Firming non-political actors to enhance the quality of urban service delivery. A review on the City Development Forums in Uganda

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Abstract
Purpose: This study aimed to explore the dependability of non-political forums specifically considering the City Development Forums in Uganda. This investigation was motivated by the idea of City Development Forums being a known spectrum for Non-Political Forums to play a role in affairs otherwise affecting a City or Municipality.

Research methodology: A Desk review method was adopted in which data was collected from obtainable resources specifically Publications, the Internet, Official Reports, etc., followed by cross-referencing and collation of data.

Results: The outcomes reveal that a set of six principles inform City Development Forums, _viz_. shared accountability of every stakeholder in ensuring sustainable development; integrated planning framework for sustainable urban development; effective coordination among every urban stakeholder; local teamwork and networking; bottom-up broad-based stakeholder participatory consultations; and mobilization of resources for sustainable urban development.

Limitations: This study adopted a review of secondary data yet if primary data were to be used, maybe, the results would have been different. Therefore, a different study can be conducted using primary data to determine whether these results hold sway and, if any, the justifications for the noticeable variances.

Contribution: This study contributes to the understanding of local community development initiatives using the empowerment approach.

Keywords: _non-political actors, urban service delivery, City Development Forum, urban authorities_

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1. Introduction

The political environment in which urban authorities in Uganda and similar countries in the region and beyond operate is controlled within a clearly demarcated legal framework, which is intended to improve the relevancy of community programs and projects, consequently enhancing the quality of services delivered to communities. One way to attain that relevancy is through community-based forums. This study contends that using peoples' fora can be an effective channel through which Cities and/or Municipalities, in Uganda, are able to enhance their effectiveness in service delivery. The study evaluates the dependability of Non-Political Forums (NPFs) amongst the members as well as the overall community they both represent and operate in. The discussion is centered on the City Development Forums (CDFs), previously known as Municipal Development Forums (MDFs), which have gained prominence in the recent past among Municipalities and later Cities. The focus, here, is

limited to CDFs for the reason that a total of ten Municipalities were transformed into cities at the end of the 2020 financial year. They include Hoima, Lira, Gulu, Arua, Jinja, Soroti, Mbarara, Masaka, Fort Portal, and Kabale.

Outside the official acknowledgment of one's residency in the community, as well as the abiding set of human rights and accountabilities, dynamic forums are assumed to be one of the core values of representative societies, from a global scale to a local level (Caruso & Teivainen, 2020; Mac Lorin, 2020; Whitaker, 2020). While inferences of the expression 'forum' have been growing beyond the traditional urban spaces, its significance toward debates on urban progress continues and it is expected to continue growing over the next several decades given that more humans are projected to transform into urban settlers or dwellers. Certainly, as humanity becomes more urbanized and/or sophisticated, discussions on citizens' forums are expected to gain more meaning than they were some five decades in the past. There is, as a result, the abundant compromise that a dynamic and involved forum should concurrently reinforce and be reinforced by a receptive and answerable control. While such reciprocally reinforcing occurrences are key, urban centers can swing to all-encompassing progress and well-organized growth. Thus, they can likewise be well positioned to battle with disenchantment and volatility so predominant in contemporary urban areas especially those in less-developing nations such as Uganda (Matamanda, Chirisa, Dzvimbo, & Chinozvina, 2020; Mwesigwa & Oladapo, 2021; Opio, Chono, & Mwesigwa, 2022). Despite widespread unanimity on the value of active forums, the methods for promoting and facilitating them are less clear (Morris & Sarapin, 2020; Pärli & Fischer, 2020). Very often, urban authorities struggle to have a candid engagement with their residents, even though residents, in contrast, often fail to recognize and access the instruments through which forums can both be activated and operated.

The terms 'trigger' and 'operate' were deliberately applied deliberately seeing that forums have existed in African societies for limitless epochs. From the so-called traditional societies to the most contemporary social order, forums have been very contributory in a number of ways. To cite the recent forums in Uganda, the City traders, and other social group associations (such as the Kampala City Traders Association - KACITA) and Taxi drivers' associations remain prominent (Rollason, 2020); these are faced with countless challenges in the East African region (Barack & Munga, 2021). Others include farmers' associations, student associations, et cetera. As a result, forums have become essential structures for bringing together groups that were hitherto considered amorphous. No matter what, these forums are now being exploited by both the central government and a number of urban authorities to patronize the members within such forums. In the recent past, a number of forums in Uganda were, offhandedly, required to become politically partisan especially during the much-heated Presidential elections, as a maneuver to keep them active. Since then, the political apparatus appears to be unwavering to, instead, of fostering these forums, transform them into what many in Uganda called 'walking sticks' of key politicians afterward *damp them* 'by the road-side' (Sabbi, 2020). This action suggests that politicians have realized how forums are such a dynamic force of well-organized individuals who can be exploited for long-term political gains at the expense of the long-term targets of the forum.

In the present day, both Cities and Municipalities, in Uganda, have been challenged to mobilize and nurture people's forums that can facilitate the City or Municipal administration to get directly connected to the people without necessarily relying on the elected councilors (Siebers, Gradus, & Grotens, 2019). These forums came were known as MDFs, and later CDFs, seeing that a number of urban residents appeared to be frustrated with the growing inability of the City or Municipal administration to interact with the ultimate beneficiaries of public policies and service delivery. Several factors could be responsible for this frustration but the most prominent being the skewed structure of urban governments in Uganda as well as the inadequate inclusion of a number of stakeholders when making key decisions affecting the urban residents (Ogentho, Munene, Kamukama, & Ntayi, 2021). Therefore, encouraging participation amongst segments of key stakeholders with a view to enhancing the relevancy of City or Municipal projects among local governing structures is essential. In their study, O'Brien, Phelan, Smith, and Smits (2021) suggest that as a result of low stakeholder involvement in a number of local projects, the available personnel lacks experience and

apply pseudo-administrative approaches. This view may be used to justify why Mitchell (2022) found that, in American Municipalities, no specific structure of stakeholders was dependable except different alliances were found to be very successful in varying situations. Despite that, recent studies suggest that different instruments for citizen participation allow urban residents to ensure that community-based challenges are thwarted (Haustein & Lorson, 2023; Mwesigwa, Bogere, & Ogwal, 2022). These revelations, appear to show that a dearth of stakeholder participation in deciding about the quality of services is likely to result in a number of challenges including, but not limited to; low sustainability of urban projects as well as failure to take care of resilient urban infrastructures such as what Nigeria has done in the recent past with the country's road networks (Muhammed, Salahudeen, & Zubairu, 2021). A study conducted in Nigeria Muhammed et al. (2021) reveals that not only is this condition limited to the urban centers but the rural ones as well. As a result, residents' forums appear to be one of the key channels to stimulating progress in their areas as well as fostering social equality in Cities and or Municipalities.

1.1 The context of CDFs in Uganda

On the one side, S. M. Bogere (2021) states that the level at which Uganda is urbanizing has proved to be unprecedented staggering approximately 5% per annum. This growth appears to mount enormous pressure on both local – and urban authorities to provide essential services as well as spur the much-needed development objectives of the urbanizing population. A few of the challenges identified include unsustainable water supply, sanitation and hygiene (Bishoge, 2021), urban liveability and prosperity (Nastar, Isoke, Kulabako, & Silvestri, 2019), urban slump, the explosion of slums, dilapidated housing, and the denationalization of urban growth lacking public greeneries and transport plans (Bolleter et al., 2022), non-communicable diseases (Mackay, 2022), and water pollution (Okurut, Kulabako, Chenoweth, & Charles, 2015), to mention just a few. Even though the country's level of urban sprawl is moderately low, with just 18% of its populace living in cities and towns, it is one of the most rapidly urbanizing countries in Africa. For instance, the aggregate number of people residing in urban areas is estimated to increase fourfold from six million people, at this moment in time, to over 20 million people by 2040. This is, presently, triggering numerous urban challenges for policymakers across the country (Mwesigwa, Bogere, & Anastassova, 2021).

On the other side, significant challenges including a high rate of joblessness and underdevelopment have been noticeable, especially in urban zones, with the proportion of formation of productive careers being subordinate to the rate of evolution of the urban populace. Consequently, over 75% of the workforce in urban areas is engaged in the casual segment, which is considered low output and low income. Besides, overcrowding and shortage of public transport possibilities in several cities limit the movement of merchandise and amenities. Further, the value of accommodation is still a key challenge with over and above 60% of the urban population living in slums as well as informal areas. To end with, the delivery of community services of an acceptable class to a swiftly growing urban population is likewise a cause of worry. Hence, the tall degree of suburbanization, in Uganda, necessitates thoughtful consideration to effectually challenge the budding challenges. The scanty formal capacity impedes effective consistent forecasting, progress and administration; inadequate teamwork, networking as well as a partnership among different stakeholders in the urban segment relinquishes the benefits of collaborations, inadequate budgetary allocation to the urban committees weakens the execution of urban development strategies and effective service delivery.

It is posited that this condition requires vigorous and inventive instruments that both nurture and boost official actions to allow the city residents as significant allies in the development and administration of the urban bodies. Several alternatives have been put forth by scholars as a way to enhance better urban spaces in the country. For instance, widening political involvement in city development planning as well as focusing on the need to recognize the degree of demand for better-quality water hygiene from the local perspective is key. The formation of CDFs is, thus, being fortified to offer a stage for the involvement and engagement of every stakeholder in the matters of city bodies. No wonder, the National legal framework of the Republic of Uganda (under Democratic Principle 3, Art. 17 and 18) advocates that residents in a particular area have a right to take part in governmental matters. This, consequently, points to the fact that residents are legally permitted to take part in

determining their fate through planning and policymaking. To be precise, this condition can be said to be necessary not as inactive beneficiaries but as dynamic and expressive allies in development. The CDFs come as podia recognized at the city or municipal level for every stakeholder in the urban sector. According to Dewi (2022), the inspiration behind CDFs is expected to rotate around: frequent meetings, exchange of opinions, discussion of choices and decisions on joint actions on issues affecting the urban sector in their local governments. This is also consistent with a study by Anayochukwu, Ani, and Nsah (2022) that gives emphasis on Local Government autonomy.

The purpose of this study, therefore, was to explore the dependability of NPFs in Uganda though, specifically, we examined the CDFs. This investigation was motivated by the idea of CDFs being a known spectrum for NPFs to play a lead role in affairs otherwise affecting a city or municipality. Also, analyzes were made concerning the formation, membership and role played by CDFs. From the available literature, NPFs, especially the CDFs in Uganda are still a novel idea since much of the attention has been dedicated to the political forums as well as the civil society structures. In addition, the role of citizens has mainly been pronounced through Local Councils or Community Development Forums but not NPFs.

2. Methodology
A desk review was adopted given that it did not favor the interface between the researcher(s) and the participants thus cutting costs. According to Pitan (2016), desk research involves collecting data from obtainable resources namely publications, the internet, official reports, etc., followed by cross-referencing and collation of data. Consequently, different official documents detailing the two issues of CDFs and SLs, as well as the emerging issues, were sought and analyzed. The predominantly qualitative data were organized into basic themes so as to determine and summarise the essential features.

3. Discussion
This study focuses on how each of the five aspects can be maximized so as to enhance the dependability of CDFs, viz.; stimulus of CDFs, principles of CDFs, shared accountability (Mwesigwa & Oladapo, 2021), integrated planning, effective coordination, bottom-up participatory consultations, and mobilization of resources. As a consequence, the six issues that were discussed are:

3.1 Stimulus behind the CDFs in Uganda
The government of Uganda, along with its development partners, inter alia, Cities Alliance, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the World Bank, and the United Nations Habitat organized the formation of CDFs[1] in designated Municipalities upon the inauguration of the Uganda National Urban Forum on the 6th of May 2010 (S. Bogere, 2015). CDFs became an opportunity, at the Municipal and/or City level, for every stakeholder in a Municipality and/or City to rally with a view of exchanging opinions, discussing main concerns and deciding on mutual engagements about issues affecting a Municipality. According to Worldbank (n.d.), the objective of establishing CDFs was to balance individuals and representatives of governmental and Nnn-governmental establishments, Unions of the underprivileged, professional associations, cultural bodies, religious organizations as well as charitable groups so as to deliberate on issues relating to the progress of a Municipality at every level.

The CDFs were mandated to undertake discussions on issues that aim to benefit residents in the Municipality or City by giving every stakeholder an opportunity to *Inter alia*: (a) contribute to the process of formulating the Municipal/City plan; (b) share the best practices; and (c) facilitate the flow of information so as to guarantee SLs (Bashir, Ojiako, Marshall, Chipulu, & Yousif, 2022). As a consequence, CDFs are at the forefront of organizing an opportunity for every member to negotiate with the objective of stimulating shared participation in the Municipal or City policy formulation. It

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[1] It should, however, be noted that the CDFs have been transformed from municipal development forums following the elevation of ten municipalities to city status in 2020.

was projected that such participation would let stakeholders handle existing challenges so as to achieve sustainable progress (Abate & Adamu, 2022; Maku, Kitambo, & Mugonola, 2022). Besides, the CDFs offer an opportunity, for the underprivileged, to contribute to the processes that guide sustainable progress by creating awareness of their rights, responsibilities and duties.

A set of six principles inform CDFs, *viz.* (i) shared accountability of every stakeholder in ensuring sustainable development; (ii) integrated planning framework for sustainable urban development; (iii) effective coordination among every urban stakeholder; (iv) local teamwork and networking; (v) bottom-up broad-based stakeholder participatory consultations; and (vi) mobilization of resources for sustainable urban development. For example, a study conducted in India by Mithun et al. (2022) suggests that successful urban development is attainable through monitoring urban land-use efficiency. Also, a study by Han, Zhang, Qin, Tan, and Liu (2022) corroborates the same. CDFs should be able to enhance a network in the Municipality and/or City with a view of organizing the non-political actors to establish and submit community-felt needs and or challenges of diverse sections of the Municipal or City community. Consequently, CDF-network-oriented structures were set up as complementary, but non-political structures, with members that have an interest in the development of a Municipality or City aware of the livelihoods of every resident including the budding youth population (Elizabeth & Mwesigwa, 2023).

Although the CDFs were given the mandate to hold discussions on issues that benefit residents in the Municipality and/or city by giving every stakeholder an opportunity to *Inter alia*: contribute to the process of formulating the Municipal plan; share best practices and facilitate the flow of information so as to guarantee SLs. And whereas CDFs are assumed to be at the vanguard of organizing an opportunity for every member to negotiate with an objective of stimulating shared participation in the Municipal policy formulation, such participation has not facilitated stakeholders to handle existing challenges so as to achieve sustainable progress and by extension, SLs. For example, the Hoima city CDF has failed to give an opportunity to the underprivileged to contribute to the processes that guide sustainable progress through creating awareness of their rights, responsibilities and duties. While the strategy of CDF was expected to yield better results, it has not. One way to enhance SLs could be through network governance, as a result, this study aimed to find out how network governance can be used SLs in mid-western Uganda. We examine the potential of CDFs in enhancing SLs in Uganda by looking at the principles of the CDF, the objectives of the CDF, the functions of the CDF, concerns addressed through the CDF, and the key institutional informing the CDFs.

3.2 Objectives of CDFs
The CDF platform was initiated as a practical platform through which participants would:
1. Arrange for space for the exchange of ideas among all participants for the urban sphere to guide strategy and policy agendas with reference to forecasting and organization of urban development.
2. Raise the consciousness of participants about shared achievement to inspire the urban growth agenda at the municipality level.
3. Endorse partnership-oriented urban research to seek viably hands-on alternatives to serious urban challenges.
4. Improve organization and networking activities amongst stakeholders in the urban realm so as to facilitate the exchange of data, awareness and practices as well as seek funds for the execution of urban expansion programs.
5. Encourage hands-on cohesive participatory preparation, growth and administration of the urban environs among urban players.
6. Organize regular conferences, seminars, fora and training events for the purposes of influencing legal and policy reforms for effective urban development and management.

3.3 The Principles of the CDF
The idea of CDF is based on six principles, namely; collective responsibility, integrated planning, effective coordination, local cooperation, participatory consultation, and resource mobilization. To begin with, through collective responsibility of all stakeholders in ensuring sustainable urban development can facilitate the CDF to become dependable in a number of ways. While collective

responsibility can realized 'through design-based professional learning' (Friesen & Brown, 2022), the CDF structure being charitable by nature, multi-skilled arenas and contributory outlets where residents embodied by not-for-profit or community-based bodies, researchers, young people, women, and media practitioners, can share ideas with municipal administrators and politicians in chatting a way forward and making resolutions on issues affecting or contributing to local progress, service delivery, as well as governance; this by itself makes local governance an all-encompassing and representative platform. In addition, through integrated planning framework for sustainable urban development is one of the approaches which allows CDFs to 'become dependable' seeing that from the time they were established in different municipalities (Dehghanmongabadi & Hoşkara, 2022). The CDFs have enhanced urban development and delivery of quality services by making sure that elected councils in the twenty-six municipalities provide meaningful accountability to the urban community. This action has the potential to render CDFs dependable to the communities for which they both represent and serve.

Also, through efficient coordination amongst every urban stakeholder in enhancing corresponding roles seeing that CDFs aid consistent and reliable empowering atmosphere for urban residents' involvement in urban management as well as growing the degree of collective accountability amongst residents in urban crusades geared towards improved quality of life such as 'keep our town clean' (López Garrido, 2022). Likewise, CDFs play an overseer responsibility and boost value for money and assure quality in the essence of openness and answerability to residents in a number of Cities or Municipalities. Correspondingly, through local cooperation arrangements and networking, CDFs 'enhance local capacities and capabilities' (Pedrini, Corrado, & Sacco, 2022). They can become dependable by facilitating a sense of collective proprietorship of local infrastructural sub-projects such as access roads, roads and highways, bus – and taxi parks, food markets and lagoons. This is so because, obtainable evidence (such as McDermot, Agdas, Rodríguez Díaz, Rose, and Forcael (2022)) suggests that 'improving infrastructure is key for sustainable development', especially in less-developing nations such as Uganda.

Likewise, through bottom-top inclusive stakeholder participatory discussions CDFs can be used to make sure that stakeholders are empowered. This notion is significant within the context of devolution given that local governance is premised on the principle of popular citizen participation. This way CDFs become dependable conduits in raising a sense of public proprietorship of municipal developments, through their involvement and commitment. And, to sum up, through the mobilization of funds and other capital for sustainable and feasible urban growth, the CDF structure allows participants to have consistent consultations, discuss ways forward, consider areas of priority and come to an understanding on collective engagements on issues concerning the municipal council. This way resources are mobilized and other capital from several sources using shared strategies.

3.3.1 Shared accountability as an indicator of CDF dependability
The CDFs are presented in this discussion as NPFs even if they have to function side-by-side with politicians. Shared accountability emerges as an indicator through which CDFs can become dependable, especially when dealing with several community-based concerns such as urban waste management, street children, infrastructures, wetland reclamation, traffic jam, and urban crime. In spite of the swift progress in their quantity, latitude and impact, there is still a need for additional effort to appreciate the nature of available shared accountability engagements on the whole and teamwork for local development particularly. Available literature reveals that there is limited consideration given to the operations of CDFs – what makes them team-oriented, how do they become effective in enforcing accountability, and why do they fail? As identified in this review, in probing the space for shared accountability, we ought to examine the formation of CDFs, the hidden interests, and the terms of engagement.

While since 1992 local governments, and indeed municipalities, Uganda embraced the principle of collective accountability in service delivery and adopted new policy arrangements to facilitate the process of local governance in the Constitution (Republic of Uganda, 1995) as well as

operationalizing the provisions of the Local Governments Act (Republic of Uganda, 1997 [as amended]). Thus far, there are limited indications of how these shared accountability arrangements between NPFs and municipalities mirror teamwork and encourage superior stability of the benefits and primacies of the residents. Shared accountability includes being aware of the dealings from various viewpoints. These take account of shared capital, local cultures and processes as well as structural organization. From the perspective of CDFs, these dealings coincide and intermingle with every participant affecting the forum and quality of shared accountability.

3.3.2 Integrated planning as an indicator of CDF dependability

Studies suggest that CDFs, with the participation of local actors, can generate a tailor-made local development program. The development programme considers a diagnosis of the productive profile of the city and its relationship with the characteristics and origin of services consumed by the residents. Based on the diagnosis, the causes of the decoupling between the local production system and consumption needs can be detected. And with this, find a way to readjust local systems to meet the demand for community services of the city inhabitants, generating new committees and encouraging local consumption. A new perspective on the role of the cities is proposed. They will be in charge of territorial development from a model that includes the creation of CDFs which, with the participation of the local agents, generate local development forums which, with the participation of the local agents, generate a local development program (Solfa & Girotto, 2020). The participation of the productive sectors of each city was anticipated to be fundamental among local residents. It was expected that, from the coordination of the city, these sectors would become the driving force of local development. This proposal intended to carry on the concept of "Human Development", understood as the possibility to generate opportunities for its residents in the respective city, so that they can meet their material needs. That is to say, taking into account the three components of the human development rate: quality of life, longevity and knowledge level. This proposal was projected to be applied in cities with development potential, which had a balanced and important internal consumption, but where progress was hindered by the proximity of one or more political jurisdictions of a larger production scale that were regional administrative. Generally, the greatest economic flow and productive investments were in the most important cities. Therefore, encouraging uniform development in every city. It was supported that, if cities took this perspective into account, a fairer and well-balanced national economy would be attained. It was necessary to bear in mind the notion of development on a human scale, which was hitherto "focused and reinforced in the fulfillment of the basic human needs; in the generation of increasing levels of self-reliance; and in the organic delivery of residents with nature and technology of personal issues with social ones, of forecasting with self-sufficiency and of Civil Society with the city."

The formation of CDFs was offered in every city or municipality which had the pre-established necessities. These Forums, enhanced and managed by each city, were founded by reps of selected local actors such as: associations of commerce and industry, technical education institutions, universities, NGOs related to the productive sector, etcetera. The city would be in charge of executing the notification and organization of all the essential undertakings for the design, implementation and evaluation of the Urban Development Programme (Solfa & Girotto, 2020).

3.4 Benefits of the CDFs in Uganda

Enhancing the CDFs is likely to yield positive outcomes for Uganda. It is expected that urban residents will contribute to mitigating the impact of climate change given that ecosystem-based adaptation practices have rapidly acknowledged and adopted urban development strategies that are community-driven. China has already successfully attained this drive (Khatun, Baten, Farukh, & Faruk, 2022; Ma & Jiang, 2022) and it is hoped that Uganda, through the popular CDFs will achieve much in this aspect. Also, urban authorities are faced with challenges of managing the various inter-societal relations within the city such as relations with the market and local communities suggesting that a residents' forum has an impetus to achieve this in the case of Uganda. As such major events such as sports, urban tourism, official functions, etcetera, can succeed with this arrangement. While a study by Chen, Yu, and Baker (2022) explored the entrepreneurial model for both Birmingham and Guangzhou, the CDF appears to be convenient for the conditions of Uganda. Correspondingly, the

diverse stimuli and connections of numerous stakeholders play a central part in the course of spatial influence and enhancement of multinational gatherings as well as in the re-distribution of multinational components such as those in Ugandan Cities and/or Municipalities. Li (2022) study attests that multinational actors (comparable to CDFs) are, and should be regarded as urban members and they sway the actions and policymaking of urban administrators and sectors, in that way influencing the city's expansion.

Similarly, the idea of smart Cities is no longer a theoretical imperative but rather a requirement of the 21st century to which every City should adhere. It is envisaged that CDFs can serve as a platform for attaining this requirement by benefitting from plentiful info and communication technologies available to CDF adherents and the resultant interconnectedness. As stated by (Pan, Zhang, & Zhong, 2022), Smart City Development (SCD) is estimated to make the most of modernization returns as well as enable low-carbon revolution resource movement into more well-organized areas through considered spillover outcomes on low carbon revolution among participating cities in Uganda. By the same token, CDFs are expected to propagate smart sustainable city development in terms of environmental performance, human progress and sustainability adeptness. A study conducted in China by Su and Fan (2022) reveals the underlying intricacy of building smart cities with a view of realizing city sustainability as well as evolving a classification of smart alignments that can result in human progress, specifically, eco-friendly and human-friendly modes; these are possible possibilities for Uganda through the CDF approach. Of course, these require clear permits so that consistency with the building regulations is followed to the latter (Nubatonis, Kase, & Nursalam, 2021). Consistently, available studies suggest that small or young cities, such as the ones in Uganda, having a smaller amount of natural assets are reluctant to emerge ecotourism. A study by Ly and Kong (2022) reveals that ecotourism can be in wherever arrangement wherever, every time every interested party in such industry is environmentally, frugally, and morally accountable. The CDFs offer a great prospect for solutions for a diverse community and non-public sectors who are endeavoring to participate in ecotourism in Uganda.

Our study has revealed that, if prudently planned and executed, citizens' forums have the latent to change the methods Ugandan cities are planned, administered, and directed. Simultaneously, CDFs are being executed in circumstances coupled with socio-economic disparities, muddled means of transport and huge urban governance let-downs, among many other encounters. We have shown that if ineffectually organized, CDFs can worsen prevailing disparities and intensify spatial marginalization through a scramble for power in urban councils. Thus, the espousal of CDF principles, in Uganda, should be embedded in circumstantial reality and appropriately regulated to allow cities to become more viable and all-encompassing.

5. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore the dependability of non-political forums specifically looking at CDFs in Uganda. Using a desk review, we examined the stimulus of CDFs, and their principles, namely; shared accountability, integrated planning, effective coordination, bottom-up participatory consultations, and mobilization of resources. From abundant literature, it is concluded that the CDFs are a key mechanism for mobilizing local residents, identifying local needs and priorities for the city and ensuring that city development projects are well monitored to guarantee that value for money is realized. However, a number of challenges affect this goal most of which are external to the city authorities and would require the intervention of either the central government or the civil society or both. It is advocated that, especially for the newly created cities in the country, more attention be put to attracting popular citizen involvement in the affairs that otherwise affect the local citizenry if those cities are to realize the necessary development agendas. One way to attain this is by strengthening the role of non-political actors to lead a major role in the development of the respective city. Thus, it can be acknowledged that change in attitude is a steady process that calls for constant capacity improvement as well as effective monitoring and evaluation of CDF accomplishments and lessons learned. It is encouraged that given Uganda's great potential, more time

should be given to allow CDFs to create and/or consolidate their dependability among the different non-political participants.

5. 1 Limitation and Study Forward
This study focused on NPFs among Cities in Uganda yet, apart from Kampala, the country's capital, all the other cities were created barely half a decade prior to this study. This presupposes that little progress in the area of CDFs could be assessed through this review. Also, the study covered one country-Uganda yet other countries within the east African region and beyond could be implementing a similar strategy in urban governance. Therefore, other studies can be conducted to determine whether these results hold sway and, if any, the justifications for the noticeable variances.

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