

Namatala 2008



[“By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers”]

This document is the shorter report on visits to Namatala district , Mbale in 2007 and 2008, by Prof David Jenkins

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Any remaining mistakes are my sole responsibility.

David Jenkins, September 2008

Front cover

The front cover shows children in Namatala playful in front of camera. © David Jenkins 2008

The quotation on the cover page is Millenium Development Goal, Target 11

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Summary

Namatata is a slum district of Mbale city in Uganda. Namatata qualifies as a slum against all the UN indicators. In fact, Namatata is the biggest slum in one of the poorer regions in one of the poorest countries on earth. Uganda is rated 154th out of 177 countries in the United Nations Human Development Index.

Past efforts to ameliorate the situation in Namatata have not proven sustainable. A very high proportion of the population of Namatata live in extreme poverty by UN definitions. Natural resources are dwindling; changing climate, the HIV/Aids pandemic and civil unrest in neighbouring areas has intensified the problems.

While the needs of Namatata are urgent, any attempt to tackle them has to look to the long term.

The United Nations has set out targets for improving slum settlements. Unfortunately in Uganda there is little progress and no means of objectively quantifying it if there were. One urgent task at Namatata is to define data needs and begin long term data capture.

There has been no integrated approach to governance of Namatata.

Nevertheless

the government of Uganda, while lacking resources, is keen to see improvement and supportive of attempts to meet the challenge of improving the lives of slum dwellers.

there is a strengthening higher education sector that is capable of making a significant contribution to the challenge.

the PONT/ Mbale Partnership (www.pont-mbale.org.uk) is forging a coalition that embraces churches, the local government of Mbale region and several NGO's with a commitment to tackle poverty in Mbale.

Building on the PONT model to the point where a significant impact is made on urban poverty in Mbale will require

significant additional resources

a closer mutual understanding of principles and their application

strong multi-stakeholder partnerships to realise the potential

community engagement and empowerment.

This presents a significant challenge to PONT and its coalition partners, including the University of Glamorgan.

Introduction and Aims

The aim of my two visits to Mbale, Uganda (October 2007 and May 2008) was to develop an initial understanding of needs and perceptions within the informal settlement at Namatala, the very poorest part of this fast growing urban area, and to review these in the context of Millennium Development Goal (MDG) Target 11, indicators 31 and 32. (viz. "Proportion of urban population with access to improved sanitation" and "Proportion of households with access to secure tenure.")

Mbale is a district in the eastern administrative division of Uganda. It has an area of 2,466.7 square kilometres and the 2002 census counted a population of 721,242. Its central town and commercial centre is Mbale, the third largest of Uganda, with a population of approximately 70,000. Like many urban centres in developing nations, the town is growing rapidly.

On the first visit, I was able to make 5 visits to Namatala with representatives of NGO's, local churches, the local community representative (LC1) and the Women's Group of Mvule cell (a district within Namatala). On the second visit, the aims were to

- build on the initial intelligence through further visits to Namatala, meeting with local church leaders and JENGA, an NGO in the PONT coalition, embedded in the district

- cast the net more widely and encounter some of those agencies that hold the key to unlocking the development of Namatala or who are charged with monitoring progress towards MDG goals: Mbale District Council, UNDP, British Council/ DfID, UN Habitat

- develop an understanding of the role of the University sector in addressing these issues (Makerere, Islamic University In Uganda and Uganda Christian University at Mukono).

The following pages record my observations to date.

The longer term aims are to

- develop a longitudinal study (the intention is that subsequent reports will follow). This report also serves as an invitation to interested parties to join in the development of this study

- provide useful data to policy makers, movers and shakers that will make an impact on urban poverty in Uganda.

Namatala qualifies as a slum against all the UN indicators.¹

Slums have been defined as

“contiguous settlements where the inhabitants are characterized as having inadequate housing and basic services. A slum is often not recognised and addressed by the public authorities as an integral or equal part of a city.”

Slums are characterised by

- insecure residential status
- inadequate access to safe water
- inadequate access to sanitation and other infrastructure
- poor structural quality of housing and overcrowding

Figure 1 identifies a cluster of houses in Namatala, depicting a mixture of traditional thatched huts² and more modern buildings, constructed of local clay brick, with sheet metal roofs. The average occupancy per hut in this particular area is 11 persons. In the foreground a pit latrine is servicing roughly 120 people.



Figure 1 Poor quality housing and overcrowding

¹ See Appendix B for a report on these indicators and their interpretation

² Eclectic construction, materials based on adaptations of the rural hut (timber framed with wattle and daubed with a mixture of mud, straw and dung walls with thatched roof)

There is widespread misunderstanding about the nature of slums. They, along with other informal settlements, are highly dynamic communities. This dynamic can be one of amelioration and the development of prosperity. Most slums are hives of economic activity: there is evidence of people returning to slums after relocation to higher quality housing and of resisting return to village life³. The primary reason is to retain access to employment and social networks. The social lives of slum dwellers can be vibrant.

Figures 2, 3 and 4 provide some examples of economic activity. The *marua* is strong alcohol brewed largely by women and consumed largely by men, though increasing numbers of women are to be found in the makeshift 'bars'.



Figure 2 A young man making a trap



Figure 3 Home brewing Marua

However, the economic fragility of slums is also well documented. UN Habitat refers to slums as being 'of hope' or 'of despair.' These are not particularly useful categories but they do identify a dynamic. The problem is that the dynamic can be highly volatile. Namatala is a hopeful place, but its fragility is apparent: it exhibits dissonance. In the past, threats to slums that had once exhibited signs of progress include enforced re-location policies or slum clearance⁴, armed conflict, criminalisation and the breakdown of law and order, often associated with narcotics and illicit alcohol, the imposition of law and order, HIV Aids and other epidemics, natural disasters and climate change⁵, large scale immigration etc.. Most of these risks haunt Namatala.

It is not enough simply to note the direction in which the dynamic is being resolved in any slum (towards amelioration or deterioration).⁶ Policies also need to be fine tuned to the specific characteristics of this tension. Standalone improvements to the built environment may not offer

³ See for example, "The strange allure of the slums," The Economist, May 2007.
http://www.economist.com/surveys/displaystory.cfm?story_id=9070714

⁴ Some of the very policies that have been aimed at improving the lives of slum dwellers have in fact contributed to their worsening. The tension between wholesale and piecemeal renewal has been elevated to a matter of principle in some policy debates.

⁵ One recent report, TURNING UP THE HEAT: CLIMATE CHANGE AND POVERTY IN UGANDA, Oxfam, 2008, provides specific evidence of such influences within the region.

⁶ Indeed slums can be highly differentiated spaces and it is perfectly possible that different parts of a slum are moving in opposite directions on this continuum e.g. where ethnic ghettos exist or simply where a physical area is absorbed into a more/ less affluent neighbourhood.

sustainable solutions. 'Gentrification' of one area may simply occasion recrudescence of slum conditions elsewhere in a city.



Figure 4 Women winnowing the last grains of rice from the waste deposited at a refuse site in Namatala

Location and population

Like many slums, Namatala is developing on the urban periphery. However, despite the fact that a settlement has existed at Mbale for over a century, much of the growth of Mbale is recent and as a result Namatala is located close to the main urban centre. The nearest part of Namatala lies within 15 minutes walk (the most common form of transport) of Mbale town centre. The boundaries of the slum are identified approximately on the plan in Figure 5.

The population of Namatala is unknown. One apparently official figure suggests 16,000⁷, just under a quarter of the town's population. Local opinion suggests that this is a gross underestimate; though using a grid over satellite imagery suggests that the official figure may not be unreasonable. However, significant immigration to Namatala occurred between the two visits (after this photograph) as a consequence of flooding to the north during the autumn 2007.

⁷A local Council Report on Namatala in 2006 reported approximately 15000.

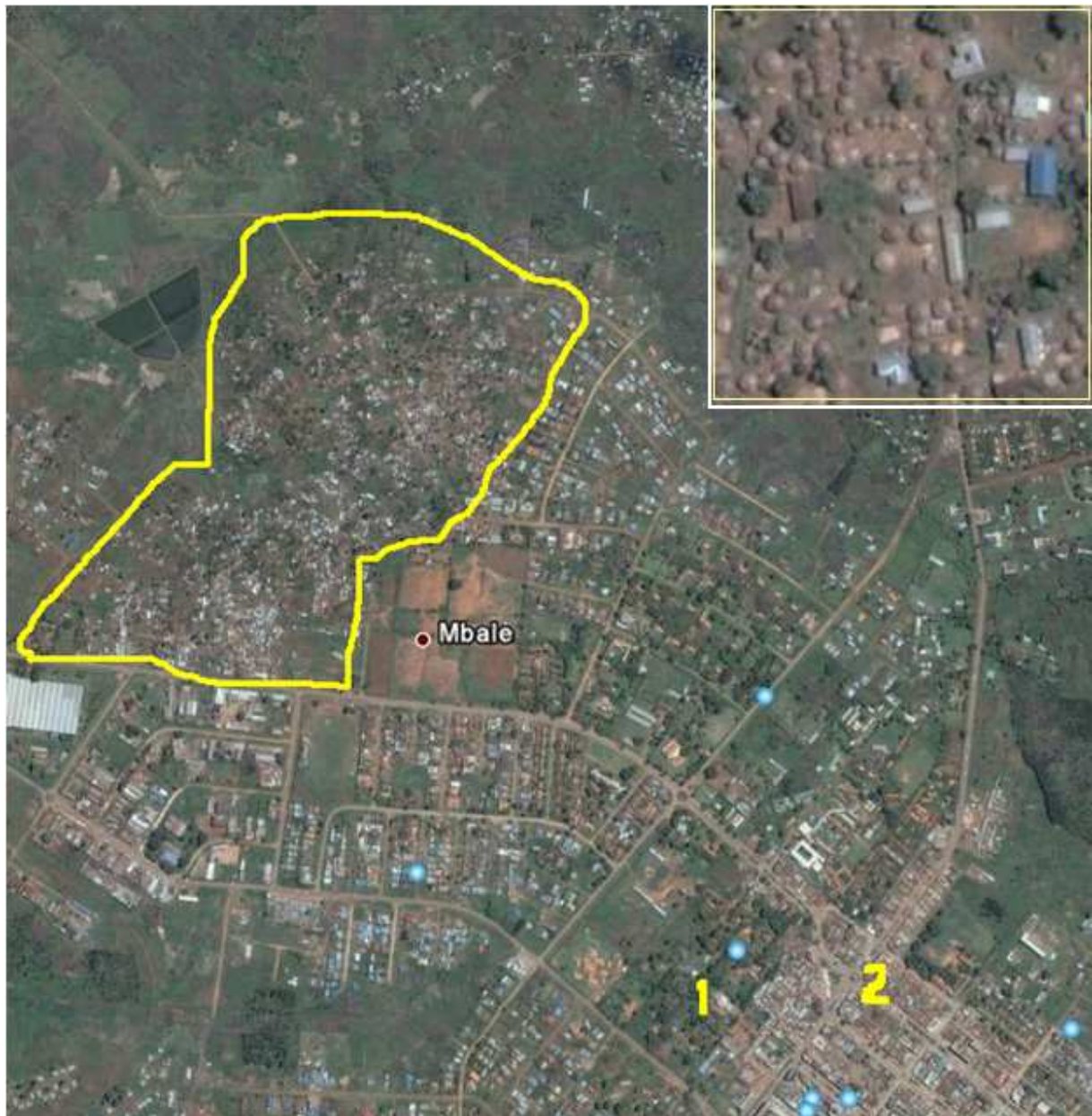


Figure 5 The Cathedral (1) and Town Centre (2) are indicated on plan; Namatala is bounded in yellow. Fitting a grid over the Namatala area facilitates counting numbers of residential units, applying an average occupancy rate generates a rough estimate; 16000 is a reasonable estimate at the time of this photo. The inlay shows a grid square identifying huts (circular) and other domestic buildings (rectangular) in greater definition.

Tenure mix

There are mixed tenure systems in Namatala. Some people own the freehold equivalent of their plots.⁸ Many people rent their units from freeholders. Sometimes the freeholders have developed the buildings, though not always. Rents of developed units are typically 50% of a tenant's income. Some are squatting. There is a formal land registration system but according to research carried out by Catherine Kimani⁹, the formal system has not been able to cope with the extent of illegal occupation.

The position of women in relation to land ownership in Uganda generally and reflected in discussion with women in Mbale is most unfortunate. By and large women work the land but men both enjoy the fruits of the women's labour and own the land. Land legislation in Uganda upholds this situation in a formal sense. There is evidence that male violence against female partners upholds this situation (and more injustice besides) more directly in Mbale.¹⁰

Development Control and Land Market

There is an operable property market and a formal Namatala development plan, eminent domain and (quasi) professional advisors but insufficient evidence of actual operations. There is anecdotal evidence of a lack of professional competence among operators in this marketplace and of inefficiency and corruption among officials.

Development plans indicate preferred locations for roads and other infrastructure. Development plans are vitiated by the sheer scale and speed of development and by the lack of a trained cadre of development control officers. Much development is spontaneous and covert.¹¹

Recent market activity suggests a turnover of freehold owned land and residential units. Prices have increased markedly in recent times and there is some evidence of gentrification. At the same time, some of the areas occupied by huts have seen intensification of land use, as people displaced by last year's floods have moved into Namatala.

⁸ Appendix C points to material that will explicate the complex land system for those interested in the detail.

⁹ Effects of Urbanization on Land Use Planning and Control in Mbale Municipality, Nawangwe and Kimani, unpublished research report, 2008

¹⁰ Intimate partner violence against women in eastern Uganda: implications for HIV prevention Charles AS Karamagi, James K Tumwine, Thorkild Tylleskar and Kristian Heggenhougen, BMC Public Health. 2006; 6: 284. <http://www.pubmedcentral.nih.gov/articlerender.fcgi?artid=1660563> Accessed August 2008

¹¹ Huts can be erected quickly and unconfirmed word of mouth reports suggest that much of this development occurs at night.

There is a very high proportion of this population in extreme poverty by UN definitions.

Uganda is rated 154th out of 177 countries in the most recent United Nations Human Development Index (United Nations Human Development Programme Report, 2007). Given Uganda's extreme poverty (rates 150th for GDP per capita) it is sobering to realise that this poverty is not evenly distributed. As one commentator observes

“20% of the people are locked in chronic poverty and inequality is increasing. It has one of the highest rates of population growth in the world (at 3.3% per annum) with the highest fertility rate evident in the lowest wealth quintile. There is a widening inequality among and within regions...”

Irish Aid, Country Strategy Paper, 2007 -9: Uganda

There is more than anecdotal evidence of an east - west split in Ugandan wealth. Mbale is in the poorer east.

Economic differentiation has a spatial component even in the poorest communities. Mbale exhibits distinct communities based on social class and wealth though these are more fluid than in more established urban areas and are cross-cut by ethnic and other differences just like any other city. Namatala is the poorest district of Mbale.¹² It is an ethnic melting pot and the main reception area for new waves of immigrants.

“In Mbale town, poor people are found in slums of Namatala, Nauyo, and Namakwekwe which are characterized by alcoholism, insecurity and poor living conditions.”

Sustainable Community Development in Mbale, the issues, challenges and required interventions, Mbale District Council, 2007

NAMATALA IS THEREFORE THE BIGGEST SLUM IN ONE OF THE POOREST REGIONS IN ONE OF THE POOREST COUNTRIES ON EARTH.

Nor is poverty equally distributed between genders as the following quotation illustrates:

“The National Household Survey 2004 showed that women headed households were amongst the poorest in the country. The MDG Report (2005) shows that most health indicators linked to gender inequality have shown little improvement. Women are disproportionately affected by HIV and AIDS with infection rates of 7.5% against 5% for men. Women in Uganda constitute up to 80% of the agricultural workforce but own only 7% of the land and control 30% of the agricultural income. Girls and boys now have equal access to primary education but completion rates for boys far exceed that for girls. Teenage pregnancies at 39% of girls under 18, contributes to a high dropout rate.”

Irish Aid, Country Strategy Paper, 2007 -9: Uganda

¹² Appendix A offers a description of this poverty

Measurement of progress towards the Millennium Development Goal 7 Target 11 is compromised

Monitoring improvements in the lives of slum dwellers is a vexed issue. UN Habitat's strategy to measure progress toward the objective is set out in its 'Strategy for the implementation of the Millennium Development Goal 7 target 11' published in 2005. (viz "Proportion of urban population with access to improved sanitation" and "Proportion of households with access to secure tenure."¹³)

Much of the strategy depends on the refocusing of data obtained from other sources (usually national governments) and from a sampling strategy that would be self confessedly less than ideal. The remainder is aspirational.¹⁴

"In the long-term, the strategic approach aims at setting up a monitoring mechanism that provides reliable, credible and globally representative knowledge on:

Actions taken by central and local governments and other stakeholders geared towards improving the lives of slum dwellers, every five years, starting with 2004;

The impact of the actions taken on the "lives of slum dwellers", every five years, starting with 2004;

The magnitude of the problems of urban inequities, every five years, starting with 2004."

(Ibid 2005, p44)

In other words globally there is as yet very little reliable data. The situation in Uganda is clear. There is no formal data *at all* in relation to slum dwellers.

Internal UN documents provided to me showed that there is as yet (July 2008) no data returned against the headings for Target 11 in Uganda.

This is not to say that there is no data related to other MDG Goals.

- 1 There is a national report: MDG's Uganda progress Report 2007 was published by UNDP. This is primarily based upon data supplied by the Ugandan government ~ National Household Survey, Demographic and Health Survey and supplied via the Ugandan Bureau of Statistics. However, there is in July 2008 no available data for TARGETS 8, 9, 11 – 18. It is worth quoting in full the report on slum dwellers: see window on next page. The absence of any data is telling.
- 2 Findings are challenged by some knowledgeable sources, see for example 'A long way to go', 2005, published by the Uganda National NGO Forum and the reports of DENIVA http://www.deniva.or.ug/files/h_index.php?pageName=home.html

¹³ At this stage I make no comment on the adequacy of these specific targets in relation to the goal's objective.

¹⁴ The monitoring activities within the Urban Indicators Programme are expanding to cover 350 cities selected from a global sample of cities.

- 3 There are district reports. A rolling programme of reports has been compiled by UNDP. However, these are based on data supplied by local districts councils. Sample reports given to me contain the same lacunae as national reports.
- 4 JENGA undertook a survey of Namatala in 2006 and a summary their findings are reproduced in Appendix A

Improving the lives of slum dwellers

“More than 50 per cent of Uganda’s urban population lives in informal unplanned settlements on land owned by other people or the government. Without security of tenure, they cannot access credit from the formal financial institutions and therefore lack the basic means of production. The squalid conditions they live in are a source of health hazards they face on a daily basis. Although urban authorities have put in place programmes to improve the lives of slum dwellers, the challenge remains enormous. Interventions are limited to public works programmes such as drainage improvement, roads, and water supply.”

*MDG’s Uganda progress Report
2007*

So while the general condition of Uganda's slums is documented, there is no official data at all in relation to the condition of slum dwellers.

One urgent task at Namatala is to define data needs and begin long term data capture. Simple indicators of progress, such as those identified in Appendix B, are necessary. However such an approach in isolation would be inadequate. What is needed is a more thorough understanding of *well being*. In this quest, qualitative approaches are needed to discover the perspectives of "participants."

The development of Uganda's "millennium village" at Ruhiira under the auspices of UN Habitat is intended to demonstrate what can be done. Case studies of good practice not only offer hope (though the downside risks are considerable) but help identify clearer metrics of (lack of) progress. This has the potential to provide rich lessons for action elsewhere.

There is no integrated approach to governance of Namatala.

The detailed mechanics of local governance in Uganda are outside the scope of this report.¹⁵

Political representation within Districts is the result of elections at different aggregates. Local Council representatives (LC's) are directly elected at 5 different levels. An LC1 represents the smallest aggregate, a neighbourhood. An LC5 represents the whole of a district like Mbale.

A District Council is an executive of appointees. The District Council has responsibility for urban management; though not all infrastructure falls within its remit (eg utilities are provided by a variety of suppliers). However, much of the funding received by MDC is targeted by central government at specific objectives¹⁶ with non-transferable funding¹⁷ and monitored by a centrally-appointed Resident District Commissioner.

Accusations of inefficiency and corruption are wont to travel in both directions along the central-local government axis. What *is* agreed is that significant sums of money intended for specific projects do not always reach the proposed target. An LC1 in Mbale disclosed that to his knowledge none of the vaunted projects at Namatala had ever materialised. Nevertheless, there *is* evidence of some previous infrastructure development in Namatala though some of this has not resulted in sustainable outcomes.

As in most jurisdictions, some functions are managed by local districts on behalf of central departments. For example, the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development is responsible for implementing the Slum Upgrading Programme in Uganda.¹⁸

"The study revealed that Mbale town is growing without any form of land use planning or control. Some areas that had been typically rural are gradually evolving into an urban environment. Most of the immediate peri urban areas are practically slums and the municipality seems helpless in the whole situation.

The study therefore recommends that there is need to coordinate all the planning institutions in the study area under one umbrella that would oversee and coordinate all land use planning and control activities in Mbale and its peri-urban areas."

Effects of urbanization on land use planning and control in Mbale municipality,
Assoc. Prof. B. Nawangwe, Catherine Kimani

¹⁵ Readers interested in this information might visit <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/612597/Uganda> (accessed June2008) See also: Uganda Districts Information Handbook, Fountain press: Kampala 2nd,. Expanded edition, 2007

¹⁶ Objectives are set in five sectors: education, health, water, roads and agriculture.

¹⁷ Conditional Grants accounted for 88% of all local spending in 2002/3, the last year for which figures are published (Local Government Finance Commission, <http://www.lgfc.go.ug/transfers.php> accessed August, 2008)

¹⁸ The Chief Minister of this Department is reported as blaming slum dwellers for living in such poverty. http://www.sdinet.co.za/mod/ritual/uploads/launch_of_kisenyi_iii_evelyn_nankanja.pdf (accessed May2008)

Despite the lack of an integrated approach amid a multiplicity of initiatives, and the vulnerability to corrupting influences that flourish in such circumstances:

The government of Uganda, while lacking resources, is keen to see improvement and is supportive of attempts to meet the challenge of improving the lives of slum dwellers.¹⁹

Agencies of the UN, other institutions with global reach, donor states and major charities are undertaking a variety of actions to address slum issues.

Varieties of organisations²⁰ operating at national level make important contributions to policy debates and often have local organisations undertaking specific initiatives.

At a local level smaller NGO's and FBO's²¹ are engaged in myriad smaller projects designed to improve the lives of slum-dwellers.

The district council's annual budget identifies some projects intended for slum areas.

Slum dwellers themselves are a most important resource.

THE URGENT ISSUE IS TO FORGE STRONG MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS TO REALISE ALL OF THIS POTENTIAL.

¹⁹ Since 2000 the Ugandan Government has been producing Poverty Eradication Actions Plans (PEAP)

²⁰ Including NGO's like Uganda Coalition for Sustainable Development (UCSD).

²¹ Faith based organisations: churches, mosques and synagogues etc

The Higher Education sector in Uganda has a huge role to play

To date contact has been made with 3 Ugandan Universities relevant to this study.

Makerere University in Kampala has a reputation as the pre-eminent higher education institution in Uganda. This is a deserved reputation; Makerere has supplied much of the professional class in Uganda; alumni include Vice President Bukenya, also a previous Dean of the University Medical School, and Prime Minister Nsibambi, who served as Chancellor between 2003 and 2007. Leading cadres within many District Councils, including Mbale, are alumni.

As well as the research work of the Faculties, Makerere has developed several institutes to provide research and consultancy services to government departments eg The Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics is closely associated with the Uganda Bureau of Statistics that manages the research informing National Plans for Economic and Social Development as well as UN monitoring of MDG targets. The mission of Makerere University Institute of Environment and Natural Resources is concerned with sustainable management of the environment and natural resources. Key research bodies in Social Research, Child Health, Human Rights and Public Health make important contributions to the nation's development.

Of specific relevance to the study of Namatala is the work of the Dean of the Faculty of Technology, Nawangwe Barnabas, and Catherine Kimani who have studied land ownership and the planning regime in Mbale. Of more general interests is the work of Dr Nasani Batungi on Land Reform.²²

Uganda Christian University at Mukono was founded in 1997 and is a private University and a member of the Colleges and Universities of the Anglican Communion. Primarily a teaching University it offers a broad spectrum of programs in 6 Faculties and 5 separate departments. Its relevance to this study is that it has a campus at Mbale that is currently expanding rapidly and that its Department of Development Studies under the leadership of Dr. Kukunda Elizabeth Bacwayo is committed to community transformation.

The Islamic University in Uganda is the smallest of the three institutions and is also based at Mbale. Founded in 1988 the University serves the English Speaking African Muslim community in Southern and Eastern Africa (although students of other faiths are most welcome) and offers undergraduate and postgraduate programs in 6 Faculties. The Rector, Dr. Ahmed Kaweesa Ssengendo, aims to integrate the University's mission in the social and economic as well as spiritual development of Mbale region. The campus not only provides academic subjects but has an admirable emphasis on skills transfer in carpentry, bricklaying, agriculture and food, health etc..

The collaboration of these three institutions in planned intervention could considerably assist the alleviation of poverty in this region.

²² See for example, **Land tenure reform in Uganda some reflections on the formalization of customary tenure** N. Batungi and H. Rüther in **Survey Review**, Vol. 40, No. 308. April 2008

The PONT model has distinct advantages

PONT stands for Partnerships Overseas Networking Trust.²³ It grew out of a discussion in 2000 between faith based organisations aimed at developing a new approach to overseas development through community partnerships. The outcome was the linking of professionals and organizations in Pontypridd with their counterparts in Mbale.

The link was to be outcome based, with the emphasis on delivering the Millennium Development Goals, rather than simply a friendship link.

Central to the concept was the development of a network of existing agencies committed to a long term fight against poverty, a Coalition against Poverty (CAP). Figure 6 shows the PONT model as it is emerging in the Pontypridd-Mbale coalition.

PONT is keen not to impose its own agenda, and projects in Mbale originate within the Mbale CAP. The emphasis is on local ownership, capacity building and poverty reduction. The preparatory phase in PONT's development was vital in identifying those individuals and social organisations in which the community was able to place some trust.

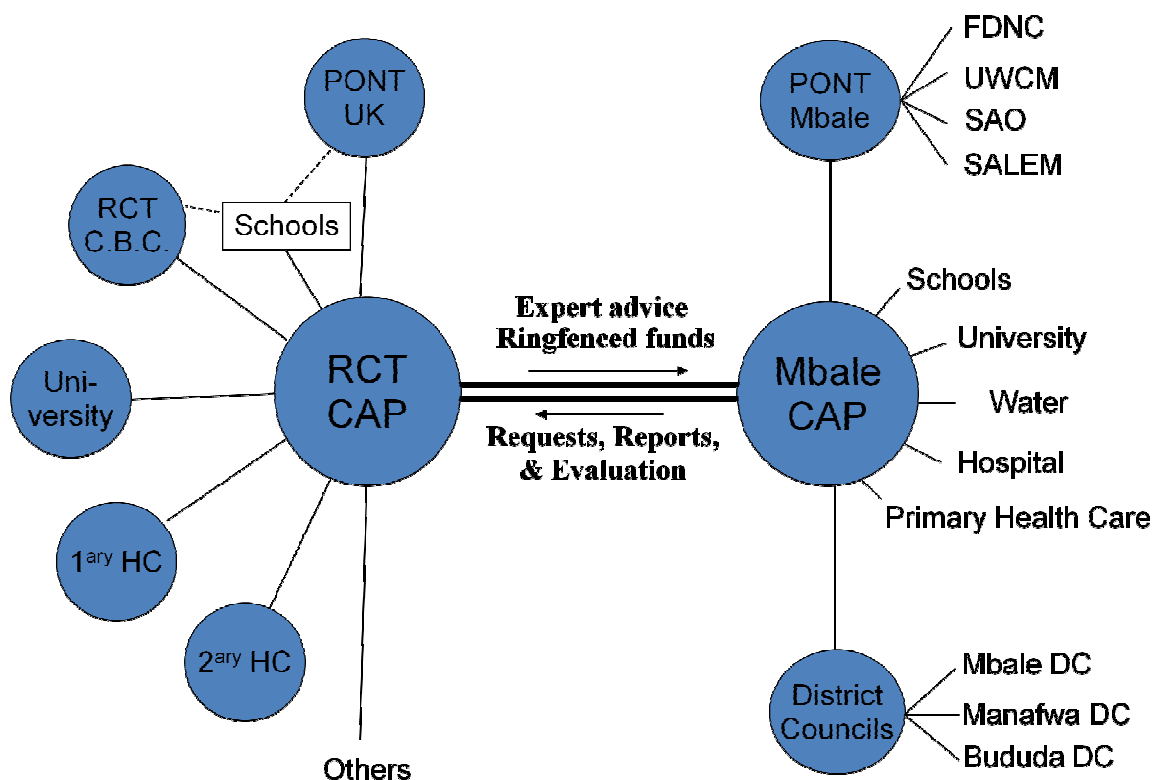


Figure 6 The PONT model. On the left hand side the UK part of the partnership based in Rhondda Cynon Taff (RCT) district, including the County Borough Council (CBC), the University of Glamorgan and primary and secondary Health Care (HC) organisations. Mbale Coalition against Poverty (CAP) embraces the NGO's and FBO's that comprise PONT Mbale, the three district councils (DC) of the region and representatives from schools, the hospital etc.

²³ <http://www.pont-mbale.org.uk/index.htm> provides a more detailed overview.

To date PONT projects²⁴ are funded through donations and small grants and primarily support operations requiring revenue. While the objective of capacity building is to support self reliance it is recognised that the scope of some projects requires sustained effort.²⁵ The aspirations of PONT require a more permanent arrangement that provides long term, sustainable support where this is required.

The PONT model seems to provide several distinct advantages

The machinery of the coalition is starting to demonstrate its efficacy in providing long term support. Lifetime friendships are being established and trust is developing not only across the large divide of continents but also within the local coalitions. Of course this is not necessarily always a “happy” process but commitment to the eradication of poverty is measured by successful project outcomes *and vice versa*, successful project outcomes are measured by commitment to eradication of poverty.

The framework is developing a collaborative approach that promotes joint, rather than several, ownership of issues and projects. The creation of a “trust” that selects, oversees and evaluates projects gives confidence to donors that money is reaching the targets for which it was intended. There is evidence that this approach is creating multi-stakeholder partnerships that provide the integration that is lacking in domestic government alone.

Whereas development work tended historically to be secular and technocratic, it is now recognised that the inclusion of faith based organisations within coalitions assists aspects of well-being like cultural identity and operates against forms of cultural exclusion.²⁶

Government-to-government development paradigms are being outperformed by multi-stakeholder partnerships that embrace the private sector and civil society.

A developed form of this trust could also offer confidence to larger donors and the development of capital projects. The fact that the coalition is looking to obtain objective monitoring and evaluation is a very healthy sign.

²⁴See the following link for a description of projects: http://www.pont-mbale.org.uk/Projects_Education.htm

²⁵“Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and he can feed himself for life.” The old aphorism is deeply embedded in the narrative of PONT.

²⁶ See Gerard Clarke, *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 28, No. 1, pp 77 – 96, 2007 *Agents of Transformation? Donors, faith-based organisations and international development.*

Sustainable community transformation needs definition

There is significant agreement within the coalition described in the previous section about the general principles upon which to proceed. These principles can be named as follows even if they are not always articulated in this way:

sustainable development

capacity building

community empowerment

pro-poor growth²⁷

It is the interpretation, application and syntheses of these principles that remain to be worked out in the specific context of Mbale so as to provide a guide for actions in the coalition. The development of these principles not only assists in project selection (and the number, scope and complexity of proposed projects is changing) but in the important phases of project management and monitoring and evaluation.

An initiative that begins to grapple with these issues first came from Mbale District Council.²⁸ In response to this initiative the University of Glamorgan has provided a modest grant to support a workshop to be held in Mbale to elaborate on these principles.

Consideration should also be given by the University to transforming the PONT operations group at Glamorgan into a fully functional Research and Intervention Centre for Sustainable Community Transformation.

The relevance to any initiative in Namatala should be clear.

²⁷ Definitions of pro-poor growth require careful thought (International Poverty Centre, UNDP, September 2004) as does supporting such growth (Supporting pro-poor growth processes, Overseas Development Institute Briefing Paper 34, January 2008; Pro-poor growth in the 1990's, IBRD, 2005)

²⁸ Sustainable Community Development in Mbale, the issues, challenges and required interventions, Mbale District Council 2007

Community engagement ~ Namatala bridge

Varying assessments of community needs in Namatala have been produced by governmental and non-governmental organisations.²⁹ The most recent and impressive was commissioned and conducted by Jenga Community Development Outreach, a Christian NGO based in Mbale.³⁰ This is an extensive survey of demographics, living conditions, health, education, nutrition, income etc. And some summary details are provided in Appendix A.

To identify needs in this way is a necessary preliminary to engaging with the community to ascertain priorities and provides a partial benchmark against which to measure progress. Given the extent of deprivation, there is a degree of paralysis in the face of so many and complex needs. By and large people with whom I discussed had difficulty in articulating social and economic priorities.

By contrast one group was able to articulate very clearly a priority for social and economic development. The women in Mvule cell, a neighbourhood within Namatala, during the course of discussion, identified the need for nursery provision. Such a development would allow mothers, many of whom are widowed or single or married to unemployed men, opportunity to earn an income (including some women that would run the nursery). This would enable them among other things, they hoped, to pay for the schooling of older children that are currently to be found “on the streets”.

But to articulate a socio-economic priority in this way is the prelude to an encounter with the cause of the paralysis. Such a development would require as a minimum land, buildings, some equipment, consumables and nursery workers (ignoring niceties like licensing of various kinds). Poverty denies the realisation of the aspiration and so paralysis or donors are a fact of life. While paralysis comes with no strings attached (no strings at all), that is rarely true of donors.³¹

Given the extreme poverty the temptation is to just “do something”, but there are many failed projects in the world’s slums and Namatala is no exception. Community development that is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable requires careful research³². It also requires a collaborative approach.

As to projects, priorities must emerge from the Namatala community itself, focussed on the needs of the poorest. A key task will be to create a space for the articulation of such priorities; to bring together key community groups; to foster “ownership” and develop good governance.

A community engagement program *appears* to be a luxury in these circumstances. In my opinion it remains the most urgent task.

The following diagram (Figure 7) is an attempt to plan community engagement in Namatala. Discussions are ongoing with a number of groups and individuals to facilitate such a plan.

²⁹ The District Council, Namatala Police, Namatala Health Centre originate occasional reports.

³⁰ Needs Assessment Survey Report, September 2006

³¹ Someone said that, “Empty pockets never held anyone back. Only empty heads and empty hearts can do that.” In a display of the energy that typifies slum dwellers a local group is attempting to provide a nursery.

³² There is a danger of course, neatly summed up in the saying attributed to American journalist Bill Vaughan, “It would be nice if the poor were to get even half of the money that is spent in studying them.”

A Community and University in the UK impacting MDG's in Uganda?

A number of more or less formal evaluations of PONT projects have been conducted.³³ Perhaps the strongest testimony to the impact that PONT has made to date is the award of two United Nations endorsed Community Gold Stars. These awards were designed specifically to recognise excellence in cross-community linking.

'The work being done by Gold Star Communities and links between Wales and Africa is truly an inspiration.' Desmond Tutu

How can PONT and the CAP coalition impact MDG slum targets in Namatala?

Clearly the mutual respect and the collaborative working that has become the hallmark of projects to date must be maintained and extended. The challenge is to continue building effective networks and relationships that can define principles, engage with the community, ascertain needs and priorities, seek and secure funding, identify and deliver projects, monitor and evaluate outcomes.

The University of Glamorgan Contribution

University staff have already been involved in successful PONT projects, particularly in the building of capacity through education and training. This work has enriched the University and especially the people privileged to be involved.

In the general run of things universities can teach... and study. Intercultural discourse offers strong possibilities for the development of theory and practice both in Wales and Uganda. Some differences between Wales and Uganda identify new frontiers: for example the need to integrate pro-poor and sustainable development principles. Some similarities also identify possibilities for synergy e.g. low educational attainment and excessive dependency among youth in parts of both regions.

Clearly also a university can contribute to the development of policy, assist with community engagement and offer project management and M&E³⁴ roles.

To go beyond this is to become an advocate, is to intervene in a meaningful way, to impact the real world.

This requires personal and institutional commitment and resources.

Glamorgan is proud of its achievement in Wales, its agenda for strategic partnerships and its record for participation, equal opportunities and social inclusion.

³³ By DfID among others

³⁴ For an insight into the failure of community based organisation in relation to evaluation see Joanne G. Carman, Evaluation Practice Among Community-Based Organizations: Research Into the Reality, American Journal of Evaluation 2007; 28; 60

If the challenge for Glamorgan is to develop a focused international profile, PONT Mbale provides a stiff test. Can Glamorgan University help to enrich the coalition against poverty and the people of Mbale?

Namatala represents in microcosm all the complexities that such a challenge entails - intellectual and human.

Appendix A Some data on Namatala

This data was reported in September, 2006 by JENGA³⁵ Community Development Outreach. It is offered here in highly summarised form. The sampling methodology for the study is reported at page 8 et seq. of the original report.

Demographics

52% of the population are female; 59% is aged under 18; 34% of households have more than 5 dependants.

42% are Bagisu; 15 Iteso; 10% Bagwere; 4% Karamajong; 26% other

70% of adults are married; 80% of marriages are monogamous; 12% widows.

Religion

36% Anglican; 24% Muslim; 21% Born again Christians; 18% Catholic; 1% other

Education

20% of school age children not in school; rises to 82% for households with 5+ children.

60% cite lack of school fees as main reason for non attendance

Housing

14% live in temporal housing; 59% live in semi-permanent housing; 27% live in permanent housing (brick built with iron sheet or tiled roof

60% live in rented housing

Waste disposal

60% use a local tip or "rubbish" area; 15% throw waste on roadsides; 25% use municipal skips (only infrequently emptied)

Food and Water

79% use communal tap; 7% has municipal tap in house; 7% use the river; 7% use borehole

77% use water without boiling

24% have one meal per day; 30% have less than one meal per day; 6% obtain food from tips.

³⁵ Jenga originally means "to build" as children raised on the block tower building game will remember.

Income and Expenditure

63% earn less than Ug Sh 2000 per day (about 70 pence)

27% run small businesses; 15% get casual work; 9% professionals; 8% manual labour

Main expenditures: food , rent , school fees and medical costs

Health Problems

40% have malaria; 22% diarrhoea; 15% Coughs/ tuberculosis; 11% pregnancy and delivery problems; 2% admit to having HIV/Aids whereas deaths from HIV/Aids amount to 29% of all deaths

60% does not practice any form of family planning

Appendix B MDG Target 11 and its Interpretation

Target 11 sits within the ambit of MDG 7

Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability	
Target 9: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources	25. Proportion of land area covered by forest 26. Ratio of area protected to maintain biological diversity to surface area 27. Energy use (kg oil equivalent) per \$1 GDP (PPP) 28. Carbon dioxide emissions per capita and consumption of ozone depleting CFCs (ODP tons) 29. Proportion of population using solid fuels
Target 10: Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation	30. Proportion of population with sustainable access to an improved water source, urban and rural 31. Proportion of population with access to improved sanitation, urban and rural
Target 11: By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers	32. Proportion of households with access to secure tenure

In fact indicator 31 was also bracketed with Target 11 from the outset. As flesh was put on the bones of Target 11 a number of indicators were developed to help measure progress towards the goal.

In 2003, UN Habitat published “Improving the lives of 100 million slum dwellers” (ISBN: 92-1-131682-0) which identified 5 key dimensions for measuring progress (reprinted overleaf).

The same year, the UN’s issue of Global Report, was entitled ‘The Challenge of Slums: Global Report on Human Settlements 2003, aiming to provide “a baseline for UN-HABITAT’s future analytical work on slums...”’

Later came UN-HABITAT’S Strategy for the implementation of the Millennium Development Goal 7 target 11 (ISBN: 92-1-131733-9) (2005)

Most recently UN-HSP has produced a Medium Term Strategic and Institutional Plan, 2007, that is designed to support governments to meet the challenge of urban poverty and slums and sets out a range of criteria and proposals for more effective management.

Improving slums: five key dimensions ²

Access to safe water



A household is considered to have access to improved water supply if it has *sufficient amount of water* for family use, at an *affordable price*, available to household members without being *subject to extreme effort*, especially to women and children.

Access to sanitation



A household is considered to have adequate access to sanitation, if an excreta disposal system, either in the form of a *private toilet* or a *public toilet shared with a reasonable number of people*, is available to household members.

Secure tenure



Secure Tenure is the right of all individuals and groups to effective protection by the State against forced evictions. People have secure tenure when:

- There is *evidence of documentation* that can be used as proof of secure tenure status;
- There is either *de facto* or *perceived* protection from forced evictions.

Durability of housing



A house is considered as 'durable' if it is built on a *non-hazardous location* and has a structure *permanent and adequate* enough to protect its inhabitants from the extremes of climatic conditions such as rain, heat, cold, humidity.

Sufficient living area



A house is considered to provide a sufficient living area for the household members if not more than two people share the same room.

² As per the recommendations made at the Expert Group Meeting on Urban Indicators held in Nairobi in November 2002 ([http://www.unhabitat.org/programmes/guo/documents/EGM final report 1 Dec 02.pdf](http://www.unhabitat.org/programmes/guo/documents/EGM%20final%20report%201%20Dec%2002.pdf))

Appendix C Uganda's Land System

Current law is contained in:

The Uganda Land Act, Revised edition 2000, CAP. 227 4979 et seq

The Land Amendment Act (2004), Uganda Gazette, No 14 Volume XCVII

Further revisions to this law are currently before the Uganda Parliament.

Analysis of the failure of this legislation is provided by one of its architects:

A Narrative on Land Law Reform in Uganda, Patrick McAuslan, 2003, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy

Further analysis of the failure is also provided in:

Land: Changing Contexts, Changing Relationships, Changing Rights, September 2005, Elizabeth Daley and Mary Hobley: see especially page 41 et seq

A brief resume of the land situation is provided by Nawangwe and Kimani (cited above) but a more detailed narrative of the history and difficulties is provided by their Makerere colleague:

Batungi, Nasani (2005), "Land reform in Uganda: the Land Tenure System of Uganda", unpublished PhD thesis, University of Cape Town

It is also clear that specific aspects of poverty in Uganda (e.g. HIV and the legacy of armed conflict) are deeply impacted by the Land System and sometimes vice versa:

"Land Tenure Security for Poverty Reduction in Eastern and Southern Africa," Report of the workshop hosted by: The Government of Uganda's Ministry for Lands, Housing and Urban Development, International Fund for Agricultural Development, United Nations Office of Project Services, 2006

"HIV/Aids in Uganda's national land policy, Evidence and Trends: Implications for Poverty Social Impact Assessment in Uganda", Herbert Kamusiime and Margaret A. Rugadya, 2007

"Land Rights and Peace Building in Gulu District, Northern Uganda : Towards an holistic approach, Sam B Tindifa", ISBN 9970-511-06-9