

Review Article

Political Influence and Creation of New Political Cities in Uganda: Challenges Facing Newly Created Cities in Uganda, the Case of Mbarara City

Elias Nuwagaba^{1*}, Professor Murindwa Rutanga²

¹Faculty of Business, Economics and Governance, Bishop Stuart University, Uganda

²Associate Professor Gershom Atukunda

Article History

Received: 08.07.2025

Accepted: 29.08.2025

Published: 03.09.2025

Journal homepage:

<https://www.easpublisher.com>

Quick Response Code



Abstract: Global statistics show that more people will move to cities and urban centers in the next forty years than in the entire span of human history, and therefore building cities become a critical response to this social and economic boom as it can help break ground for innovation and employment. The future of the world's urbanization will be in Africa. The continents urban population will almost triple in the coming 35 years with more than 1.3 billion Africans living in cities by 2050 (21% of the world's urban population (UNDESA, 2014). This implies a steep increase in demand for urban housing infrastructure and services on top of existing back logs. Governments in many African countries have so far been unable to strictly address the fore mentioned matters and have therefore shifted from providing to an enabling approach with the state encouraging private sector investments in urban housing, infrastructure and services. New private investments in housing and urban development are increasingly reaching Africa: foreign and domestic companies are investing in Africa urban property (Bhan, 2014; De Boeck, 2014); Grant, 2015; Murray, 2015; Watson 2013). The study analyzed these current and predicted trends of urbanization and assess whether created cities are prepared enough to handle these rapid city expansion challenges. The operationalization of the newly created cities in Uganda is stirring bitter controversies as leaders of mother districts decline to support the new entities. In April 2020, the Uganda government elevated seven municipalities to city status in a phased process that will see more towns become cities. The new cities which came into force in July 2020 are Arua, Gulu, Mbale, Jinja, Masaka, Mbarara and Fort Portal (Ministry of Local Government, 2019). The new cities were created as a result of protracted clamors by leaders and communities, in anticipation of so many benefits that strategically come along with the new status of urbanization. To achieve the dream, the traditional municipalities had to meet a series of legal prerequisites to qualify for elevation into cities. Key among the requirements for a city, according to the third Schedule of the Local Government Act, included having a population size of at least five hundred thousand people, area land size of at least 100 square kilometres, the capacity of the urban area to meet its cost of delivery of services, and having a master physical plan among others. To meet these requirements, the municipalities had to lure their mother districts and the neighbouring lower local governments to allow them to expand their boundaries into the other peri-urban areas, to supplement on what was originally existing.

Keywords: Political Cities, Urbanization, New Cities, Urban Bias, Urban Population.

Copyright © 2025 The Author(s): This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution **4.0 International License (CC BY-NC 4.0)** which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium for non-commercial use provided the original author and source are credited.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Uganda is currently experiencing rapid urbanization estimated at 20% and by 2050 will be

among the most urbanized countries in Africa (GOU, 2017). Uganda urbanization has been looked at as a prerequisite for the country to achieve upper middle

*Corresponding Author: Elias Nuwagaba

Faculty of Business, Economics and Governance, Bishop Stuart University, Uganda

income status as part of achieving the vision 2040(MOFPED, 2016).

The Uganda vision 2040 and third National Development Plan for Uganda have recognized the importance of urbanization as a force for socio-economic transformation across the country and in particular the need for regional and strategic cities in the country, in addition to the capital city of Kampala. Effective 1st July 2020, ten cities became operational. These are Arua, Mbarara, Gulu, Jinja, Fortportal, Mbale, Masaka, Lira, Soroti, and Hoima. These cities operate under local government Act and under the guidance of the National urban policy.

1.1.1 Background to Study

The entire area of 32 kilometers radius was undergoing rapid urbanization that has been imposed from above albeit without any planned strategic industrial or scientific plans which would otherwise be anchored round an urban industrialization program. There was gradual expansion of unconnected, unplanned, unequal and haphazardly scattered City without thinking about sustainability future risks. Due to unplanned citification many challenges have developed such as floating human slums due to lack of housing leading to unhealthy environment; illegal occupancies are growing at an alarming rate due to increasing City population; some city residents have destroyed wetlands and occupied river Rwizi banks land which has resulted into water pollution and stagnation which have developed further complications; and lack of proper waste management which has affected public health. There is lack of proper urban planning and management (The Daily Monitor, 2 November 2022).

This has been further witnessed in other cities like Cape Town, South Africa, Nairobi, Kenya, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, Kampala, Uganda, Tamale, Ghana, and Maputo, Mozambique (Langmeyer Johannes *et al.*, (2021). The loss of priority in urban land-use planning has become a global trend with only a few exceptions. This has created food crisis in the city especially to the unemployed, low incomes earners, those under employed, the poor, the landless, the displaced and other vulnerable members of the city. Even Addis Ababa, Ethiopia recently has witnessed massive displacement which has threatened livelihood security (Gnamura Kejela *et al.*, 2024). This has promoted highest level of the social and ecological vulnerabilities and risk-related inequalities of urban inhabitants, food shortage among them, in the face of different scenarios of global change, including climate change or pandemic events such as Covid-19. Also there has been the disregard of the intensified negative environmental externalities caused by distant agricultural production, as well as lacking consideration of nutrient re-cycling potentials in cities, for instance, from waste water to replace emission intensive mineral fertilizer use. There is also lack of accounting for the multi functionality of urban farming

as a sustainable tool and the multiple benefits it provides beyond the provision of food, including social benefits and insurance values, for instance, the maintenance of cultural heritage and agro-biodiversity (Langemeyer Johannes *et al.*, 2021).

For Mbarara City's case, currently there is rapid City growth and the population is increasing at a faster rate (91867, 2022-2023) and is expected to grow to 500,000 by 2025 (Daily Monitor, 2 November 2022) without proper planning and designs hence sustainable socio - economic urban transformation has remained a challenge. Rural areas have been integrated into the city without proper planning, proper transport design, decent housing, access to water and sanitation services, electricity and other necessary survival urban skills. City dwellers have limited access to land, insufficient infrastructure and supportive services, they face intense competition from other land users, lack of research on human health risks in growing food and lack of skills. As a result, Mbarara city has witnessed wide spread poverty, food insecurity, malnutrition, persistent child under nutrition, stubborn micronutrient deficiencies, and an alarming rise in overweight and obesity, the city has also faced structural social exclusion, excessive pollution and low climate mitigation, stagnating urban un productivity, weak governance, poor sanitation and housing conditions, related pollution (Nuwagaba E, 2022).

There has been gradual expansion of unconnected, unplanned, unequal and haphazardly scattered City without thinking about sustainability future risks. Mbarara City expansion has witnessed the invasion of square kilometers of agrarian setting neighboring Mbarara Municipality and merging them with the latter. At first the divisions of Kakoba, Kamukuzi and Nyamitanga formed Mbarara Municipality but now has been extended to include the former sub Counties of Biharwe, Kakiika, and Nyakayonjo of the Greater Mbarara district. The citification process of Mbarara city has invaded these people and their modes of production. This process subsumes the existing modes of production and existence. These modes are not aimed at remodeling and improving them but to exterminate them. This is because majority of the city residents are growers of bananas, coffee, beans, groundnuts, millet and vegetables. Many are graziers and paddock dairy farmers and ranchers. Their mode of production and existence has failed to be compatible with modernity and urbanity. The challenge to these farmers is the struggle to catch up with these two different modes of production, which is urbanity, peasantry and farming where on is highly capitalistic and dependent on external production for profits in shops and markets whereby it depends on imports and other from supplies from industries from other areas while the other is of producers of commodities, labor ad for their own consumption (Nuwagaba E, 2022).

According to Mr. Raphael Magyezi, the Minister of Local Government in Ugandan Government, most new cities remain dysfunctional, a few operating partially five years after their creation. (Business Focus Reporter, August 6, 2025). He has admitted to major failings in the full operationalization of new cities by exposing serious administrative, financial, and infrastructure gaps due to weak governance frameworks, staffing shortages, and lack of funding. The report presented to Parliament identified 15 cities that were approved between 2020 and 2023. Of these, only 10 cities have been partially operationalized, while the remaining five have yet to take effect. These are; Kabale, Moroto, Nakasongola, Entebbe and Wakiso.

The weaknesses cited include: the absence of regulations, weak urban policy implementation, delays in gazetting district headquarters, and non-functional statutory bodies.

The report further highlighted that most of the 10 partially operationalized cities face acute staffing shortages, with cities like Masaka operating at just 32.1 percent staffing capacity, despite Cabinet approving staff structures as far back as 2022.

Statutory bodies such as City Service Commissions, Land Boards, and Public Accounts Committees are also underfunded. In Mbarara, for instance, the City Service Commission was allocated just Shs18 million to run its operations for the entire financial year 2022/2023. The report further revealed that most cities do not have approved Physical Development Plans, and asset sharing between cities and their mother districts remains unresolved, leading to conflicts and allegations of fraudulent land sales.

The United Nations (UN) expects the world to gain 2.2 billion new urban residents by 2050, increasing mostly in Africa and Asia. How the cities of the future are governed and developed will affect their ability to provide these growing populations with healthcare and housing – and how successfully they will adapt to the effects of climate change (Nina Gillespie and Suzannah Sherman, 2023).

Future cities need to be adapted, redesigned, and constructed to tackle increasingly significant challenges. Some challenges are structural so cities need to be redeveloped and built to be better adapted and resilient to a changing climate, extreme weather events such as flooding, and other environmental challenges such as air pollution and biodiversity loss. Cities will also need to accommodate more people, as urban populations continue to grow. This means cities must continue to find ways to reduce their carbon emissions – already cities consume around 70 percent of global emissions (Nina Gillespie and Suzannah Sherman, 2023).

Urbanization is the global trend and has largely been a positive force for economic growth, poverty reduction and economic development. Urbanization is understood as population shift from rural areas to urban areas; it is the gradual increase in the proportion of people living in urban areas and the ways in which each society adapts to the change. It is the predominantly process by which towns and cities are formed and become larger as more people begin living and in urban and working in urban areas (GOU, 2017). Urbanization is looked at as a process by which towns and cities are formed and become larger as more cities are important drivers of development and poverty reduction in both urban and rural areas because they are places where entrepreneurship and technological innovations and other economic activity can flourish (United Nations 2014). The paper studied the recent City creations in Uganda, 2020 with emphasis on Mbarara City by examining its opportunities and challenges in modern era of urbanization. The study employed a retrospective – prospective and analytical study design to trace the historical development of the city up to present. The study revealed that trade; investment, industrialization, small scale enterprises, developed infrastructure, rural-urban migration, natural population increase and central locality were responsible for city expansion. The study revealed that city expansion has contributed to human suffering in of congestion, inadequate accommodation, food insecurity, diseases, criminal tendencies and unemployment among others (Atukunda G, 2013). The study recommended proper city planning, strict enforcement of building plans, integrated system of managing river Rwizi, zoning the city, developing air control policy and developing traffic policy among others. The study established that urbanization is real in Africa and other developing countries. African urban population is likely to triple in the coming 35 years with more than 1.3 billion people living in cities (UNDESA, 2014).

1.1.2 Legal and Policy Background to Creation of Cities in Uganda

The constitution of Uganda Article 179(a) (GOU, 1995), the Local Government Act section 7 (2a) of the Local Government Act, CAP243 (GOU, 1997) mandate Parliament to create cities through alteration of boundaries of the existing districts. Thus on May 20, 2019, Uganda's cabinet approved the phased creation of fifteen cities across the country. The approved cities were Arua, Mbarara, Jinja, Gulu, Mbale, Masaka, Fortportal, Wakiso, Hoima, Lira, Moroto, Nakasongola, Soroti and Kabale. Backed by the resolutions from respective district councils, the ministry of Local Government presented bills in parliament seeking for the phased upgrading of some urban areas shown in table 1 below (MOLG, 2020). On April 2020 the parliament of Uganda approved the creation of 15 cities seven of which became operation starting 1 July 2020 Classification of an area as a city.

The national urban policy classified a city if an urban area satisfies the following:

- Has a population at least 300,000 residents within a minimum area of 50 square kilometer with a minimum population density of 6000 persons per square kilometer and maximum density of 20,000 persons per square kilometer in an area not exceeding 100 square kilometers.
- Has an integrated city development plan in accordance with this policy
- Has demonstrable capacity to generate sufficient revenue to sustain its operations
- Has a capacity to effectively and effectively deliver essential services to its residents as shall be provided for in the urban development law.
- Has institutionalized activity participation by its residents in the management of its affairs.
- Has infrastructural facilities, including not limited to roads, street lighting markets, fire stations, and adequate capacity for management.
- Has a capacity for functional and effective waste management system (GOU, 2017). The government of Uganda deliberately gazetted Municipal councils, Town councils, Town boards and cities as launch- pad for urbanization. In Uganda gazetted Cities, Municipalities and Town councils are defined as urban areas as per local government Act 2000. Regardless of the population size, all district headquarters are urban areas by law because they are located in Town councils and all Town councils are in urban areas. Urban areas in Uganda represent industry, financial services, trade, education and other services (UN Habitat 2012). However, prior to the final deliberations at the Ministry of Local Government and in Parliament, few of the then aspiring cities could meet the preconditions until in Cabinet, in September 2019, lowered the bar for them by adopting the new National Urbanization Policy.

The new instrument which reduced the population threshold to 300,000 people and the area land size to between 50 to 100 square kilometers, came at the height of intense criticism against the government by the political and opinion leaders in Municipalities that had failed to meet the earlier preconditions. For instance, the leadership in the greater Masaka sub-region jointly appealed to the Kabaka of Buganda Ronald Muwenda Mutebi II to question government on why it had dropped their traditional municipality off the list of the first batch of cities that had been cleared. Masaka was added onto the list.

1.1.3 Benefits of Creating New Cities

Managing rapid urbanization will help Uganda achieve sustainable and inclusive growth (World Bank, 2020). Uganda's urban population was predicted to

increase from six million in 2013 to over 20 million in 2040. Policy makers need to act now to ensure that this rapid urbanization is managed well, so it can contribute to Uganda's sustainable and inclusive growth. Therefore urban planners and authorities need to provide data on new urban areas and their populations in a consistent manner across Uganda to provide the government and local leaders with analyses to improve planning and coordination to deliver better services, jobs and opportunities, making cities more competitive. The typical Ugandan cities have grown rapidly, but without sufficient policy coordination. As a result, urbanization has not necessarily resulted in increased productivity, with the majority of jobs created involving low productivity activities.

According to World Bank report (2020), there is growth challenge in Ugandan cities. The major question has been: Can Ugandan Cities get to Work or just mere creations to win votes. This is because the majority of the population is still concentrated in rural areas, non-agricultural, economic growth and jobs are concentrated in urban areas. The report shows that while cities can help propel growth, the speed of urbanization is challenging and can lead to congestion and strain infrastructure and lowering productivity. By managing the urbanization process effectively, Uganda will be more likely to achieve middle income status by 2040. However, current patterns of growth pose a significant challenge. Urban population growth multiplies the number of challenges already facing urban areas and hinders their ability to be the sources of growth, to create productive jobs and to provide decent housing to urban residents.

The the challenge to government is about ensuring that its cities are ready to accommodate the increasing number of residents expected to settle in urban areas and able to facilitate the growth of business enterprises, thereby creating opportunities for productive employment for a greater proportion of city residents.

Cities have the potential to propel growth, attracting capital, spurring innovation, providing higher productivity jobs. Services can be provided more cost-effectively, and improving access for all. To reap these benefits, urban growth needs to be managed well by planning for land use and basic services, connecting to make a city's markets accessible, and financing to meet infrastructure needs. To ensure the development of functional cities, the public sector will require the coordination of a range of different types of investment, including investment in physical planning for buildings and the provision of transport, housing and social services. Each layer faces its own coordination challenges. It is better to anticipate and plan for this at the very early stages of the urbanization process, as it becomes very difficult to correct mistakes retrospectively (World Bank report, 2020).

Policy makers at national and municipal levels have an important role to play in ensuring that urbanization is sustainable and inclusive by ensuring that land and property rights are conducive for increasing economic density of cities. They will also have to improve mobility through better transport infrastructure and systems, as well as improve living conditions through better housing policies. Furthermore, it will be critical to improve access to social services such health and education; and levelling access to, and quality of, public services such as water and sanitation services.

According to World Bank (2020), economic opportunities and numbers of people living in cities have increased since 2013 as indicated below:

- 6.4 million Ugandans live in urban areas
- 70 percent of non-agricultural GDP in Uganda is generated in urban areas
- 54 percent of people living in Central region are residing in urban areas
- Central region has the highest number of people living in urban areas, but the Eastern region is the fastest urbanizing region during the first decade of 2000s
- Kampala is home to 31 percent of Uganda's urban population
- 69 percent of Uganda's urban population live in small cities with less than 500,000 people
- 21 million people will live in urban areas in Uganda by 2040
- By 2013, 38 percent of the urban population was connected to the electricity grid
- The number of firms engaged in real estate and business services in Kampala is 11 times the overall average across districts
- Over the first decade of the 2000s, cities accounted for 36 percent of overall job growth
- Walking is the main mode of transport in Kampala, and 70 percent of the residents of Kampala walk to work
- 80 percent of the global economic activity is generated in cities

In summary cities are home to more than half the global population, and another 2.4 billion people are expected to live in urban areas by 2050. Cities bring benefits to people and the planet, such as economic opportunities and social capital. However, traditional models of city development can result in congestion, sprawl, pollution and inequality. Achieving sustainable, human-centered urban growth and a thriving urban future for all is a crucial global challenge.

1.1.4 Justification for Creation of New Cities in Uganda

Uganda has had a phenomenal rise in its urban population from 1.7millions persons in 1991 to 7.4millions in 2016. The urban population is projected to rise to 21million by 2040. Realization of potential

benefits from the phenomenal of the rapid urbanization, calls for a conscious strategy to ensure that the fast growing and viable urban settlement are elevated to higher and better planned entities. Besides up grading of deserving urban councils precludes mushrooming unplanned urban settlements (slums), with their attendant socio- economic problems (Ministry of Local Government 2019). Urban areas in Uganda play significant role in driving economic growth. More than 70percent nonagricultural economic activity no agricultural jobs are done in urban areas. Urban areas are leading the process of transformation away from agriculture resulting into socio- economic conditions for urban dwellers, with migrants from areas often living in better conditions and earning significantly higher incomes than the counter parts in the rural areas. The typical Ugandan city has grown rapidly but without sufficient policy coordination. As a result, the emergency of Ugandan cities has not necessarily resulted in increased productivity, with the majority of jobs created through urbanization process involving low productivity activities. Furthermore, the living environment does not provide decent housing or adequate public goods for a significant population of the city residents with at least 60 percent of the urban populations in Uganda living in slums. Also the mobility of people and goods is constrained and costly due to the heavily traffic congestion in the city (World Bank 2015). The growth and expansion of municipal councils in Uganda has over the years taken place without corresponding physical and socio- economic infrastructure. This is in part due to the delay in the upgrading of these governance structures to cities. Approved human resources and other institutional structures of municipal councils and availability of funding levels do not position municipal councils to adequately meet administrative and socio- economic needs of ever increasing numbers of their residents. In urban areas unemployment rates are high and most of the jobs are in the informal sector economy are neither taxed nor monitored by the government. There are unregulated land markets, infrastructure and service provision. There are complicated settlement governance arrangements with weak local authorities and poor land use management capacity informal settlements and unregulated peri-urban construction. The established new cities require office structures, staff, transport and other administrative resources that are vital for daily operations. Those come with hefty prices that can only increase public administration expenditure. Besides the startup funds, the administrative units require operational funds to enable them to implement their mandate as stipulated in the Local Government Act, 1997. Some of the responsibilities under their mandate include service delivery, governance and administration (Ministry of Local Government 2020). Urbanization has generally been a positive force for economic growth and development, poverty reduction, human development and social development. Cities are places where entrepreneurship and technological innovation can thrive. Urban areas also serve as hubs for development

where the proximity of commerce government and transportation provide the infrastructure necessary for sharing knowledge and information (United Nations 2018).

1.1.5 Current Challenges Facing Newly Created Cities in Uganda

Unclear management for created cities. The approval of the new cities by parliament on April 28, 2020 was not preceded by rigorous analysis and forward planning. It is unclear whether they will operate as dynamic industrial hubs or as expanded administrative municipalities. Their governance structure is not clear (Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment, 2020).

Rapid Urban Growth:

Uganda is experiencing a high urbanization rate of approximately 5.2% per annum, with projections indicating that nearly half of the population will reside in urban areas by 2050. This rapid growth has led to unplanned urban expansion and increased pressure on existing infrastructure.

Inadequate Infrastructure:

The urban infrastructure in Uganda is struggling to keep pace with the growing population. Many urban areas lack essential services such as clean water, sanitation, and reliable transportation systems. This inadequacy contributes to poor living conditions and health risks for urban residents.

Slum Development:

The growth of informal settlements and slums is a significant issue, with many urban dwellers living in substandard housing conditions. These areas often lack basic services and are characterized by overcrowding, poor sanitation, and limited access to economic opportunities.

Governance and Planning Issues:

There is a lack of effective urban governance and planning frameworks in Uganda. The absence of a comprehensive urban policy has resulted in disorganized urban growth, land-use conflicts, and inadequate coordination among various governmental agencies.

Environmental Degradation:

Rapid urbanization has led to environmental challenges, including deforestation, pollution, and waste management issues. The pressure on natural resources is exacerbated by the increasing urban population, leading to unsustainable practices.

Economic Disparities:

Urbanization has not translated into equitable economic development. Many urban residents face high levels of poverty and unemployment, particularly in slum areas. The lack of job opportunities and access to education further perpetuates these disparities.

There are still problems with gazetting of district headquarters, asset sharing guidelines, staffing structures, waste management, road equipment and harmonizing remuneration for local leaders. There are also issues of accountability challenges.

1.1.3 Benefits of Creating New Cities

Managing rapid urbanization will help Uganda achieve sustainable and inclusive growth (World Bank, 2020). Uganda's urban population was predicted to increase from six million in 2013 to over 20 million in 2040. Policy makers need to act now to ensure that this rapid urbanization is managed well, so it can contribute to Uganda's sustainable and inclusive growth. Therefore urban planners and authorities need to provide data on new urban areas and their populations in a consistent manner across Uganda to provide the government and local leaders with analyses to improve planning and coordination to deliver better services, jobs and opportunities, making cities more competitive. The typical Ugandan cities have grown rapidly, but without sufficient policy coordination. As a result, urbanization has not necessarily resulted in increased productivity, with the majority of jobs created involving low productivity activities.

According to World Bank report (2020), there is growth challenge in Ugandan cities. The major question has been:

Can Ugandan Cities get to Work or just mere creations to win votes. This is because the majority of the population is still concentrated in rural areas, non-agricultural, economic growth and jobs are concentrated in urban areas. The report shows that while cities can help propel growth, the speed of urbanization is challenging and can lead to congestion and strain infrastructure and lowering productivity. By managing the urbanization process effectively, Uganda will be more likely to achieve middle income status by 2040. However, current patterns of growth pose a significant challenge. Urban population growth multiplies the number of challenges already facing urban areas and hinders their ability to be the sources of growth, to create productive jobs and to provide decent housing to urban residents.

The the challenge to government is about ensuring that its cities are ready to accommodate the increasing number of residents expected to settle in urban areas and able to facilitate the growth of business enterprises, thereby creating opportunities for productive employment for a greater proportion of city residents.

Cities have the potential to propel growth, attracting capital, spurring innovation, providing higher productivity jobs. Services can be provided more cost-effectively, and improving access for all. To reap these benefits, urban growth needs to be managed well by planning for land use and basic services, connecting to

make a city's markets accessible, and financing to meet infrastructure needs. To ensure the development of functional cities, the public sector will require the coordination of a range of different types of investment, including investment in physical planning for buildings and the provision of transport, housing and social services. Each layer faces its own coordination challenges. It is better to anticipate and plan for this at the very early stages of the urbanization process, as it becomes very difficult to correct mistakes retrospectively (World Bank report, 2020).

Policy makers at national and municipal levels have an important role to play in ensuring that urbanization is sustainable and inclusive by ensuring that land and property rights are conducive for increasing economic density of cities. They will also have to improve mobility through better transport infrastructure and systems, as well as improve living conditions through better housing policies. Furthermore, it will be critical to improve access to social services such health and education; and levelling access to, and quality of, public services such as water and sanitation services.

According to World Bank (2020), economic opportunities and numbers of people living in cities have increased since 2013 as indicated below:

- 6.4 million Ugandans live in urban areas
- 70 percent of non-agricultural GDP in Uganda is generated in urban areas
- 54 percent of people living in Central region are residing in urban areas
- Central region has the highest number of people living in urban areas, but the Eastern region is the fastest urbanizing region during the first decade of 2000s
- Kampala is home to 31 percent of Uganda's urban population
- 69 percent of Uganda's urban population live in small cities with less than 500,000 people
- 21 million people will live in urban areas in Uganda by 2040
- By 2013, 38 percent of the urban population was connected to the electricity grid
- The number of firms engaged in real estate and business services in Kampala is 11 times the overall average across districts
- Over the first decade of the 2000s, cities accounted for 36 percent of overall job growth
- Walking is the main mode of transport in Kampala, and 70 percent of the residents of Kampala walk to work
- 80 percent of the global economic activity is generated in cities

In summary cities are home to more than half the global population, and another 2.4 billion people are expected to live in urban areas by 2050. Cities bring benefits to people and the planet, such as economic

opportunities and social capital. However, traditional models of city development can result in congestion, sprawl, pollution and inequality. Achieving sustainable, human-centered urban growth and a thriving urban future for all is a crucial global challenge.

1.1.4 Justification for Creation of New Cities in Uganda

Uganda has had a phenomenal rise in its urban population from 1.7millions persons in 1991 to 7.4millionsin 2016. The urban population is projected to rise to 21million by 2040. Realization of potential benefits from the phenomenal of the rapid urbanization, calls for a conscious strategy to ensure that the fast growing and viable urban settlement are elevated to higher and better planned entities. Besides up grading of deserving urban councils precludes mushrooming unplanned urban settlements (slums), with their attendant socio- economic problems (Ministry of Local Government 2019). Urban areas in Uganda play significant role in driving economic growth. More than 70percent nonagricultural economic activity no agricultural jobs are done in urban areas. Urban areas are leading the process of transformation away from agriculture resulting into socio- economic conditions for urban dwellers, with migrants from areas often living in better conditions and earning significantly higher incomes than the counter parts in the rural areas. The typical Ugandan city has grown rapidly but without sufficient policy coordination. As a result, the emergency of Ugandan cities has not necessarily resulted in increased productivity, with the majority of jobs created through urbanization process involving low productivity activities. Furthermore, the living environment does not provide decent housing or adequate public goods for a significant population of the city residents with at least 60 percent of the urban populations in Uganda living in slums. Also the mobility of people and goods is constrained and costly due to the heavily traffic congestion in the city (World Bank 2015). The growth and expansion of municipal councils in Uganda has over the years taken place without corresponding physical and socio- economic infrastructure. This is in part due to the delay in the upgrading of these governance structures to cities. Approved human resources and other institutional structures of municipal councils and availability of funding levels do not position municipal councils to adequately meet administrative and socio- economic needs of ever increasing numbers of their residents. In urban areas unemployment rates are high and most of the jobs are in the informal sector economy are neither taxed nor monitored by the government. There are unregulated land markets, infrastructure and service provision. There are complicated settlement governance arrangements with weak local authorities and poor land use management capacity informal settlements and unregulated peri-urban construction. The established new cities require office structures, staff, transport and other administrative resources that are vital for daily operations. Those come with hefty prices that can only

increase public administration expenditure. Besides the startup funds, the administrative units require operational funds to enable them to implement their mandate as stipulated in the Local Government Act, 1997. Some of the responsibilities under their mandate include service delivery, governance and administration (Ministry of Local Government 2020). Urbanization has generally been a positive force for economic growth and development, poverty reduction, human development and social development. Cities are places where entrepreneurship and technological innovation can thrive. Urban areas also serve as hubs for development where the proximity of commerce government and transportation provide the infrastructure necessary for sharing knowledge and information (United Nations 2018).

1.1.5 Current Challenges Facing Newly Created Cities in Uganda

Unclear management for created cities. The approval of the new cities by parliament on April 28, 2020 was not preceded by rigorous analysis and forward planning. It is unclear whether they will operate as dynamic industrial hubs or as expanded administrative municipalities. Their governance structure is not clear (Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment, 2020).

According to UN Habitat (2021) on urbanization in Uganda, building Inclusion and Sustainable cities, cities are still facing the following challenges:

Rapid Urban Growth:

Uganda is experiencing a high urbanization rate of approximately 5.2% per annum, with projections indicating that nearly half of the population will reside in urban areas by 2050. This rapid growth has led to unplanned urban expansion and increased pressure on existing infrastructure.

Inadequate Infrastructure:

The urban infrastructure in Uganda is struggling to keep pace with the growing population. Many urban areas lack essential services such as clean water, sanitation, and reliable transportation systems. This inadequacy contributes to poor living conditions and health risks for urban residents.

Slum Development:

The growth of informal settlements and slums is a significant issue, with many urban dwellers living in substandard housing conditions. These areas often lack basic services and are characterized by overcrowding, poor sanitation, and limited access to economic opportunities.

Governance and Planning Issues:

There is a lack of effective urban governance and planning frameworks in Uganda. The absence of a comprehensive urban policy has resulted in disorganized urban growth, land-use conflicts, and inadequate

coordination among various governmental agencies. Ineffective urban governance and management due to involvement of various agencies in urban governance and management which makes it difficult to coordinate many actions and in turn affects the effectiveness of the actions

Environmental Degradation:

Rapid urbanization has led to environmental challenges, including deforestation, pollution, and waste management issues. The pressure on natural resources is exacerbated by the increasing urban population, leading to unsustainable practices, degradation which rises from conflicting land users, unsatisfactory waste management practices, destruction of green belts and ecologically fragile ecosystems especially wetlands and hilltops.

Economic Disparities:

Urbanization has not translated into equitable economic development. Many urban residents face high levels of poverty and unemployment, particularly in slum areas. The lack of job opportunities and access to education further perpetuates these disparities.

According to Mbabazi Jonas and Atukunda Phoebe (2020) the following further challenges are facing new cities created in Uganda.

Poor waste disposal and management. Poor waste disposal is a national wide problem with approximately 13 percent of urban population disposing waste in gardens, 19 percent in pits, and 32 percent heaping it in drainages and streets and the remaining 36 percent on open dump sites.

Slums and informal settlements. Substandard housing conditions units built with temporary building materials of which 27 percent are in urban areas.

Weak urban economy. Uganda's urban economy is characterized by low productivity and competitiveness and largely dominated by the informal sector. The increase in urban population does not correspond to job opportunities to propel growth.

Urban sprawl. The country is currently experiencing an unprecedented level of urban sprawl (uncoordinated urban expansion) resulting in a high cost of infrastructure and service provision, encroachment on environmentally sensitive areas and fertile lands for agriculture.

Inadequate urban infrastructure and services. Due to rapid urbanization, unplanned development and inadequate funding, many urban areas cannot afford to cope with the demands for infrastructure development and services. The central government transfer of funds to urban local government is insufficient compared to the needs of urban services. The level and quality of services

delivered by urban authorities do not match the needs of the population.

Urban transportation challenges. Weak transportation and traffic management as well as limited mode of transport which is mainly by road is expensive in terms of time spent in traffic fuel and vehicle maintenance. Road transport is the predominant form of transport with the vehicle growth of 8 percent per annum, the bulk of which operate in urban areas.

There are still problems with gazetting of district headquarters, asset sharing guidelines, staffing structures, waste management, road equipment and harmonizing remuneration for local leaders. There are also issues of accountability challenges.

Maintaining road equipment has remained a challenge in cities like Mbale, Mbarara and other without government support especially after borrowing the equipment's from the neighboring district of Bukedea.

Lack of absorption capacity of released funds from the Central Government.

"In December 2023, the Auditor General reported that over Shs427 billion had been dispatched as start-up funds for the cities, but over Shs41 billion was returned to the Consolidated Fund. This shows failure in absorption even amidst financial constraints," he said.

Fight over assets. Despite the long journeys towards achieving their long-awaited dreams, the new urban local governments are yet to settle for full operationalization over a stirring controversy on how to share assets with the mother districts. The latest dispute arises out of a circular by the Attorney General, which requires the mother districts to move their headquarters to alternative areas outside the city boundaries as well as relinquishing all other immovable assets to the new administrative units, to support their growth. However, the leaders of traditional districts which gave birth to cities are reluctant to hand over the assets, described the Attorney General's letter issued in November last year, as further suppression of their administration and status. For instance.

Andrew Lukyamuzi, the Masaka District Chairperson, indicates that the circular from the Attorney General dispossesses the district of their crucial assets that include their recently acquired administrative headquarters, Council hall, a public library and several prime pieces of land that are not easy to replace once lost. Lukyamuzi explains that the new cities already expanded into the boundaries of the districts and annexed key sources of local revenue that were sustaining the mother local governments. Lukyamuzi further argues that they cannot imagine having a traditional district return to

scratch, demanding that government withdraws the circular to at least allow them sell the contested properties to the cities as a way of boosting the districts' startup budgets.

Cultural attachment. The best example is Masaka city. Since the 1960s, Masaka district local government had been operating from the Buganda Kingdom premises located at Ssaza headquarters in Nyendo-Mukugwe city division until 2012, when they obtained an alternative piece of land to start construction of the new district headquarters. As a coincidence, both the new headquarters and the traditional Buganda Kingdom premises which the district continues to use for its council hall and technical departments are located within the city boundaries. Besides the fear of losing urban-based office spaces, the leaders argue that some of these assets they are asked to forfeit have strong cultural and social significance districts would not wish to lose.

Budget issues evidenced by Gulu city.

Christopher Opiyo Ateker, the Gulu District Chairperson says they are not ready to surrender any of the hard-earned assets to the city unless the new urban council accepts to pay rent for utilizing these assets. Ateker says the circular kills the rationale of acquiring the cities by creating what he describes as unnecessary operational rifts between the two local government units that are meant to supplement each other. He argues that the cities should be allowed to begin from assets of the former municipalities, owing to the high budgetary allocations as compared to their counterparts in the districts. Notably, in the 2021/2022 financial year, Gulu district local government operates on a budget of 31 billion shillings which is below that of the previous financial year which was 42 billion shillings.

In its first budget year, Gulu City Council is expending on a budget of 48.6 billion shillings. Ateker explains that with such a decline in their budget which is largely supported by central government transfers, it will take the district decades to regain other assets if loses them to the City. He reveals that they already resisted attempts by Gulu City Council to start occupying the district properties, arguing that the Attorney General's circular was inconsistent.

Muhammad Mafabi, the Mbale district Chairperson, argues that losing assets to the new Mbale City Council will significantly affect the district operations yet their local revenue collections have already dwindled. Mafabi says although the district may shift their headquarters to a new location outside the city, they are not ready to relinquish their high-value properties unless they are compensated. Some of the assets they will keep hold on, according to Mafabi, are; 48 staff housing units at Maluku

Estate, the administration block on Plot 57-61 Republic Street, the district road unit, and several commercial buildings among others.

Mbale district is operating with an estimated budget of over 43 billion shillings in the financial year 2021/2022 and of this, only 800 million shillings is expected to be collected from local revenue sources. The biggest percentage is to come from the central government. While Mbale City has an estimated budget of over 50 billion shillings, just over 4.7 billion is expected from local revenue sources. Mafabi says that some of the sources of local revenue, like markets and lower local governments, were already annexed into the city when it was expanding its boundaries.

In Mbarara District, the contested properties include, the historical Council Hall which originally belonged to the Kingdom of Ankole, office Blocks, Kakyeka Stadium, buildings hosting Makerere University Business School-Mbarara, and over five prime plots of land all located in Kamukuzi City Division. The other assets are; Generational Suites Hotel, GNTV, and King of King Ministries church building. Didas Tabaro, the Mbarara district Chairperson, says they have put the Ministry of Local Government on notice to compensate them for the properties if they are to hand them over to the city council (USMAID, 2024).

Similarly, the Chairpersons of Lira and Soroti district local governments, whose cities were inaugurated in July 2020, also argue that they will not sign off transfers for the properties unless they are compensated. Richard Cox Okello Orik and Simon Peter Etoru Ekuu say they don't see any future in surrendering, especially the district headquarters to the new city.

Local Government Minister Raphael Magyezi says he is aware of the existing puzzle in the operationalization of the cities, however indicating that the Ministry is going to address them on a case by case basis (The Independent February 21, 2022 Business).

Conclusively, addressing these urbanization problems in Uganda requires a multi-faceted approach, including the development of a comprehensive urban policy, investment in infrastructure, and improved governance. Collaborative efforts among government, civil society, and international organizations are essential to create sustainable urban environments that can support the growing population and enhance the quality of life for all residents.

1.1.6 Study Objectives

The overall objective of the study was to analyze the influence state-politics on creation of new cities while assessing the opportunities and challenges for the newly created cities.

Specific Objectives

To assess how state politics has influenced the creation of new cities in Uganda.

To identify challenges and opportunities for the newly created cities in Uganda With specific reference to Mbarara city.

To explore possible dependable measures/ strategies for harmonizing city creation and sustainable development initiatives in Mbarara city.

1.1.7 Rationale and Significance of the Study

Very many scholars have studied urban expansion and examined the historical origins and functions of towns without considering the measures that can harmonize urban expansion and sustainable development. There is recognition that there is limited information about towns of less developed countries including Uganda. This made the study justified in the sense that there is knowledge gap about the new created cities and therefore there is a need to search for new knowledge to bridge this gap.

It was hoped that the study findings and the recommendations made may be an asset to town planners, administrators, politicians and policy makers who have a stake in the city. The study findings will provide a basis of designing policies that will guide on future urban expansion based on sustainable development. The study findings are also an important reference tool for future research in the expansion of other urban areas in Uganda.

Also since the city is new, the generated knowledge will help in transforming new cities into smart cities. This is because many new created cities have transformed rural towns into cities without clear physical planning and zoning. According to Dhingra and Chattopadhyay(2016), a smart and sustainable city has goals to be achieved in adaptable, reliable, scalable, accessible and resilient way, such as: Improve quality of life of its citizen; Ensure economic growth with better employment opportunities; Improve well-being of its citizens by ensuring access to social and community services; Establish an environmentally responsible and sustainable approach to development; Ensure efficient service delivery of basic services and infrastructure such as public transportation, water supply and drainage, telecommunication and other utilities; Ability to address climate change and environmental issues; Provide an effective regulatory and local governance mechanism ensuring equitable policies. Mbarara city has to work towards that.

Since the city is new and a recent creation, the information obtained is timely because the city has adopted expansion of boundaries policy to integrate neighboring areas of Biharwe, Nyakayonjo and Kakiika into the city. The question has been won't the expansion have an effect on future generation of both natural and human resources of these immediate and surrounding

areas around the city?. The study therefore explored how the expansion of the city should put into consideration the sustainability of both the natural and human environments.

The Time scope was limited to 1950 to 2020. This period was thought to be enough to capture historical information about city growth and recent developments that are taking place. It was within this time that the country initiated and implemented many development programmes in both pre and post-independence like Structural Adjustment Programmes, Universal Primary Education, and National Agriculture Advisory Services, slum upgrading, and urban expansion inclusive that created an impact on both natural and human environment.

1.1.8 Theorizing Urbanisation and Creation of New Cities

Two theories have been considered to guide this study. The Theory of Self-Generated Urbanization and the Theory of Urban Bias.

The theory of Self-Generated Urbanization, suggest that urbanization occurrence requires separate conditions which are the generation of surplus products that sustain people in non-agricultural activities (Hawley, 1981) and the achievement of a level of social development that allows large communities to be capable of working successfully alone (Bodo 2015). It is believed that this type of changes that results in urbanization took place simultaneously in the Neolithic period when the first cities emerged in the Middle East (Wheatley, 1971). This theory also holds that rural urban migration was the source of this form of urbanization as people began to move to cities for factory jobs (Childe, 1950). Thus industrialization was identified as the driver behind the exodus movement of people from the rural settlement to urban areas. Before the industrial revolution in Great Britain in the twentieth century, historical evidence showed that no society could be described as urbanized. It was after this period that the West began to industrialize rapidly and soon after the accelerated industrialization and then urbanization in the rest of the world through the last century to the present. This theory has been criticized for concentrating on rural urban migration shift within countries as the source of urbanization considering that there are other cities that are urbanized based on other factors not necessarily through rural urban migration. For Mbarara city, this theory applies because rural urban migration has been a major cause for rapid expansion although other factors like early trade, government urban policy, colonial policy, investments, natural population increase, geographical location, land availability, and infrastructure development explain the cause of rapid urbanization in the area.

The theory of urban Bias has been supported by several scholars (London and Smith 1988, Bradshaw

1987, Tadaro 1981) among others. Micheal Lipton, a development economist who is a leading proponent of the urban bias theory: in 1977 explained this theory in his paper by comparing data of 63 less developed countries and nine developed countries which revealed that urban rural disparity is seen to be growing in poor countries as the government of these nations tend to intervene in markets in ways that imposes tax on agriculture; Whereas governments of richer nations were doing the reverse by intervening in ways that counter subsidies to farmers (Dixon and Mc Micheal, 2016).

In this sense, rural people were described as being parasitized by urban populations who benefit massively from the consumption of cheap goods from the rural settlements and beautiful urban structures from the tax incomes from these rural areas (Dixon and Mc Micheal, 2016). This bias in favor of the urban settlements has created disparity between the rural and urban areas as regard to consumption, wage and productivity levels, necessitating mass exodus of the rural dwellers to cities for greener pastures and improved standard of living (Corbridge and Jones 2005).

The sufferings and abject poverty among the people in rural areas is attributed to urban bias. This results from the uneven distribution of available resources among the populace; a situation that concentrate development projects like agricultural and industrial reforms in the urban centers, making the impoverished rural dwellers to move to the cities where they can access quality education, health care services, basic social amenities, security, essential goods and services (Lipton 2005).

The urban bias theorists believed that there are groups that hinder the economic accumulation of resources in core settlements or areas of interest that immediately became urbanized through two main factors; massive rural urban migration and natural increase (Abiodun 1997, Modal 2018). The urbanization of developing countries especially Africa has been described as unique (Bodo 2015). Urbanization pattern in Africa is different from other continents in the world. As compares with other regions, Africans are always moving to other parts of the world for greener pastures, leisure and religious functions but despite these, the continent is of the fastest urbanizing regions of the world. (Gunal Petal 2018). Currently, most places in Africa is largely rural and primitive yet African urban population is expected to be more than triple in over forty years from 39.5 million in 2000 to 1,339 billion in 2050, corresponding to 21st of the world projected urban population(UNDESA 2019). Mbarara city urbanization process properly suits in the explanation of this theory.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopted a retrospective -prospective and analytical study design. According to Kumar (2005),

retrospective-prospective studies investigate and focus on past trends in a phenomenon and study it into the future. The study was selected because it enabled the researchers to investigate aspects within the period that took place in the past so as to understand the present situation and use it to predict the future implications of urban expansion on sustainable development in Mbarara city. Analytical study design helped the investigator to seek and critically analyze the implication of urban expansion and transformation of rural areas to cities with emphasis on challenges and opportunities on socio-economic transformation and human welfare in Mbarara city.

The approach of the study was an interface between the qualitative and quantitative research methods. Information was obtained from a cross section of the population of the entire city on variables that included: the factors that led to the expansion of Mbarara city; the threats of urban expansion on sustainable livelihood; the challenges of urban expansion towards achieving sustainable development strategies and dependable measures that can harmonize urban expansion and development. The reason for the choice of interface was the need for a representative sample to ensure a fair generalization of the findings on the quantitative responses and the need to have in-depth qualitative responses about experiences, perceptions, opinions, values and beliefs of those who have seen the expansion of the city; the information which cannot be obtained through quantitative approach.

The study population comprised key informants in form of political leaders, religious leaders, city clerks, division mayors, and the lord mayor. The second category comprised city residents and working class, urban farmers, entrepreneurs, industrial workers, commercial traders, and service providers from different categories.

Sample size determination has to do with a number of factors, including the purpose of the study, population size, the risk of selecting a bad example, the level of precision- the sampling error, the confidence level and the degree of variability in the attributes being measured, (Glenn Isrea, 11992; Saunders *et al.*, 2004).

The study used the Taro Yamane formula to determine the minimum sample size with utmost confidence level of 95 percent, (Yamane 1967/1973).

The Taro Yamane formula is stated as;

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where n = sample size, N = population size and e =significance level of 5% (0.05)

Mbarara city has a population of 323000 people (Mbarara Municipality Development Plan, 2019). A total of 333 people was sampled for the study, of these, 297 heads of households sample were selected to fill

questionnaires. However, only 264 questionnaires out of the 297 issued were realized; a response rate of 88.88 percent.

Purposing sampling was used to select local council I leaders (27), local council III leaders (6), and city and division leaders (08), Managers of service providers (3), elders (3), and heads of organizations (3). Purposive sampling was used because it enabled the researcher to get knowledgeable respondents with accurate and authentic information hence improving the validity of the study findings.

Sources of data were derived from primary and secondary sources. Primary data was obtained from the researcher's interaction with respondents using interviews, focused group discussions, questionnaires, and observation methods. Secondary data was obtained through relevant social science websites, textbooks, journals, \magazines, and newspapers, and reviewing records mainly reports, city development plans, budgets, statistical abstracts and minutes. This helped the study to generate data and derive a meaningful interpretation of the findings.

Data collection methods involved use of questionnaires, interviews, observation, focus group discussions, and documentary evidence analysis as a method of information gathering. Structured and unstructured questions were constructed and administered by the researcher. Interview guides and interview schedules help in the interviewing process. Observation checklist was drawn to help in observation, focus group interviews were guided by the focus group discussion guide.

On quality control and checking Validity of instruments, data collection instruments were developed in a way that the y measured the desirable standards (Kumar2005, Walter 1995). On reliability of instruments: an instrument is reliable if measures consistently what it is supposed to measure. According to Kumar (2005), if a research tool is consistent and stable and predictable and accurate, it is said to be reliable. The study used instruments that were found to be reliable. After using a Test- Re-Test method where an instrument is administered once, and then again under the same or similar conditions and same answers being given, the instruments were considered reliable (Kumar 2005, Oso and Onen 2008, Walter 1989).

On data management, the data was stored and entered in a computer using appropriate computer software (epi data) and also sent to researchers email for easy access and security, retrieval, analysis, editing and interpretation. Data was edited to ensure its accuracy and consistency. All questionnaires were collected and checked for its completeness to avoid omission of important data.

On data analysis, qualitative data was analyzed thematically where derived themes from objectives were described in details. This analysis utilized data collected from documents, interview guides, observation checklists and focus group discussions. On the side of quantitative data, SPSS computer software was used in running frequencies and creating tables and graphs.

On ethical consideration, all interviewees that participated in semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were informed about the procedure of the study in which they were requested to participate and the researcher's intention to use interview data and information for purely academic purposes.

On limitations of the study, some respondents would dodge answering some questions; others failed to provide adequate information thus missing some important data for the study. However using simple and convincing language and ensuring confidentiality among respondent helped in the collecting the required information.

1.3 LITERATURE REVIEW

Urbanization is the global trend and has largely been a positive force for economic growth, poverty reduction and economic development. Urbanization is understood as population shift from rural areas to urban areas; it is the gradual increase in the proportion of people living in urban areas and the ways in which each society adapts to the change. It is the predominantly process by which towns and cities are formed and become larger as more people begin living and in urban and working in urban areas (GOU, 2017). Urbanization is looked at as a process by which towns and cities are formed and become larger as more cities are important drivers of development and poverty reduction in both urban and rural areas because they are places where entrepreneurship and technological innovations and other economic activity can flourish (United Nations, 2014).

The Ugandan Government third National Development Plan (NDP111) 2020/21-2024/25 under the vision: "A transformed Ugandan Society from peasant to a modern and prosperous country within 30 years" calls for increased household incomes and improved quality of life for Ugandans. The whole chapter 15 Uganda's NDP 111 is dedicated to sustainable urbanization and housing. It recognizes that urbanization offers opportunities for accelerating socio-economic transformation. Planned and efficient urbanization will enhance rather than restrict inclusive structural transformation. This is because the growing middle class consumption is largely urban based and urbanization also influences industrial growth. The Global Agenda 2030 for sustainable development (SDG11) as well as Africa Agenda 2063 advocate for a well-planned and managed urbanization as a better urban system and vulnerability due to climate change. Chapter 5 of NDP 111 calls for

agro- industrialization. The aspiration of the Agenda 2030(SDG2 and 9) is to end hunger and achieve food security, improve nutrition and promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.

CHALLENGES TO CREATION OF NEW CITIES

According to the World Economic Forum (2018), the UN estimates that 55 percent of the global population lives in urban areas, a figure that is likely to be 68 percent by 2050. With few exceptions cities are expected to become bigger and more numerous. As urbanization speeds new challenges also come up. These include: Environmental threats, rapid urbanization which strains basic infrastructure coupled with more frequent and extreme weather events linked to global climate changes in exacerbating the impact of environmental threats. Common environmental threats include; flooding, tropical cyclones for which coastal cities are particularly vulnerable, heat waves and epidemics.

Inadequate resources in form of water, food and energy leading to urban vulnerability, Urban sprawl reduces available water catchment areas, agricultural lands and increasing demand for energy. While better application of technology can boost agricultural productivity and ensure more efficient transmission of electricity, many cities will continue to struggle to provide these resources to ever growing urban population. Even up hazard growth will see the reduction of green spaces with in cities, negatively affecting livability. As fresh water becomes scarce and fertile lands diminish, food prices may escalate hitting the poorest hardest (World Economic Forum 2018).

Inequality at all levels, urbanization comes with different challenges. As the number of urban super rich grows, many cities will also see increased numbers of urban poor. The widening gap between the haves and have not's will be accentuated in the megacities of the future. Such inequalities when left unchecked will destabilize the society and upend any benefits of urban development. There is a critical need for policy makers to ensure that the fruits of progress are shared equitably.

Technological challenges:

Technology will be increasingly used in the development and running of cities of the future. Smart planning used in Singapore can harness solar energy for use in housing estates and create man made wetlands for ecological balance. Smart mobility technology can alleviate traffic gridlocks which plague many cities (World Economic Forum 2018).

The use of environmental technologies which can cool buildings more efficiently or run vehicles that are less polluting will also lead to better future cities. Installing sensors in the homes of ageing seniors living alone can connect them to the community and summon help when they are unwell or hurt. However, technology can exclude urban inhabitants who cannot afford it or

lack the capability required for its adoption. As future cities become more digitized care must be exercised to prevent the emergence of a new form of social; divide rooted in the technological.

Governance challenges. Future cities offer immense possibilities to enrich the lives of their inhabitants even as the challenges are stark. It is important to note that cities will increase in size and population become more diverse. Governing these cities will therefore be progressively complex and require the most dedicated of minds. Increasingly, cities around the world are learning about the governance and planning practices from one another, even as they remain accountable to their respective national governments. The broader goal governance should address issues of equity, livability and sustainability in cities of the future. (World Economic Forum 2018).

According to United States, Environmental protection Agency (EPA) report (2020), small towns and cities can use local assets to rebuild their economies. This is because over time all communities experience change that affect the industries, techniques and land use patterns that help form the foundation of their economies. Economically resilient towns, cities and regions adapt to changing conditions and even reinvent their economic bases if necessary. Even if the community has lost its original or main economic driver, it has other assets that it can use to spur the economy. While most economic development strategies involve some effort to recruit major employers such as manufactures or large retailers, many successful small towns and cities complement recruitment by emphasizing their existing assets and distinctive resources. Examples of such towns include Bend, Oregon with a population of 12000' Dubuque, Iowa with a population of 58000 and others.

In attempt to transform small towns and rural communities and create cities EPA reports that, they have used the following approaches or tactics: identifying and building existing assets, engaging all members of the future; taking advantage of outside funding, creating incentives of re-development and encouraging investment in the community, encouraging cooperation within the community and across the region and supporting a clean and healthy environment.

African Experience with Creation of New Cities

For the case of sub Saharan Africa, urbanization has not provided the same economic growth experienced by other regions of the world (World Bank report 2019). There was consistency in GDP per capita growth for East Asian countries as their share of urban population grew between 1990 and 2016 but for the sub Saharan African story is a mixed bag. There is no clear pattern for instance Nigeria and Ghana have seen strong growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) along with higher shares of urban populations, on the other hand Zimbabwe,

Madagascar and Guinea Bissau have experienced decline in GDP while experiences increase in urban population. This is due to failure to reallocate economic activities for the agricultural sector toward the more productive industrial and service sectors resulting in urbanization without growth.

Urban sprawl and compactness are inevitable outcome of urban growth. According to Abo -El-wata, etal (2017) in explanation of their urban expansion model and its impact on food production in Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia contends that urban sprawl in the city may lead to excessive loss of farm land. They tried to analyze geospatial modeling by quantifying future urban growth and concluded that with increasing population in urban areas, there has to be loss to farming and food production due to preference for residential housing, industrial set and other commercial enterprises. This has threatened urban food security (Batter by 2013). Therefore, there is a need to integrate food security in city master plans. Scholars like Satterth Waite, Mc Granahan and Tacoli have posed a question as to whether it is not possible to keep agriculture and urbanization to match with the growing demands for agricultural products by the growing urban population in a sustainable manner to check rising urban poverty and food insecurity.

For Uganda's case, the un planned rapid horizontal city growth has caused structure and socio-economical challenges for the established cities including poor land tenure system; low level of physical planning; lack of un interrelated transport system; challenges related to environmental management especially wet land management; garbage collection and disposal, noise pollution and development of slums; and increasing crime rate (World Bank report 2019).

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2030

The United Nations adopted the 17 Sustainable Development Goals in 2016 to transform the world and maintain sustainable development. They are a call to action to end poverty and to ensure that all people enjoy health, justice and prosperity. The social and economic dimension 2030 Agenda and the targets on social inclusion, the eradication of extreme poverty, the reduction of inequalities, inclusive policies for cities, as well as inclusive and participatory decision-making, also resonate with UNESCO's mandate to support Member States in managing contemporary social transformations. Intercultural dialogue is essential to understanding contemporary social transformations and to ensuring peaceful societies. However the achievement of the SDGs and the African Union Agenda 2063 will depend on researchers and policymakers, practitioners and stakeholders having access to and being able to share pertinent and accurate information about the societies and communities targeted by their actions, as well as a coherent intellectual framework in which to proceed. The 17 SDGs are:

1. End Poverty in all its forms everywhere. According to UNESCO, in 2020, the number of people living in extreme poverty (living on less than USD 2.15 a day) rose to 724 million. Those living in extreme poverty struggle to fulfill the most basic needs (health, education, access to water and sanitation). Recovery from the pandemic has been slow and uneven, with extreme poverty dropping from 9.3 per cent in 2020 to 8.8 per cent in 2021. The conflict in Ukraine has disrupted global trade, leading to increased living costs that are disproportionately impacting the poor. Furthermore, climate change poses substantial threats to poverty reduction. By the end of 2022, now casting suggests that 8.4 per cent of the world's population, or as many as 670 million people, could still be living in extreme poverty. Poverty affects developed countries as well. Right now, 30 million children are growing up poor in the world's richest countries. Eradicating poverty in all its forms remains one of the greatest challenges facing humanity. While the number of people living in extreme poverty dropped by more than half between 1990 and 2015 – from 1.9 billion to 731 million – too many are still struggling for the most basic human needs. A surge in action and investment to enhance economic opportunities, improve education and extend social protection to all, particularly the most excluded, is crucial to delivering on the central commitment to end poverty and leave no one behind.
2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. According to UNESCO report, in 2022, about 9.2 per cent of the world population was facing chronic hunger, equivalent to about 735 million people - 122 million more than in 2019. Hunger and malnutrition are barriers to sustainable development because hungry people are less productive, more prone to disease, and less able to improve their livelihoods. To nourish today's 735 million hungry people and the additional 2 billion people expected by 2050, a profound change of the global food and agriculture system is needed. To achieve zero hunger by 2030, urgent coordinated action and policy solutions are imperative to address entrenched inequalities, transform food systems, invest in sustainable agricultural practices, and reduce and mitigate the impact of conflict and the pandemic on global nutrition and food security.
3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. Great strides have been made in improving people's health in recent years. 146 out of 200 countries or areas have already met or are on track to meet the SDG target on under-5 mortality. Effective HIV treatment has cut global AIDS-related deaths by 52 per cent since 2010 and at least one neglected tropical disease has been eliminated in 47 countries (UNESCO, 2020 Report). However, inequalities in health care access still persist. The COVID-19 pandemic and other ongoing crises have impeded progress towards Goal 3. Childhood vaccinations have experienced the largest decline in three decades, and tuberculosis and malaria deaths have increased compared with pre-pandemic levels. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) make a bold commitment to end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and other communicable diseases by 2030. The aim is to achieve universal health coverage, and provide access to safe and affordable medicines and vaccines for all. To overcome these setbacks and address long-standing health care shortcomings, increased investment in health systems is needed to support countries in their recovery and build resilience against future health threats.
4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Progress towards quality education was already slower than required before the pandemic, but COVID-19 has had devastating impacts on education, causing learning losses in four out of five of the 104 countries studied. Without additional measures, an estimated 84 million children and young people will stay out of school and approximately 300 million students will lack the basic numeracy and literacy skills necessary for success in life (UNESCO Report, 2020). In addition to free primary and secondary schooling for all boys and girls by 2030, the aim is to provide equal access to affordable vocational training, eliminate gender and wealth disparities, and achieve universal access to quality higher education. Education is the key that will allow many other Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be achieved. When people are able to get quality education they can break from the cycle of poverty. Education helps to reduce inequalities and to reach gender equality. It also empowers people everywhere to live more healthy and sustainable lives. Education is also crucial to fostering tolerance between people and contributes to more peaceful societies (UNESCO Report, 2020). To deliver on Goal 4, education financing must become a national investment priority. Furthermore, measures such as making education free and compulsory, increasing the number of teachers, improving basic school infrastructure and embracing digital transformation are essential.

5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. Women and girls represent half of the world's population and therefore also half of its potential. But gender inequality persists everywhere and stagnates social progress. On average, women in the labor market still earn 23 percent less than men globally. On average, women spend about three times as many hours in unpaid domestic and care work as men. Sexual violence and exploitation, the unequal division of unpaid care and domestic work, and discrimination in public office, all remain huge barriers. All these areas of inequality have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic: there has been a surge in reports of sexual violence, women have taken on more care work due to school closures, and 70 percent of health and social workers globally are women (UNESCO Report, 2020). At the current rate, it will take an estimated 300 years to end child marriage, 286 years to close gaps in legal protection and remove discriminatory laws, 140 years for women to be represented equally in positions of power and leadership in the workplace, and 47 years to achieve equal representation in national parliaments. Political leadership, investments and comprehensive policy reforms are needed to dismantle systemic barriers to achieving Goal 5. Gender equality is a cross-cutting objective and must be a key focus of national policies, budgets and institutions. Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world (UNESCO Report, 2020).
6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. Access to water, sanitation and hygiene is a human right. Yet billions are still faced with daily challenges accessing even the most basic of services. Water scarcity is projected to increase with the rise of global temperatures as a result of climate change. In 2020, 2.4 billion people lived in water-stressed countries. In 2022, 2.2 billion people still lacked safely managed drinking water, including 703 million without a basic water service; 3.5 billion people lacked safely managed sanitation, including 1.5 billion without basic sanitation services; and 2 billion lacked a basic hand washing facility, including 653 million with no hand washing facility at all (UNESCO Report, 2020). There has been positive progress. Between 2015 and 2022, the proportion of the world's population with access to safely managed drinking water increased from 69 per cent to 73 per cent. Investments in infrastructure and sanitation facilities; protection and restoration of water-related ecosystems; and hygiene education are

among the steps necessary to ensure universal access to safe and affordable drinking water for all by 2030. But we are still not on track to reach Goal 6 by 2030. To get back on track, key strategies include increasing sector-wide investment and capacity-building, promoting innovation and evidence-based action, enhancing cross-sectoral coordination and cooperation among all stakeholders, and adopting a more integrated and holistic approach to water management.

7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all. Our everyday life depends on reliable and affordable energy. And yet the consumption of energy is the dominant contributor to climate change, accounting for around 60 percent of total global greenhouse gas emissions. From 2015 to 2021, the proportion of the global population with access to electricity has increased from 87 per cent to 91 per cent. In 2021, developing countries installed a record-breaking 268 watts per capita of renewable energy-generating capacity. And yet, in 2021 there were still 675 million people around the world with no access to electricity (UNESCO Report, 2020) (UNESCO Report, 2020). Ensuring universal access to affordable electricity by 2030 means investing in clean energy sources such as solar, wind and thermal. Expanding infrastructure and upgrading technology to provide clean energy in all developing countries is a crucial goal that can both encourage growth and help the environment. To ensure access to energy for all by 2030, we must accelerate electrification, increase investments in renewable energy, improve energy efficiency and develop enabling policies and regulatory frameworks (UNESCO Report, 2020). Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. Multiple crises are placing the global economy under serious threat. Global real GDP per capita growth is forecast to slow down in 2023 and with ever increasing challenging economic conditions, more workers are turning to informal employment. Globally, labour productivity has increased and the unemployment rate has decreased. However, more progress is needed to increase employment opportunities, especially for young people, reduce informal employment and labour market inequality (particularly in terms of the gender pay gap), promote safe and secure working environments, and improve access to financial services to ensure sustained and inclusive economic growth. The global unemployment rate declined significantly in 2022, falling to 5.4 per cent from a peak of 6.6 per cent in 2020 as economies began recovering

from the shock of the COVID-19 pandemic. This rate was lower than the pre-pandemic level of 5.5 per cent in 2019 (UNESCO Report, 2020). A persistent lack of decent work opportunities, insufficient investments and under-consumption contribute to the erosion of the basic social contract: that all must share in progress. The creation of quality jobs remain a major challenge for almost all economies. Achieving Goal 8 will require a wholesale reform of the financial system to tackle rising debts, economic uncertainty and trade tensions, while promoting equitable pay and decent work for young people (UNESCO Report, 2020).

8. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation. The manufacturing industry's recovery from COVID-19 is incomplete and uneven. Global manufacturing growth slowed down to 3.3 per cent in 2022, from 7.4 per cent in 2021. The share of manufacturing in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) remains low, posing a serious challenge to the target of doubling industry's share of GDP by 2030. However, medium-high and high-technology industries demonstrated robust growth rates. As of 2022, 95 per cent of the world's population was within reach of a mobile broadband network, but some areas remain underserved (UNESCO Report, 2020). Investments in infrastructure – transport, irrigation, energy and information and communication technology – are crucial to achieving sustainable development and empowering communities in many countries. To achieve Goal 9 by 2030, it is also essential to support LDCs, invest in advanced technologies, lower carbon emissions and increase mobile broadband access (UNESCO Report, 2020).
9. Reduce inequality within and among countries. Inequality threatens long-term social and economic development, harms poverty reduction and destroys people's sense of fulfillment and self-worth. The incomes of the poorest 40 per cent of the population had been growing faster than the national average in most countries. But emerging yet inconclusive evidence suggests that COVID-19 may have put a dent in this positive trend of falling within-country inequality. The pandemic has caused the largest rise in between-country inequality in three decades. Reducing both within- and between-country inequality requires equitable resource distribution, investing in education and skills development, implementing social protection measures, combating discrimination, supporting marginalized groups and fostering international cooperation for fair trade and financial systems (UNESCO Report, 2020).

10. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. Half of the world's population live in cities. This is projected to reach 70 per cent by 2050 (UNESCO Report, 2020). In the developing world, the rapid growth of cities, along with the increasing rural to urban migration, has led to a boom in mega-cities. In 1990, there were ten mega-cities with 10 million inhabitants or more. In 2014, there are 28 mega-cities, home to a total of 453 million people. This rapid urbanization outpaces the development of housing, infrastructure and services, which led to a rise in slums or slum-like conditions. In 2020, an estimated 1.1 billion urban residents lived in slums or slum-like conditions. Over the next 30 years, an additional 2 billion people are expected to live in such settlements. Sustainable development cannot be achieved without significantly transforming the way urban spaces are built and managed. Making cities safe and sustainable means ensuring access to safe and affordable housing, upgrading slum settlements, investing in public transport, creating green spaces, and improving urban planning and management in a way that is both participatory and inclusive (UNESCO Report, 2020).
11. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns. If the global population reaches 9.8 billion by 2050, the equivalent of almost three planets will be required to provide the natural resources needed to sustain current lifestyles. Global crises triggered resurgence in fossil fuel subsidies, nearly doubling from 2020 to 2021. In 2021, governments spent an estimated \$732 billion on subsidies for coal, oil and gas, nearly doubling the \$375 billion spent in 2020. In 2021, although 828 million people were facing hunger, 13.2 per cent of the world's food was lost after harvest along the supply chain from farm to consumer. The trend towards sustainability reporting is on the rise, with around 70 per cent of monitored companies publishing sustainability reports in 2021. In 2022, 67 national governments reported to the United Nations Environment Programme on the implementation of sustainable public procurement policies and action plans, a 50 per cent increase from 2020 (UNESCO Report, 2020). Support should be provided to developing countries to move towards more sustainable patterns of consumption by 2030.
12. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. Climate change affects every country on every continent. It is caused by human activities and threatens the future of our planet. With rising greenhouse gas emissions, climate change is occurring at rates much faster than anticipated and its effects are clearly felt

world-wide. The impacts include changing weather patterns, rising sea level, and more extreme weather events. If left unchecked, climate change will undo a lot of the progress made over the past years in development. It will also provoke mass migrations that will lead to instability and wars. Between 2010 and 2020, highly vulnerable regions, home to approximately 3.3–3.6 billion people, experienced 15 times higher human mortality rates from floods, droughts and storms compared to regions with very low vulnerability. Sea levels continued to rise in 2022, reaching a new record since satellite measurements in 1993. Affordable, scalable solutions are now available to enable countries to leapfrog to cleaner, more resilient, and low-carbon economies. Climate change is a global challenge that requires coordinated international cooperation. Two people replant mangrove seedlings in Kampong Jawa, an area of Banda Aceh that was devastated by the tsunami in 2004. Conserving, restoring and sustainably using coastal wetlands is crucial in the battle against climate change (UNESCO Report, 2020).

13. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development. Oceans cover three-quarters of the Earth's surface, contain 97 percent of the Earth's water, and represent 99 percent of the living space on the planet by volume. The world's oceans provide key natural resources including food, medicines, bio fuels and other products; help with the breakdown and removal of waste and pollution; and their coastal ecosystems act as buffers to reduce damage from storms. However, marine pollution is reaching alarming levels, with over 17 million metric tons clogging the ocean in 2021, a figure set to double or triple by 2040. Currently, the ocean's average pH is 8.1, about 30 per cent more acidic than in pre-industrial times. Ocean acidification threatens the survival of marine life, disrupts the food web, and undermines vital services provided by the ocean and our own food security (UNESCO Report, 2020). Careful management of this essential global resource is a key feature of a sustainable future. This includes increasing funding for ocean science, intensifying conservation efforts, and urgently turning the tide on climate change to safeguard the planet's largest ecosystem. Two people replant mangrove seedlings in Kampong Jawa, an area of Banda Aceh that was devastated by the tsunami in 2004. Conserving, restoring and sustainably using coastal wetlands is crucial in the battle against climate change (UNESCO Report, 2020).
14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development. Oceans cover three-quarters of the Earth's surface, contain 97 percent of the Earth's water, and represent 99 percent of the living space on the planet by volume. The world's oceans provide key natural resources including food, medicines, biofuels and other products; help with the breakdown and removal of waste and pollution; and their coastal ecosystems act as buffers to reduce damage from storms. However, marine pollution is reaching alarming levels, with over 17 million metric tons clogging the ocean in 2021, a figure set to double or triple by 2040. Currently, the ocean's average pH is 8.1, about 30 per cent more acidic than in pre-industrial times. Ocean acidification threatens the survival of marine life, disrupts the food web, and undermines vital services provided by the ocean and our own food security (UNESCO Report, 2020). Careful management of this essential global resource is a key feature of a sustainable future. This includes increasing funding for ocean science, intensifying conservation efforts, and urgently turning the tide on climate change to safeguard the planet's largest ecosystem (UNESCO Report, 2020).
15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss. Terrestrial ecosystems are vital for sustaining human life, contributing to over half of global GDP and encompassing diverse cultural, spiritual, and economic values. Global forest coverage decreased from 31.9 per cent in 2000 (4.2 billion hectares) to 31.2 per cent (4.1 billion hectares) in 2020. In 2021, Official Development Assistance (ODA) in support of biodiversity increased by 26.2 per cent from \$7.7 billion in 2020 to \$9.8 billion. In 2022, 21 per cent of reptile species are threatened (UNESCO Report, 2020). Between 2015 and 2019, at least 100 million hectares of healthy and productive land were degraded every year, impacting the lives of 1.3 billion people. Halting deforestation and restoring the use of terrestrial ecosystems is necessary to reduce the loss of natural habitats and biodiversity which are part of our common heritage (UNESCO Report, 2020).
16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. People everywhere should be free of fear from all forms of violence and feel safe as they go about their lives whatever their ethnicity, faith or sexual orientation. Civilian deaths directly

related to 12 of the world's deadliest conflicts increased by 53 per cent between 2021 and 2022, marking the first rise since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda in 2015. The year 2022 witnessed a more than 50 per cent increase in conflict-related civilian deaths. High levels of armed violence and insecurity have a destructive impact on a country's development. Sexual violence, crime, exploitation and torture are prevalent where there is conflict or no rule of law, and countries must take measures to protect those who are most at risk (UNESCO Report, 2020). As of the end of 2022, 108.4 million people were forcibly displaced worldwide – an increase of 19 million compared with the end of 2021 and two and a half times the number of a decade ago. In 2021, there were approximately 458,000 intentional homicides – the highest number in the past two decades. Governments, civil society and communities need to work together to find lasting solutions to conflict and insecurity. Strengthening the rule of law and promoting human rights is key to this process, as is reducing the flow of illicit arms, combating corruption, and ensuring inclusive participation at all times (UNESCO Report, 2020).

17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is universal and calls for action by all countries – developed and developing – to ensure no one is left behind. It requires partnerships between governments, the private sector, and civil society. The Sustainable Development Goals can only be realized with a strong commitment to global partnership and cooperation. The total external debt of low- and middle-income countries reached \$9 trillion in 2021, recording a 5.6 per cent increase from 2020. In 2022, global exports increased sharply by 12.3 per cent, and global trade reached a record \$32 trillion. In 2022, net ODA flows by member countries of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) reached \$206 billion. To be successful, everyone will need to mobilize both existing and additional resources, and developed countries will need to fulfill their official development assistance commitments (UNESCO Report, 2020). Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is universal and calls for action by all countries – developed and developing – to ensure no one is left behind. It requires partnerships between governments, the private sector, and civil society. The SDGs can only be realized with a strong commitment to global partnership and cooperation. The total external debt of low- and

middle-income countries reached \$9 trillion in 2021, recording a 5.6 per cent increase from 2020. In 2022, global exports increased sharply by 12.3 per cent, and global trade reached a record \$32 trillion.

1.4 Findings of the Study

The study findings established that 48.5 percent of respondents were females while 51.5 percent were males meaning that there was equal representation of sexes. Both sexes were involved in different economic activities of the city ranging from brick making, carpentry, boda boda cyclists, drivers, metal fabrication, urban agriculture, floriculture, and other small scale business enterprises which could not meet their better quality of life hence affecting their sustainable livelihoods in the city.

Findings further indicated that 29.2 percent of the respondents had ages between 26 – 31 age intervals. This constituted biggest percentage followed by 18 percent in 20 – 25 age range while 4.9 percent in the age range of 50 – 55 age interval followed. Majority of these have migrated from rural areas to the city in search of employment, security, and quality life. However, some of these have ended up without employment hence resorting to criminal activities like theft, prostitution, drug abuse and alcoholism. Some have failed to get decent accommodation which all undermines sustainable development goal in the city.

On the level of education, the study established that 39.8 percent of the respondents had attained tertiary level education, 28 percent had completed secondary education while 9.8 percent had never gone to school. The purpose was to assess whether the level of education influences urban expansion and leads to sustainable city development. This is because education empowers people to assume responsibility for creating a sustainable future since it is part of the broader sustainable development approach to transformation. Investment in human capital empowers individuals to innovate, learn and adopt new technologies and effectively manage enterprises and other complex organizations.

On employment status, 35.6 percent who were the majority were self-employed, 15.5 percent were private workers, 21.2 percent were students while a considerable number of respondents 12.1 percent were unpaid family workers and 4.2 percent were employers. This purpose was to assess the role of employment in influencing urban expansion and sustainable city development.

Factors for Cification

The findings further indicated that many factors have contributed to city growth and development. These included strategic location of the city in the region (96.6 percent of respondents), early trade and commerce (82.2 percent respondents), and availability (89.4 percent),

natural population increase (97.3 percent), increased investment (90 percent), developed infrastructure (50 percent), rural urban migration (53.3 percent) and industrialization (67 percent).

Effects of Citification

The findings indicated that city expansion has already affected natural resources; base in the area in

form of deforestation, wetland reclamation, disappearance of green belts, river encroachment, and change inland use. 28 percent of the respondents strongly agreed, 56.8 percent while 11.7 percent agreed that city expansion has led to deforestation leading to prolonged drought, loss of wind breakers, and air pollution.

Table 1: Challenges to creation of new cities.

variable	Strongly agree	percentage	agree	percentage	undecided	percentage	disagree	percentage	Strongly disagree	percentage	Total	percentage
Deforestation	74	28	150	56.8	7	2.7	31	11.7	2	0.8	264	100
Wetland reclamation	73	27.7	133	50.4	14	5.3	42	15.9	2	0.8	264	100
Disappearance of green belts	95	36.0	120	45.5	15	5.7	34	12.9	-	-	264	100
River encroachment	209	79.2	-	-	37	14	-	-	37	14.0	264	100
Change in land use	255	96.6			8	3.0			1	0.4	264	100

Source: Field summary 2024

On wetland reclamation, 78.1 of the respondents agreed that the current wetland reclamation in the city was due to city expansion, due to inadequate land for expansion and development; on disappearance of disappearance of green belts, 81 percent of respondents agreed with the view that city expansion has led to the disappearance of green belts in form of loss of shades, change in weather and pollution; on river encroachment, river Rwizi, the main source of water in the city and its banks have been greatly exposed to agricultural practices, brick making, sand quarrying, and human settlement. 79.2 percent have confirmed this. Even NEMA report of 2000 has given the same report.

Effects of citification on welfare. This ranges from individual households to large societies and communities in form of availability of social amenities, and infrastructure. Much as [people enjoy these services, they are not of quality nature. The quality question has been identified in areas of water sources, safety of water, lack of connection to electricity, poor lighting in some areas, access to education, and health services and food availability.

Effects of city on employment. 90.5 percent of respondents reported that they experience unemployment in the city. Unemployment stems from lack of education and practical skills, increase in population, lack of industries, nepotism and corruption. All these have undermined sustainable development strategies and initiatives.

POLICY AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OF CREATING CITIES

80 percent of the respondents indicated pressure on the national resources envelope. The resources for establishment of the cities are not adequate.

70 percent of the respondents indicated displacement of existing District Local Governments. The existing local governments have to be swallowed by the new cities or relocate their headquarters to new areas. In effect, Gulu, Mbarara, Jinja Kabarole, Mbale and Masaka districts have to relocate. The government has to incur extra financial resources to construct new offices for new displaced districts.

82 percent of the respondents indicated change in the demographics of the districts local governments. The geographic size and the demographics of the districts will shrink and this will affect the local government's revenue of the affected local governments. There will also be migrations in and out of the gazetted cities that need to be planned for. The case of Wakiso district which is already facing low revenue collection due to the presence of many town councils and municipalities within the district is the perfect example of what is likely to happen to other districts.

75 percent of respondents indicated that there will be creation of new administrative units, town councils and other administrative units to bring services nearer to the people. This will increase the costs of operation yet resource envelope is limited.

90 percent of the respondents indicate that there will be administrative reclassification. The ministry of Local Government classified gazetted cities, Municipalities and Town Councils as urban areas and the Local Government Act CAP 243 empowers the ministry to declare an area urban if it satisfies the following criteria: A minimum of 25000 people for town council; A minimum 100000 people for a municipality; A minimum 500,000 people for city; Has a master plan for

land use; Has available water sources; is able to meet the costs of providing services.

In addition the local government act declares all districts headquarters as towns. The new district headquarters and city jurisdictions are automatically gazetted as urban, thus reclassifying the population urban.

90 percent of the respondents indicated creation of more electoral constituencies. Each city will have three representatives in a parliament. According to the ministry of local government, each city will have three Members of Parliament (MPS). Two will represent the divisions in the cities and one woman MP, just like the districts will have the representatives. This implies that the 15 cities will have a total of 45 representatives further increasing the cost of public administration.

60 percent of the respondents indicated that there are deficiencies within the existing laws. The local government Act section 4 states that a city is equivalent to a district. This implies that a city is supposed to operate like a district. However, the structure of the district and the city are different, so are their needs and services they provide. There are no existing staff structures for these cities. Also their leadership or governance structures for both political and technical leaders are different. This is likely to create challenges in management of these cities.

60 percent of the respondents indicated that there exists lack of minimum standards for the cities. The created cities do not have any existing minimum standards of their operations including nature of infrastructure, social services, industries and others.

78 percent indicated that there is unplanned horizontal growth of cities. This unplanned rapid horizontal city growth is likely to cause structural and socio-economic challenges for the ear marked cities including poor land tenure system, an integrated transport systems, challenges related to environmental management, development of slums and unplanned settlements, urban poverty exacerbated by high unemployment levels, poor infrastructure for markets, water and health service systems and housing, crowding, congestion and pollution. These cities will have to work backwards in terms of creating a physical plan appropriate for a city, something akin to putting the cart before the horse.

Lastly 65 percent of the respondents indicated unclear management for created cities. The approval of the new cities by parliament on April 28th, 2020 was not preceded by vigorous analysis and forward planning. It is not clear whether they are going to operate as dynamic industrial hubs or as expanded administrative municipalities. Their governance structure is not clear. The legal framework under which they are going to

operate is not clear. Their funding modality too is not clear.

1.5 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

It is projected that by the middle of this century, the majority of Africans will be urban residents, although with huge variations between countries as is the case today (MC Granahan and Satterhwaite, 2014). Currently only a small proportion of the region's population lives in cities and towns but this is rapidly changing. Thus urbanization and rural urban transformation are critical qualities of contemporary societal change in sub Sahara Africa. Therefore, proper systems have to be developed for new cities to address infrastructure, environmental, technological, income inequality, and population growth and governance challenges. Recent cities are lagging behind in their abilities to address the social and spatial consequences of the complex and rapidly shifting rural - urban connections. A fast growing population without corresponding job growth is one of the challenges that come with rapid urbanization.

Unfortunately, Uganda is yet to realize the positive gains of urbanization since independence instead increasingly concentrated populations have become a major stress on limited infrastructure and services like housing, markets, roads, transport, employment, education, health and safety. The current attempt at modernizing Kampala and providing relief food under the Covid 19 lockdown are sad testimonies. Mbarara city is facing similar challenges; many rural areas have been integrated into the city without proper planning. These integrated areas lack develop infrastructure net work in form of feeder roads, electricity extension lines, tarmacked roads, administrative offices, banks among others.

Retrofitting new cities as we are doing, where towns already exist is more expensive because we lack resources for compensating private old structures to pave way for both new and expanded facilities to accommodate the increasing numbers.

Land prices are also going up at a faster rate by speculators cash in. Redesigning rural development in place where people already live could make a better idea with prospects for real transformation to take place. The cities are a gamble because many people are hesitant to live their tradition way of living to take upon city life. As government opens more infrastructure and lowers tax for investors choosing up country, there is need to shift business from Kampala to new cities and as well create new opportunities in boarder cities of Mbale, Gulu, Mbarara, Arua and Fort portal to tap opportunities in neighboring countries.

Creating new cities is good because of various benefits like job creation, infrastructure development, industrialization and other gains but Uganda needs cities of knowledge, innovation, industrial, business,

entertainment and recreation parks and organised affordable low cost residential estates. We don't need cities for tribal and petty politics but business/commercial industrial and service sector driven cities.

It is hoped that while some cities will succeed, others will stumble but as a development thinker I have a feeling that new ideas will be generated by academicians, politicians, researchers, policy makers, technicians to provide insights and help city builders and managers define their priorities in achieving bold vision.

To make urban areas more productive and reliable for the many people that will converge in the coming years, policy makers must adopt modern system of running modern cities. These policy consideration areas include; ensuring land markets function well, to improve the efficiency of land use and spatial planning. Incentives need to encourage development of existing unutilized urban land to prevent sprawl and take advantage of economic density; Enhance urban planning to coordinate public and private investment. Well planned investment in Uganda's cities is critical particularly in the context of East African integration and exploitation of the country's oil resources; improving connectivity between and within cities, with affordable public transport system for people to get to work and minimize congestion and to benefit producers and consumers in urban and rural areas.

1.6 CONCLUSION

Urbanization is a welcome trend but there is a need for adequate preparation for an area to be gazetted a city. There is a need for adequate facilities or infrastructure in terms of transport, markets, health facilities, water systems, electricity and industries among others. Most of these cities have annexed rural areas to build up a population requirement for a city status. How will these cope? Physical planning for these cities is a critical ingredient for organized cities. Otherwise, these will mushroom into large slummy settlements.

Drawing lessons from Kampala city which is facing multiple problems due to poor planning, new cities should embrace urban planning, land and environmental management, business planning, develop models and social development in order to succeed. There should be a new and a progressive land tenure system that allow flexibility in physical planning into adjoining areas without conflicts and obstruction seen in Kampala and other areas.

Also there should be clarity on permitted and restricted activities in these new cities because they are already poorly managed as evidenced by the gross failure to remove domesticated livestock from roaming the so called cities in competition with unruly human beings. All the new cities have copied a bad culture where un restricted mobile and street goods vending; passengers,

transport stages, commercial car parks and boda bodas are permitted to exist where they want.

With Ugandans of strong rural background, there is need to create a new relationship between private and public stakeholders in urban planning to successfully attract people and business into the new cities and create an identity that bonds them to their . The major challenge here is that people residing in the village only come to towns to shop, trade goods, idle around and return to their homes hence urban life is minimal and restricted today time. Urban investment in real estate including Kampala hasn't been as lucrative because people have chosen to build their own houses or business premises stimulating demand for such real urban estates is going to be critical for cities to thrive. if managed effectively, urbanization will drive Uganda's economic growth, productivity and welfare by creating infrastructure, organized living and employment.

1.7 RECOMMENDATIONS

There is need for the development and implementation of a rapid development strategy to enhance the fiscal autonomy of the new cities. This should include; Support for industries in which proposed cities have a location advantages such as tourism and agribusiness; Bolstering existing initiatives under the Buy Uganda Build Uganda policy by establishing a local content unit to identify existing capacity and constraints across industries and deeper linkages between local firms and foreign investors in industrial parks; Establish regional and sector specific public entities to coordinate regional or cross border /district and sector specific approaches to economic development. These entities would include representatives from relevant local governments and could enable the pooling of resources and exchange of ideas to leverage cross district synergies; There is need to fast track infrastructural development in the created cities like markets, upgrade electricity power lines to support industrialization, road network and upgrade some of health facilities among others.

There is need to strengthen existing infrastructure, business clusters, and local government capacities so that cities can take advantage and attract investments. And also: Re orient policy initiatives for job creation to leverage existing infrastructure and business clusters, encourage investments in larger geography, the cities; Re invigorate the push towards decentralization, taking advantage of the political support for the declaration of the new cities to promote additional policy autonomy and funding for local governments in encouraging urban centres; Strengthen the local economic development function of local governments by resourcing and staffing local commercial offices to serve as the coordinator entity for job creation initiatives at the local level (IGC 2019); To ensure that its cities are bolt competitive and livable Uganda will require a comprehensive set of actions that will establish the

necessary business environment required to create productive jobs, to provide a conducive working environment for workers, to develop good quality buildings for housing, to improve the quality of infrastructure and ensure good access to social services like education and health care, transportation, water and sanitation services.

Coordination of development of cities. The ministry of Local Government that is responsible for urban administration of urban local governments and supervision of programs related to urbanization should coordinate ministries, departments and agencies (MDAS) that have a role to play in Uganda's urbanization agenda.

Planning must take place precedence not implementation. It is important that urban planning takes place and focuses on key areas like infrastructure development before implementation can happen. Political interference, conflicting land use policies, uncoordinated instructions between urban authorities and ministry of local government. There is need to develop plans for these cities mainly focusing on land use and spatially distributed demographics, transport networks and land use and development regulations.

Financial autonomy. There is a need to support these cities/ urban institutions to gain financial autonomy. These new cities should be given the liberty and freedom to collect taxes and generate revenue and plan better on how to use these resources without external interference. Furthermore, the wealth of these cities should be enhanced borrowing and debt raising and dealing closely with the private sector for Public Private Partnership (PPP) for infrastructure investment.

Reducing land conflicts and overlapping land rights through encouraging land rental markets in areas of communal land ownership, strengthening capacity of land administration institutions to value land, manage land transactions and settle land related disputes.

Support the growth of SMEs through a systematic value chain approach to vocational training and bolstering initiatives to promote local content.

Revise the approach to industrial parks to strengthen linkages to local supply chains.

Adopt place-sensitive policies that — unlike the industrial parks programme —leverage existing infrastructure and business clusters while encouraging investment in a larger area, such as a city or district, and targeting sectors that are strategic for secondary city growth.

Strengthen local government capacities to promote local economic development by reinvigorating the push for decentralisation and promoting increased policy autonomy and funding for local governments.

These strategies should be adapted to the locational advantages of specific settlements. For several secondary cities, these opportunities could be found in tourism and food system value chains.

REFERENCES

- Abebe T (2012), *Young People: Participation and sustainable development in urbanizing World*, UN Habitat.
- Cornerstone (2015), *Urbanization, City Growth and the United Nations Development Agenda*, World Coal Industry.
- De Boeck, (2014), *Challenges of Urban growth, towards an anthropology of urban infrastructure in Africa*. In Lepik, A(ed) Afritecture. Building social change. Ustfildern; Hatje Cantz verlag, pp92-102.
- Dhingra M and Chattopadhyay, (2016) *Advancing smartness of traditional settlement, case analysis of Indian and Arab old cities*. International journal of sustainable built environment 5(2), 549-563. Urban growth, towards an anthropology of urban infrastructure in Africa. In Lepik, A(ed) Afritecture. Building social change. Ustfildern; Hatje Cantz verlag, pp92-102.
- Doystsher Y, etal, (2010), *Rapid Urbanization and Megacities: The need for spatial information management*. Research study by Fig commission 2010; 3.
- Fuchs RJ, etal (1994), *Mega -City growth and the Future*. United Nations University Press.
- GOU (1995), *The constitution of the Republic of Uganda*, Entebbe; Uganda Printing and Publishing Corporation (UPPC)
- GOU (1997), *The Local Government Act CAP 243*. Entebbe: Uganda Printing and Publishing Corporation
- GOU (2016), *A paper by the government of Uganda and the New Climate Economy Partnership*. Kampala: Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MOFPED)
- IGC (2019), *Transforming Secondary Cities for sub creation: A study Uganda*. Policy brief 43447 Aug 2019, International growth centre.
- Kennedy G; *Food security in the context of urban sub Saharan Africa*. Internet paper for food security, food Africa , internet forum 31st March - 11th April, 2003, 2009
- Mbabazi Jonas and Atukunda Phoebe (2020), A policy briefing paper NO. 49,2020, ACODE, *Creation of new cities in Uganda: social economic and political implications*
- Ministry of Local Government (2020) Ministry of local government, Ministerial policy statement. Financial year 2020/21 Kampala: Moha
- MOFPED (2016), *The Second Natural Development Plan (NPD 11), 2015-2016-2019-2020*. Kampala: Natural Planning Authority.

- PWC (2005), *Cities of the future-global competition*, local leadership. Price water house coopers.
- United Nation, (2019) *World urbanization prospects*, New York 2019.
- United Nations (2018), *World urbanization prospectus*. New York: United Nations
- World Bank (2015), *The Growth Challenge. Can Uganda cities get to work?* Uganda Economic Update 5th Edition, Report No.94622 World Bank.

Cite This Article: Elias Nuwagaba & Murindwa Rutanga (2025). Political Influence and Creation of New Political Cities in Uganda: Challenges Facing Newly Created Cities in Uganda, the Case of Mbarara City. *East African Scholars J Edu Humanit Lit*, 8(9), 381-404.
