

KAMPALA CITY

Stimulus Paper PASCAL International Exchanges

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Kampala City has evolved from a small town of 8 km² through a “City of Seven hills” at independence in 1962 to one of the fastest growing cities in Africa. Today Kampala City occupies more than twenty five hills that include Makerere Hill on which the country’s biggest and oldest university is located (Kibirige, 2006). The hills have steep slopes separated by wide valleys. The city derives its name from the land of “Impala” (antelope) that roamed the area before it was taken over for human settlement. The first administrative post was set up at Old Kampala Hill by Lord Lugard (British Administrator) in 1890 covering an area of 0.68 km². It was gazetted into a town council in 1906 with an area of 8 km² and was extended to cover an area of approximately 195 km² in 1968.

In 1962, Kampala replaced Entebbe as the capital of Uganda. Despite its proximity (32 km) to the equator, the city has a moderate climate, largely because of its altitude (about 1,220 m). Kampala City is located in the central region of the country, which experienced the first contact with European Missionaries and Arab traders at the turn of the previous century. The City today has grown into a commercial, educational, cultural and administrative centre of Uganda with an approximate population of 2.5 million people. Considering that the population was 330,700 in 1969, 1,208,544 million in 2002, and 1,811.794 in 2010, this signals rapid urbanization in the country. Urbanization in Uganda is increasing at an estimated 5.6% per annum (Nyakana *et al*, 2007). Currently the urban population in Uganda is around 15% and is projected to reach 40% in 2025 of which the majority will be in Kampala City. Of course the stimulus for this rapid urbanization has been the rapid economic growth in the 1990s to date after the turbulent and destructive years of Idi Amin (1970s) and Milton Obote (1980s). Today the youth of Uganda (15 – 35 years) which make up nearly 55% of the population are on the move from the seemingly deprived rural areas to places of endowment such as Kampala.

The unprecedented population increase in Kampala City is responsible for increased demand for employment, land for housing, social services and infrastructure that have stimulated spatial urban development and industrialization. Though the current population increase can be seen as positive development since it could potentially cause an increase in employment opportunities, housing stock, social services and infrastructure expansion, such development is however occurring in a haphazard manner largely dominated by the urban informality in most of the sectors. Thus there is growth of unplanned informal housing, and challenges related to solid waste accumulation, wetland encroachment and destruction, water pollution and land use/cover change that are reducing the ecological services from the natural environment of the metropolitan area (NEMA 2009/10; Matagi 2001). As a result, the living environment of the urban poor in the city is deplorable with poor sanitation, inadequate housing, poorly managed solid and human wastes, increased water pollution and reduction in ecological services. Kampala generates an estimated 30,000 tones of waste per month, most of which is composed of vegetable matter (73.8%). The average per capita solid waste generation rate is 0.6-kg/per person/per day with a high organic content and bulky density (NEMA, 2009/10). Solid waste management is therefore one of the most urgent problems in Kampala that has undermined the City Council’s capacity for proper management (KCC, 1998). There is also a growing army of unemployed but highly ‘educated’ youth, sprawling settlements particularly in low lying areas or wetlands, increasing poverty gap between the

well to do and the urban poor especially amidst the rising cost of living, congestion characterized by traffic jams and pollution among others.

The physical expansion of Kampala has been “guided” by different physical planning schemes. The first one was produced in 1912 and others were produced in 1919, 1930, 1972 and 1994 when a structural plan was made. Despite these planning schemes, developments in Kampala especially housing have continued to be haphazard, unplanned and located outside planned area. This is blamed on Kampala City Council’s (KCC’s) failure to implement/enforce the planning schemes, continued political interference, conflicting land use policies, and uncoordinated planning between KCC and the Ministry of Local Government.

Kampala enjoyed the urban administration monopolistic statutory requirement of collection, storage and disposal of waste (KCC 1995). With inadequate supply of skips and trucks, it has led to accumulation of garbage as well as emergence of illegal dumping sites. Realizing the daunting challenge of keeping the city free of accumulating rotting garbage, KCC embarked on a policy reform to revise the solid waste management ordinances. In 2004, this ushered in private involvement in collection and transportation of wastes to the landfill. KCC is only left with disposal while collection and transportation is fully privatized with households paying some money per month for the emptying of their waste storage facilities.

However, there are unconventional methods of waste disposal that are being employed by sections of the city dwellers such as dumping of polythene waste in water drainage channels leading to their blockage and subsequent flooding of the low lying areas during the rainy season (Lwasa 2004). Flooding causes loss of property, time and even life. Consequently this has exacerbated vulnerability of Kampala’s population and communities to natural disasters. Climate change adaptation is therefore one of the biggest challenges facing the population in Kampala City while coping strategies for the urban poor remain weak.

The recent changes in the administrative set up of the city, which include setting up of a metropolitan city with an authority, offers opportunities for reversing some of the current adverse trends. For instance, since 2011, garbage collection has improved as have the provision of other services. Uganda is rapidly becoming a tourist centre in the region and this could spiral further growth and development of Kampala City. All these forces need synergy and partnership from educational and other institutions/organizations. The growing complexity of the issues confronting City administrations means that partnerships with relevant organisations are needed in order to harness all available resources in addressing these challenges. The School of Education, Makerere University is willing to work with Kampala City Authority in the development and implementation of both short term and long term strategies for the sustainable development of the city. Particular areas where the School could make a contribution include design of strategies for the provision of quality education of the urban poor, environmental education or more widely, education for sustainable development. Education clusters in the city could be linked to the School of Education, Makerere University. Already other colleges such as College of Engineering, Design, Arts and Technology are providing critical input into the planning of city roads and buildings in the form of studies and consultancies. The army of the unemployed youth need skills in technical and vocational areas, and the University would provide some useful inputs in this area. Initial contacts with one of the new KCCA directors in charge of Public health and environment have began but this process is expected to take some time as both parties try to understand the nature of the partnership.

Other non-governmental organizations such as Uganda Wildlife Society and Nature Uganda, if already not working with KCCA, will be encouraged to join KCCA and the College of Education & External Studies in these interventions. The interventions could benefit both

KCCA and the University in a number of ways. KCCA could improve the implementation of its strategic plan in the area of education, employment of the youth in productive ventures, public health and the creation of a healthy living environment in the city for all its inhabitants; and share its experiences with other city authorities and people. The College of Education and External Studies could strengthen the quality of its outreach programmes, expand its networks, design short courses and make appropriate reforms in the training curricula where necessary. A memorandum of understanding could be signed by both parties to ease the implementation of the partnership if found necessary. In our view, these endeavours would truly make Kampala City Authority a learning organization. According to Peter Senge (1990: 3) a learning organization is one:

... where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning to see the whole together.

The basic rationale for such organizations is that in situations of rapid change such as Kampala City is currently experiencing, only those that are flexible, adaptive and productive will succeed. For this to happen, it is argued, the City authorities need to ‘discover how to tap people’s commitment and capacity to improve the situation (Peter Senge, 1990: 4).

The basic objective of the partnership between Makerere University’s College of Education and External Studies and Kampala City Authority would be to mobilize human resources to address the key challenges facing Kampala City in order to truly transform it into a learning city. The following areas could form the nuclei of this partnership:

1. Environmental Education/Climate change education of the public regarding the conservation of important ecological sites in the City for recreation and other purposes, to minimize adverse environmental impacts
2. Conducting and disseminating research findings in many areas such as hygiene, water & sanitation (WASH); City planning and infrastructure development.
3. Up-skilling of youth and vulnerable groups in vocational and technical education; project planning, implementation and administration and adult literacy programmes for the urban poor
4. To initiate projects for the greening of the City through tree planting, planned urban agriculture etc
5. Linking City schools to the University’s School of Education in order to improve the quality of learning, particularly in peri-urban areas.

The linkage with other cities in the Project should enable further exchange and sharing of information and ideas in order to identify the best practices and areas which need improvements. The Project has the potential to encourage real twinning between cities in the developed and developing countries and among the cities of the developing countries which could further strengthen partnerships.

Discussion questions

1. Can you suggest ways in which the areas proposed for partnership between the College of Education and External Studies and Kampala City Authority could be progressed in a holistic and strategic way?
2. What should be the initial steps be in progressing such a partnership?
3. What innovative links might be made with another PIE city with similar interests and concerns?
4. In what ways might such links be progressed for mutual benefit?

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