter choice is that, like TCSO investigated here, NGOs end up in competition with the very organisations they set out to empower.

8.7.4 NGO political capacity

As the literature and thesis suggest, these strategies require a high degree of NGO political capacity, particularly for those organisations who seek to link these strategies together for a more holistic effect on both political-economic change and the development industry. The question remains as to how these skills can be developed in contexts with a wider political capacity deficit. One way in which TCSO capacity has been enhanced has been through interaction with external advisers with particular areas of expertise, and a number of other studies have highlighted the important role that academics and advisors can play in capability-enhancing and problem-solving processes (Booth, 2012, Jeppeson, 2002, Webster, 2002, Mitlin and Satterthwaite, 2007).

Development actors of various kinds could be looking at ways of facilitating the placement of experienced experts – able to adopt an empowering approach – within civil society (and indeed within political society and state arenas). External actors need to commit to engagement over the long term however to provide them with the necessary depth of understanding about particular political-economic contexts. While North – South knowledge transfer is important, this kind of strategy should also (perhaps predominantly in terms of sustainability and contextual awareness) focus on facilitating the cross fertilisation of ideas and experience across movements and organisations within developing regions (Patel, 2004).

8.7.5 Aid and the principle of self-determination

NGO political capacity for the design and implementation of empowering strategies is largely determined by having financial resources that allow for experimentation and open-ended outcomes, and for investing in human resource development. It is also enhanced by partnership relations with donor agencies that demonstrate an ideological and operational commitment to alternative development approaches and empowerment (Guijt, 2008). While political pressures for demonstrable results from development aid continue to constrain its potential for empowerment (Booth, 2012), alternative ways of funding development actors focused on reshaping power relations and tackling inequality also continue to emerge –the partnership between IIED and SDI is one example (Chapter 2). At a time when donor agencies are contemplating the post-2015 development agenda and issues of inequality are gaining a greater share of the limelight (World Bank, 2006) more effective advocacy work is desperately required to 'convince ministers, parliaments and the voting public in the North' of the need for a radical shift in approach (Booth, 2012: 95). In support of this, more research is needed into the relationship between aid and empowerment and how the principle of self-determination can play a stronger role in shaping the operations of development finance.

8.7.6   Adjusting the sails

NGOs are not the most critical actors in driving forward winds of social democratic change within a semi-authoritarian regime like Museveni's Uganda, but given sufficient room for experimentation, freedom of association and political capacity, they can 'adjust the sails'. That is to say that they can shape existing processes in ways that contribute to political learning, the formation of new relationships and alliances, and new ways of thinking about what to do with individual, household,

associational and government resources. NGOs can contribute to shifts in the balance of power at different societal levels by facilitating the accumulation of socio-economic power among disadvantaged groups; catalysing latent forms of political agency and capabilities; identifying and building alliances with reform-minded power holders; being ready to take advantage of critical junctures like political and economic shifts and crises; and, most critically, creating opportunities for people to raise their head above the muddy waters of the everyday, reflect on what else is possible, and support them to follow that vision.

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Appendix 1: Fieldwork timeline

Phase I: Set up and pilot (July – Sept 2010)
• Volunteer placement within the organisation piloting participant observation method and developing understanding of rights and governance projects
• Formative discussions with staff, CPFs and other relevant local actors to assess the practicability and suitability of the research design to the organisational practice and field sites and to inform sampling decisions
• Building relationships of trust and developing contacts for future fieldwork
• Pilot interviews and focus group discussions with staff in the case study organisation and in the pilot sub-county
• FGDs with rights and governance staff, senior managers and CPFs
• Recruitment of research assistant
• Language training in Rutooro (following weekly informal classes in the UK)
• Feedback and reflection with staff about initial themes emerging from first three months with the organisation

Phase II: Analysis and Refinement (Oct – Nov 2010)
• Processing and analysis of pilot data – creation of tentative analytical categories
• Refinement of research design

Phase III: Data generation (Dec 2010 – Aug 2011)	
Dec 2010 – Jan 2011	• PO at annual staff reflection • Interviews with staff, CPFs, civil society representatives
Jan – Feb- 2011	• Data generation in sub-county A • On-going PO within TCSO • On-going data generation with district and regional level participants
March – April	• Processing and analysis of pilot data – creation of tentative analytical categories • Trip to Kampala for national level data generation and use of facilities at Makerere University
Apr – June 2011	• Data generation in sub-county B • On-going PO within TCSO • On-going data generation with district and regional level participants
July 2011	• Data processing and analysis – creation of tentative analytical categories • Trip to Kampala for national level data generation and use of facilities at Makerere University
August 2011	• Feedback and reflection sessions with organisations and communities who participated in the research and staff teams / senior managers of the case study organisation

Appendix 2: Data generation events

1. Focus group discussions and staff reflections

Reference code	Participant/source	Location/level
Villagers-BK-1	Village residents	Bukuuku
Villagers-BK-2	Village residents	Bukuuku
Villagers-BK-3	Village residents	Bukuuku
Elders-BK-1	Elders	Bukuuku
LCI-BK-1	LC1 councillors	Bukuuku
CPF-MY-1	CPF Mahyoro: first interview	Mahyoro
CPF-MY-2	CPF Mahyoro: second interview	Mahyoro
CPF-MY-3	CPF Mahyoro: third interview	Mahyoro
Elders-MY-1	Elders	Mahyoro
FarmerGp-MY-2	Members of farmer group	Mahyoro
FarmerGp-MY-3	Members of farmer group	Mahyoro
FarmerGp-MY-6	Members of farmer group	Mahyoro
FarmerGp-MY-7	Members of farmer group	Mahyoro
FarmerGp-MY-8	Members of farmer group	Mahyoro
HUMC-MY-1	Members of HUMC	Mahyoro
PComm-P-1	Peace committee members	Pilot sub-county
MA-1	Members of a Marketing Association	Sub-county level
MA-2	Members of a Marketing Association	Sub-county level
TCSO-SM-2	Senior managers of TCSO	The case study organisation
CSO-Nat-3	Members of the Uganda National NGO Forum	National level

2. Interviews

Reference code	Participant/source	Location/level
CPF-BK-1	CPF Bukuuku: first interview	Bukuuku
CPF-BK-2	CPF Bukuuku: second interview	Bukuuku
CPF-BK-3	CPF Bukuuku: third interview	Bukuuku
Villagers-BK-4	Village resident	Bukuuku
Villagers-BK-5	Village resident	Bukuuku
FarmerGp-BK-1	Member of farmer group	Bukuuku
FarmerGp-BK-2	Member of farmer group	Bukuuku
LCI-BK-2	LC1 councillor	Bukuuku
NRM-BK-1	LC1 flag bearer	Bukuuku
LCII-BK-1	LC2 councillor	Bukuuku

LCIII-BK-1	LC3 councillor	Bukuuku
LCIII-BK-2	LC3 councillor	Bukuuku
ParishChief-BK-1	Parish chief	Bukuuku
SubC-CS-BK-1	Sub-county civil servant	Bukuuku
SubC-CS-BK-2	Sub-county civil servant	Bukuuku
Teacher-BK-1	Teacher	Bukuuku
Teacher-BK-2	Teacher	Bukuuku
Teacher-BK-3	Teacher	Bukuuku
Teacher-BK-4	Teacher	Bukuuku
Teacher-BK-5	Teacher	Bukuuku
Teacher-BK-6	Teacher	Bukuuku
SMC-BK-1	SMC member	Bukuuku
SMC-BK-2	SMC member	Bukuuku
SMC-BK-3	SMC member	Bukuuku
PTA-BK-1	PTA member	Bukuuku
PTA-BK-2	PTA member	Bukuuku
PTA-BK-3	PTA member	Bukuuku
PTA-BK-4	PTA member	Bukuuku
PTA-BK-5	PTA member	Bukuuku
PTA-BK-6	PTA member	Bukuuku
PTA-BK-2	PTA member	Bukuuku
PTA-BK-7	PTA member	Bukuuku
PTA-BK-8	PTA member	Bukuuku
Parent-BK-1	Parent	Bukuuku
District-CS-KB-1	District civil servant	Kabarole
LCV-KB-1	LC5 councillor	Kabarole
FarmerGp-MY-4	Member of farmer group	Mahyoro
FarmerGp-MY-5	Member of farmer group	Mahyoro
FarmerGp-MY-9	Member of farmer group	Mahyoro
CBO-MY-1	Staff of a CBO	Mahyoro
CBO-MY-2	Staff of a CBO	Mahyoro
CBO-MY-3	Staff of a CBO	Mahyoro
CBO-MY-4	Staff of a CBO	Mahyoro
CBO-MY-5	Staff of a CBO	Mahyoro
LCI-MY-1	LC1 councillor	Mahyoro
LCI-MY-2	LC1 councillor	Mahyoro
LCI-MY-3	LC1 councillor	Mahyoro
LCI-MY-4	LC1 councillor	Mahyoro
LCI-MY-5	LC1 councillor	Mahyoro
LCII-MY-1	LC2 councillor	Mahyoro
LCII-MY-2	LC2 councillor	Mahyoro
LCIII-MY-1	LC3 councillor	Mahyoro
LCIII-MY-2	LC3 councillor	Mahyoro
SubC-CS-MY-1	Sub-county civil servant	Mahyoro
HealthW-MY-1	Health worker	Mahyoro
VHT-MY-1	Member of a village health team	Mahyoro
Teacher-MY-1	Teacher	Mahyoro
Teacher-MY-2	Teacher	Mahyoro
Teacher-MY-3	Teacher	Mahyoro
Teacher-MY-4	Teacher	Mahyoro

PTA-MY-1	PTA member	Mahyoro
PTA-MY-2	PTA member	Mahyoro
PTA-MY-3	PTA member	Mahyoro
PTA-MY-4	PTA member	Mahyoro
LCV-MY-1	LC5 councillor	Mahyoro
LCV-MY-2	LC5 flag bearer	Mahyoro
LCV-MY-3	LC5 councillor	Mahyoro
District-CS-KM-1	District civil servant	Kamwenge District
District-CS-KM-2	District civil servant	Kamwenge District
District-CS-KM-3	District civil servant	Kamwenge District
Villagers-P-1	Two village residents	Pilot sub-county
Villagers-P-2	Two village residents	Pilot sub-county
FamerGp-P-1	Member of farmer group and LC2 councillor	Pilot sub-county
LCI-P-1	LC1 councillor	Pilot sub-county
LCIII-P-1	LC3 councillor	Pilot sub-county
ParishChief-P-1	Parish chief	Pilot sub-county
SubC-CS-P-1	Sub-county civil servant	Pilot sub-county
HealthW-P-1	Health worker	Pilot sub-county
TCSO-SM-3	Senior manager of TCSO	The case study organisation
TCSO-SM-4	Senior manager of TCSO	The case study organisation
TCSO-SM-5	Senior manager of TCSO	The case study organisation
TCSO-SM-6	Senior manager of TCSO	The case study organisation
TCSO-KI-1	Key informant with strong links to TCSO	The case study organisation
TCSO-KI-2	Key informant with strong links to TCSO	The case study organisation
TCSO-KI-3	Key informant with strong links to TCSO	The case study organisation
TCSO-staff-1	Staff member of TCSO	The case study organisation
TCSO-staff-2	Staff member of TCSO	The case study organisation
TCSO-staff-3	Staff member of TCSO	The case study organisation
TCSO-staff-4	Staff member of TCSO	The case study organisation
CPF-OTHER-1	CPF of TCSO	The case study organisation
CPF-OTHER-2	CPF of TCSO	The case study organisation
CPF-OTHER-3	CPF of TCSO	The case study organisation
CPF-OTHER-4	CPF of TCSO	The case study organisation
CPF-OTHER-5	CPF of TCSO	The case study organisation
CPF-OTHER-7	CPF of TCSO	The case study

		organisation
International-1	International development actor linked to TCSO	International / TCSO
International-2	International development actor linked to TCSO	International / TCSO
CSO-district-1	Staff member of a civil society organisation	Operating at district level
CSO-district-2	Staff member of a civil society organisation	Operating at district level
CSO-district-3	Staff member of a civil society organisation	Operating at district level
CSO-district-4	Staff member of a civil society organisation	Operating at district level
CSO-Reg-1	Staff member of a civil society organisation	Operating across more than one district / regional level
CSO-Reg-2	Staff member of a civil society organisation	Operating across more than one district / regional level
CSO-Reg-3	Staff member of a civil society organisation	Operating across more than one district / regional level
CSO-Reg-4	Staff member of a civil society organisation	Operating across more than one district / regional level
CSO-Reg-5	Staff member of a civil society organisation	Operating across more than one district / regional level
CSO-Reg-6	Staff member of a civil society organisation	Operating across more than one district / regional level
CSO-Reg-7	Staff member of a civil society organisation	Operating across more than one district / regional level
CSO-Reg-8	Staff member of a civil society organisation	Operating across more than one district / regional level
CSO-Reg-9	Staff member of a civil society organisation	Operating across more than one district / regional level
CSO-Reg-10	Staff member of a civil society organisation	Operating across more than one district / regional level
CSO-Reg-11	Staff member of a civil society organisation	Operating across more than one district / regional level
CSO-Nat-1	Staff member of a civil society organisation	National level
CSO-Nat-2	Staff member of a civil society organisation	National level
CSO-Nat-4	Staff member of a civil society organisation	National level

	Staff member of a civil society organisation	National level
CSO-Nat-5		
CivServ-District	District civil servant in district local government	District level
CivServ-National-1	Civil servant in central government	National level
CivServ-National-2	Civil servant in central government	National level
CivServ-National-3	Civil servant in central government	National level
Journo-1	Journalist	National level
MinLocGov	Minister of Local Government	National level

3. Fieldwork notes from participant observation

Reference code	Participant/source	Location/level
SchRecs-BK-1	School records	Bukuuku
SchObs-BK-1	School observation	Bukuuku
SchObs-BK-2	School observation	Bukuuku
SchObs-BK-3	School observation	Bukuuku
SchObs-BK-4	School observation	Bukuuku
SchObs-BK-5	School observation	Bukuuku
SchObs-BK-6	School observation	Bukuuku
CPFreports-BK-1	CPF reports for Bukuuku	TCSO/ Bukuuku
SchObs-MY-1	School observation	Mahyoro
SchObs-MY-2	School observation	Mahyoro
SchObs-MY-3	School observation	Mahyoro
SchObs-MY-4	School observation	Mahyoro
Dialogue-MY-1	Dialogue observation	Mahyoro
Meeting-MY-1	Village meeting observation	Mahyoro
CPFreports-MY-1	CPF reports for Mahyoro	TCSO/ Mahyoro
Sch-summary	Summary of school data	Bukuuku and Mahyoro
CPFreports-P-1	CPF reports for pilot sub-county	Pilot sub-county
TCSO-FN-1	Notes summary from pre-fieldwork visit in Dec 2009	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-2	Observation of leadership retreat in Dec 2009	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-3	Notes summary from staff meetings of TCSO 2010-11	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-4	Notes summary from review of TCSO financial records	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-5	Informal conversation - staff	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-6	Informal conversation - staff	The case study organisation

TCSO-FN-7	Informal conversation - staff	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-8	Informal conversation - staff	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-9	Informal conversation - staff	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-10	Informal conversation - staff	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-11	Informal conversation - staff	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-12	Informal conversation – senior manager	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-13	Informal conversation - staff	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-14	Informal conversation – senior manager	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-15	Informal conversation – advisor	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-16	Informal conversation – advisor	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-17	Informal conversation – advisor	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-18	Informal conversation – advisor	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-19	Informal conversation – senior manager	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-20	Staff reflection	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-21	Staff reflection	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-22	Staff reflection	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-23	Staff reflection	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-24	Staff reflection	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-25	Staff reflection	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-26	Staff reflection	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-27	Staff reflection	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-28	Village meeting observation	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-29	District dialogue observation	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-30	Village meeting observation	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-31	Village meeting observation	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-32	Village meeting observation	The case study organisation

TCSO-FN-33	Village meeting observation	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-34	SMC training observation	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-35	MA meeting observation	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-36	Regional MFA meeting observation	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-37	MA meeting observation	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-38	MA training observation	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-39	Staff reflection	The case study organisation
TCSO-FN-40	Notes summary from Think Tank meetings	
CSO-district-5	Data summary from participant observation notes, interviews and FGDs with staff and members of this farmer cooperative	Farmer cooperative operating across three sub-counties of the same district
CSO-reg-12	AGM observation	Operating across more than one district / regional level
CSO-reg-13	AGM observation	Operating across more than one district / regional level
CSO-reg-14	Observation of regional civil society event	Regional level
CSO-reg-15	Observation of regional civil society event	Regional level
CSO-reg-16	Data summary from PO notes, interviews and FGDs with staff and members of an advocacy organisation	Membership NGO operating across five districts
CSO-nat-6	Observation of national civil society event	National level
CSO-nat-7	Observation of national civil society event	National level

Appendix 3: Weighting of data generation events

1. The case study organisation

Total number of formal interviews with staff and advisors: 11
Total number of informal conversations with staff recorded as field notes: 15
Total number of reflections or FGDs facilitated with staff: 5
Total number of reflections or FGDs facilitated with CPFs: 3
Total number of formal interviews with CPFs: 9
Total number of meetings or events I attended as participant/observer: 19

2. Civil society

Total number of interviews with local non-membership NGO staff: 7
Total number of interviews with national non-membership NGO staff: 4
Total number of reflections or FGDs facilitated with local/national non-membership NGOs: 4
Total number of local/national civil society meetings/events attended (not just TCSO): 6
Total number of 'other civil society' interviews (e.g. religious/cultural/media): 3
Total number of interviews with donor representatives: 2

3. Local associations (association members are also counted as local residents under next section)

Total number of interviews with members of local membership CBOs: 11
Total number of reflections/FGDs with members of local membership CBOs: 7
Total number of interviews with members of school or health unit affiliated associations/committees: 16
Total number of FGDs with members of school or health unit affiliated associations/committees: 2

4. Other village residents/parents/elders:

Total number of village and school meetings observed: 7
Total number of interviews with villagers/parents: 5
Total number of FGDs with villagers/parents: 3
Total number of FGDs with elders: 2

5. Local government actors

Total number of interviews with LC1 to LC3 councillors or 'flag bearers': 15
Total number of FGDs with LC1 to LC3 councillors: 1
Total number of interviews with LC5 councillors: 4
Total number of interviews with parish/sub-county civil servants: 6
Total number of interviews with district civil servants: 5

6. National government actors

Total number of interviews with (current or former) MPs or Ministers: 3
Total number of interviews with national civil servants: 3