

BIENNIAL REPORT

2012 - 2013



CENTRE for BASIC RESEARCH

Contact

Plot 15 Baskerville Avenue, Kololo. P.O.Box 9863. Kampala UGANDA. Tel: +256-704-342987

E-mail: cbr@cbr.ug, cbr.uganda@gmail.com, library@cbr.ug

www.cbr.ug

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REMARKS FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Centre for Basic Research (CBR) has been in existence since 1987. Its mandate is to produce knowledge for society. By the time CBR was started many research studies in Uganda and the region were being done by foreign researchers, while local researchers only played an assisting role. CBR therefore offers space to Ugandan researchers to undertake independent thinking and writing. It has nurtured local researchers and seen their progress from one level to another. Knowledge development begins with researchers asking the right questions to

answer people's concerns at a particular time.

The express aim of CBR is to enhance the generation of knowledge that is relevant to our concrete conditions, addressing key questions regarding our social transformation and development. In addition, CBR aims to increase the cohort of Ugandan and/or African intellectuals who should be at the forefront of articulating critical social, political, economic and cultural issues and also facilitate social debates as a contribution to the building of active citizenship.

CBR is non-partisan and stands for social justice. The research undertaken covers a broad range of topics including democracy and governance, constitutionalism, gendered worlds, natural resources, production systems, and, labour, among others. The guiding principle in the research is to unearth the dynamics, changes and continuities with a view of informing, further reflection, social mobilization and action, as well as policy choices.

Over the years, CBR has sought to enhance the relevance of its research competence through capacity building programmes that focus on young professionals. Research capacity building is based on the express idea of developing a cohort of researchers who are critical enough to define questions and design research projects rather than waiting to be research assistants for research projects designed elsewhere.

In the years 2012 and 2013 CBR implemented a number of initiatives aimed at enhancing public debate through research and documentation. Key research projects which included one on Uganda at 50 years of independence and another on the cooperatives agenda provided opportunities for using research to inform activism and vice versa.

Future directions point to developing collaboration with a range of actors to facilitate research and dissemination, as well as increasing the capacity to enhance greater citizens' engagement in the country. CBR is hence repositioning itself as citizens' public resource centre through expanding the utilization of its research. Repositioning also includes democratization of knowledge utilization through translation of key materials into local languages. The strategic direction is to locate CBR more as a think tank that is at the centre of facilitating public policy dialogues and citizens' engagement.

1. 0. INTRODUCTION

Centre for Basic Research is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) and a member institute of the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA). CBR's mission is 'To generate and disseminate knowledge by conducting basic and applied research of social, economic and political significance to Uganda in particular and Africa in general, so as to influence policy, raise consciousness and improve the quality of life'. To fulfil her mission, CBR has conducted cutting-edge research that has included studies on rights and constitutionalism; civil society and governance; labour; social movements and democratic struggles; appropriate technology in peasant farming; pastoralism in Karamoja; land tenure and land use; the informal sector; gender; environmental accountability; non-profit organizations; impact of structural adjustment programmes; and, aspects of cultural studies. The knowledge generated is disseminated through diverse channels that include workshops and seminars; publication of working papers and books; sale and free distribution of research products.



Figure 1: CBR Publications on display at one of the partner workshops

The results of CBR research are initially published as Working Papers which now include 102 publications. There is an on-going book publishing programme to disseminate the results of CBR's research in a more enduring form to a wider audience, both national and international. So far, two books have been published and a number of others are ready for the press.

CBR also publishes Occasional Papers that result from intensive desk research; Workshop Reports that recount proceedings of research result dissemination workshops; Commissioned Reports; and a number of other publications authored jointly with collaborating individuals and institutions.

2.0. CBR LIBRARY

The CBR Library is a place for study and providing book and non-book materials which support research. The library comprises four major sections, viz: Books and reports including theses and dissertations; Documentation that includes unpublished materials and newspaper clippings (paper and digital); journals and magazines which include more than 100 journal titles; and, the Uganda Popular Music Archive.

2.1. Documentation

The Library operates a documentation service that provides a newspaper clipping service and a collection of conference/seminar papers and other unpublished materials that fall within the CBR research agenda. The newspaper cuttings service covers well above 70 thematic areas including AIDS, land tenure issues, constitutionalism, democracy and governance, gender issues, armed conflict, to mention a few. The documentation of materials, which started in mid-April 1989, and has continued to the present, includes news items, commentaries and opinion letters culled from Ugandan newspaper publications.

2.2. Ugandan Popular Music Archive

Under the Enhancing Research Capacity (ENRECA) Urban Cultures Project, CBR has collected and organized a Popular Music Archive, the only one of its kind in Uganda. The objective of this archive is to construct a repository that not only preserves representative samples of Ugandan popular music, but also actively facilitates research into the growth of popular cultural forms in Uganda. The archive currently holds more than 6,000 songs and videos by Ugandan musicians. ENRECA was supported by DANIDA as collaboration among CBR, Roskilde University Denmark and Centre for Social Science Studies, Calcutta (CSSSC), India.

2.3. Community Service

CBR is conscious of developing its activities in such a manner as to serve a growing number of community needs while expanding its own research-related agenda. The following services are offered:

2.4. Affiliates Programme

To make CBR expanding facilities available to a wider community, non-CBR researchers are allowed access to the CBR Library and the weekly seminars through the affiliation programme. Through this programme, CBR has attracted a steadily increasing number of research affiliates accessing the facilities, more especially the Library.

2.5. Research Capacity Building

From its inception, CBR has trained its own researchers in various skills that include research methods and computer applications, through a number of short courses and training workshops. Of recent, CBR's research capacity building capabilities

have been extended outside of CBR through intensive training programmes to affiliated organizations and groups of individuals. The programme has greatly contributed towards creating a critical pool of practitioners and researchers who can carry on with the critical task of knowledge production and dissemination for socio-economic transformation of Uganda and beyond.



3.0. ACTIVITIES ACCOMPLISHED IN THE YEARS 2012/13

3.1. The Cooperative Movement and the Challenge of Development: a Search for Alternative Citizens' Welfare, Vitality and Wealth Creation Approaches in Uganda

In October 2012 Centre for Basic Research entered a tripartite arrangement with Action Aid International Uganda (AAIU) and The Uhuru Institute (TUI) on the revival of cooperatives in Uganda. The study sought to deepen knowledge about the historical contribution, present status and potential value of cooperatives as organic citizen platforms for independent efforts geared towards the socioeconomic transformation in Uganda. The initiative was inspired in part by a resurgent debate about their historical role, value and potential contribution to overcoming structural challenges citizens are enduring especially in the face of a forceful neo-liberal agenda that has reduced citizens to passive actors and distant recipients of help from above. The project was also done as part of a commitment to take forward outcomes from the Citizens' Manifesto in which ordinary Ugandans expressed interest in the revival of cooperatives.



Figure 2: Launching the Cooperatives Project at CBR

The study, launched on 17 April 2013, was guided by the following objectives:

- To evaluate the existing potentials and possibilities for a new form of cooperative movement, within the current political economy framework in Uganda.
- To take stock of factors that contributed to the collapse of the previous cooperative movement and use it as a basis for experience-informed recommendations that in future would help to avoid similar pitfalls.
- To explore the current realities and recommend to cooperatives stakeholders the least costly entry mechanism of revival under the existing institutional framework accorded by government cooperatives policy.
- Synthesize the positives and gap manifestations to make creative recommendations to catalyze a flexible cooperative movement to promote citizens' vitality and welfare.

ACTIVITIES

Activities of the project included: field research, community dialogues, seminar series and final launch of think pieces and final report.

The National Report titled 'The Cooperative Movement and the Challenge of Development: a Search for Alternative Wealth Creation and Citizen Vitality Approaches Uganda' was launched at Serena Hotel Kampala on 19 December 2013.

3.2. Uganda at Fifty Years of Independence (Uganda@50): Amplifying Citizens' voices

Between 2011 and 2013, Centre for Basic Research, implemented a project entitled 'Uganda @ 50: Amplifying Citizens Voices'. The project was a process in which citizens were engaged in systematic discussion re-examining the past, present and future of their country, Uganda, as she marked 50 years of independence on 9 October 2012. Citizens' dialogues were held in the districts of Gulu, Busia, Luwero, Kabale, Hoima and Kampala. The project was supported by the Open Society Institute of East Africa (OSIEA)



Figure 3: Prof. Mondo Kagonyera, Chancellor of Makerere University, greets Hon. Jaberu Bidandi Ssali, President of People's Progressive Party, at the Launch of the Uganda @ 50 Project at CBR

The project on amplifying citizens' voices was designed to enable Ugandans reflect on their past and present, and project a Uganda they want. The aim of the project was to enable Ugandans reflect on critical questions on the governance and development directions over the last 50 years and how these could inform future visions for our country. Some of these questions were: Where are we as a nation and where do we want to go? What is or should be the role of the general citizenry in defining the governance direction of the country? How can the current democratic deficits be addressed so as to allow for greater state responsiveness to citizens' voices and accountability? How can the voices of the citizens be captured and effectively articulated and validated in a manner that will ensure a broader and inclusive definition of Uganda's destiny?

Project activities included its launch; self-discovery community dialogues; expert meetings and discussions; debates in educational institutions; secondary school essay competitions; feedback seminars in the Central, South-western, Western, Eastern and Northern regions of Uganda; and publication and dissemination of research findings.

The project mainly drew participants from six districts selected from the four major regions of Uganda – that is, Gulu District in northern; Kabale and Hoima districts in western; Busia District in eastern; and, Kampala and Luweero districts in central Uganda. Altogether, over 650 Ugandans participated in the district dialogues, either as rural and urban communities or senior citizens. An additional 75 participants responded by participating in call-ins during FM radio talk shows held in each district.

Over 500 university students participated in debates in selected universities, namely: Makerere University, Busitema University, Kabale University and Gulu University. As part of the celebration and reflection, a secondary school essay competition was organized and students were invited to write essays on the three main areas of the dialogues – 'the Past', 'the Present' and 'the Uganda I want to see'.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of the project were as follows:

- Enhance the level of civic competence of the general citizenry by facilitating a process of self-discovery.
- Promote active and purposeful political engagement of the populace for greater responsive governance.
- Capture and validate citizens' voices and aspirations on Uganda's governance experiences.
- Catalyse a process of developing sustainable strategies for citizens' engagement with democratic processes.

ACTIVITIES

3.2.1. Community Self-discovery Dialogues

Dialogues involving ordinary women and men, students, in and out-of-school youth and community members were organized in each of the selected districts. Emerging issues from these dialogues were aggregated to guide discussions on local radio talk shows where some of the voices were replayed. This created a further opportunity for a larger population to listen and engage with the ideas.



Figure 4: An elderly Woman shares her views at during a Community Dialogue at Mulago, Kampala.

3.2.2. Secondary School Competitions

Essay writing was not only intended to capture the voices of young people in schools so as to ensure wide coverage of the ideas; but the essay competitions were organized in a way that encouraged young people to think about Uganda; think about questions of nationhood and their role in constructing the future.



Figure 5: one of the top winners – a student from Kigezi High School (Kabale District) speaking at the Essay Competition award ceremony at CBR.

3.2.3. Expert Meetings

In each of the selected districts, one expert meeting was held with about 20 to 30 people invited from across the district on the question of governance. These experts included former political leaders, cultural leaders, researchers, teachers, academicians and civil society activists, who reflected on key past events, the present and the future of the country, with regard to the governance question.

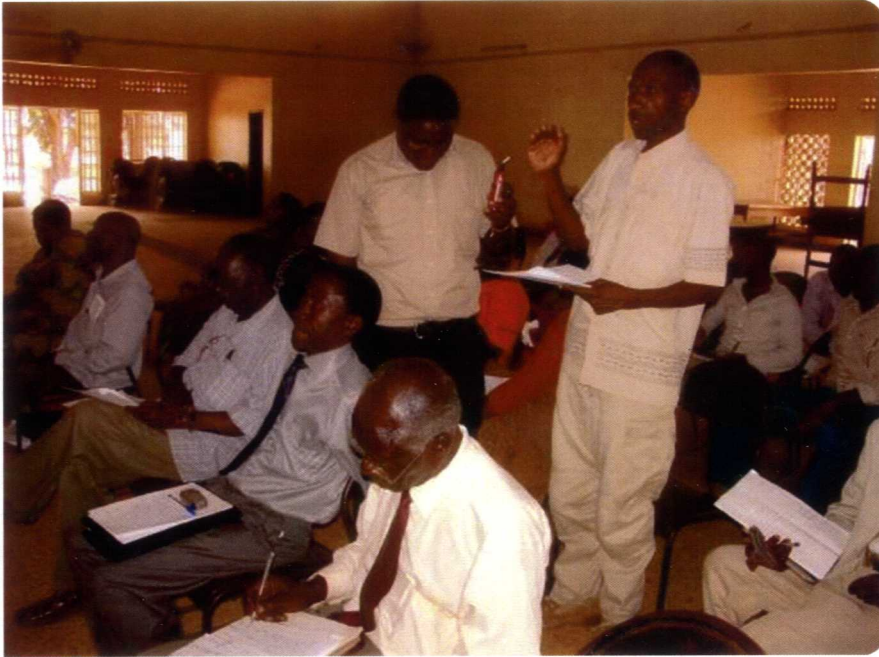


Figure 6: A citizen contributing during an Expert Meeting Dialogue in Kampala

3.2.4. Debates in Educational Institutions

Universities were selected as important spaces because of their historical role as think tanks and also because they are places where the majority of the population is the youth. Debates were organized in Makerere, Gulu, Kabale and Busitema universities. To allow for cross-generational voices to be heard, speakers included senior academic staff as well as students and other members of the University community.



Figure 7: Attentive students at Kabale University listen to various speakers during a Students' Debate.

3.2.5. Feedback dialogues



Figure 8: A Students' Debate at Gulu University

As part of the commitment to facilitating ongoing dialogues, feedback sessions were organized in all the districts covered (Gulu, Busia, Hoima, Luweero, Kabale and Kampala). In addition, a feedback session was also held in Moroto, Karamoja. The feedback sessions provided an opportunity for communities to validate the ways in which the voices were captured, as well as to engage in a more nationally-oriented narrative on Uganda.



Figure 9: Youths Participating in Feedback Seminar at CBR

Each project activity involved both a research process and a dialogue. The activities were structured in such a way that they focused mainly on illuminating the voices of the general citizens. The project employed participatory community dialogues to deliberate the topic through a multi-stakeholder approach (MSA). The process was designed in such a manner as to capture the citizens' agency and, at the same time, stimulate a process of engagement with the various governance questions that relate to the citizens' lived reality. The methodology used fitted well into the 'Uganda at 50' process as a logical way of assessing where we have been and where we are heading.

3.2.6. Products

1. It all Begins with Me: Citizens' Voices on Uganda at Fifty Years of Independence and Beyond. CBR Working Paper No. 103/2013
2. Uganda at Fifty Years of Independence and Beyond: Citizens' Voices on the past, present and future of Uganda – Ngikarimojong Speak Out. CBR Working Paper No. 103/2013
3. Uganda @ 50: Secondary School Essay Competition – A Bird's Eye View
4. Handy Posters Translated into Local Languages: Runyakitara, Luo, Luganda, Ng'akarimajong.

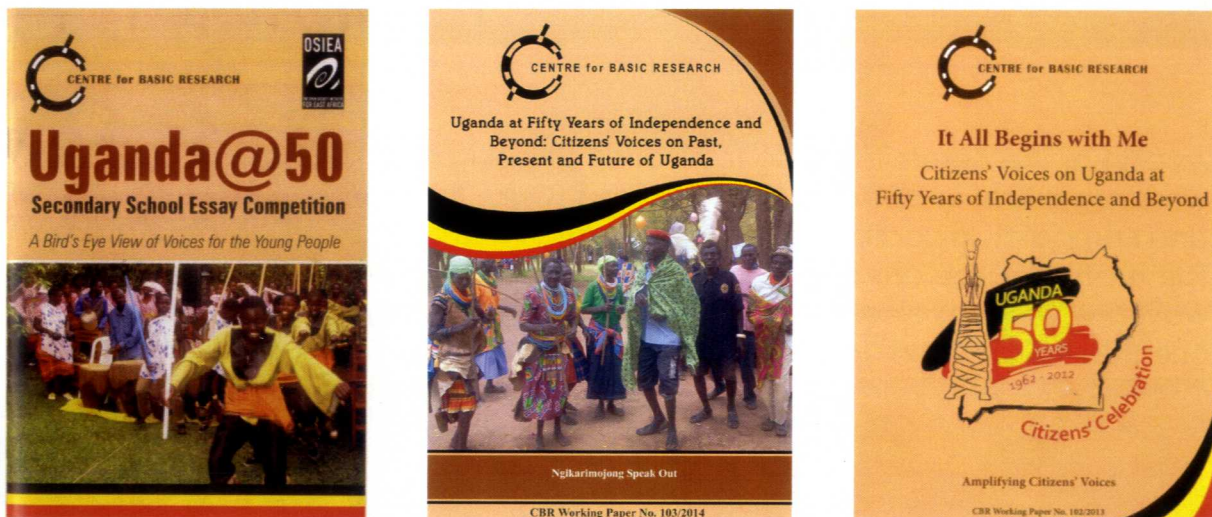


Figure 10: Some of the Products of the Uganda @ 50 Project

3.3. Decentralization, Local Land Rights and the Construction of Women's Citizenship: A Comparative Study of Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania

In July 2008, Centre for Basic Research launched a project on women's land rights in East Africa. The project entitled: 'Decentralization, Land Administration, Local Rights and Construction of Women's Citizenship' was supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). The overall objective of the project was to investigate how decentralization of land administration and management systems in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania affects women's land rights.

The specific objectives of the project were:

- To investigate how the decentralization of land administration systems shapes women's entitlement to land (access to, use of and control over land), and affects their social citizenship;
- To examine the capacity of women's organizations to pursue women's claims for land rights and how they interact with institutions of power and local levels; and,
- To investigate emerging cultural and political trends under decentralization and how these impact on women's claims on land rights.

The research was concluded in 2013 with the following products:

UGANDA

Maureen Nakirunda: Decentralised Land Administration and Women's Land Rights in 1. Uganda: Legal Provisions, Institutions and Processes

Josephine Ahikire: Cutting the Coat according to the Size of the Cloth: Decentralisation and Women's Agency on Land Rights in Uganda

Richard Ssewakiryanga: Women's Land Rights and the Local Face of Culture in Uganda

KENYA

Karuti Kanyinga: Kenya's Land Administrative System and Implications for Women's Land Rights

George Michuki : Culture and Localised space for women's land rights in Kenya

TANZANIA

Sherbanu Kassim : Decentralisation of Land Administration and Women's Rights in Tanzania: The case of Mvomero District

3.4. Hosting Open Debates (Barazas)

As a means of sharing topical ideas with the citizenry, CBR hosts Barazas (public meetings/debates), an activity which is aimed at bringing together the various stakeholders in to freely share information and knowledge.

3.4.1. Citizens' Baraza on Constitutional Change in Uganda

CBR hosted a citizens' Baraza on 'Constitutional Change in Uganda'. The Baraza was triggered by the proposal to remove age limits for workers in the Public Service, especially the Judiciary. The Baraza attracted a range of actors including politicians, academicians, students and the Civil Society fraternity. Speakers at the Baraza included Honourable Eddy Kwizera, Member of Parliament Bufumbira East County; Honourable Betty Kamywa Turwomwe, President of Uganda Federal Alliance Party; Prof Oloka Onyango, of Law at Makerere University and a Senior Research Fellow at CBR; and Mr. Gwada Tao Ogot, from Citizens Coalition for Electoral Democracy in Uganda (CEDU) Secretariat.



Figure 11: Honourable Eddy Kwizera giving a presentation at the Baraza on Constitutionalism at CBR

In giving welcome remarks at the Baraza, Prof. Josephine Ahikire, the Executive Director of CBR, noted that the word Baraza is a Kiswahili word which means a veranda; a veranda not just for its own sake, but a space where conversations take place. Conversations at a Baraza are not limited as long as people believe that the issues to be deliberated upon are important to them. "It is an open market of ideas without formalities as people seek to get all these ideas and package them in a way that creates some sense of a way forward and some sense of collective responsibility as citizens. Accordingly, the idea of a Baraza was based on the need for citizens to debate constitutional reforms, in an attempt to nurture a vibrant political culture.

On his part, Richard Ssewakiryanga, Executive Director of the Uganda National NGO Forum, noted that there was need for uncausalizing the constitution to enable the citizens to take back Uganda. "We can no longer do things and hope that things will happen on us. The point we have reached in terms of how governance is constructed and how participation is articulated seems to suggest that as citizens, we need to do more to fully show our ownership of this country," he said.



Figure 12: Prof. Joe Oloka Onyango contributing during the Baraza on Constitutionalism at CBR

The Keynote Speaker, Prof. Joe Oloka Onyango, reflected on the situation of the state of Uganda today and noted that Uganda was in a state of panic.

He went on to say: "We are grappling with a number of 'panics' that are resulting into crises! There is the Land Panic which is characterized by evictions that are taking place all over the place; a Sexual Panic or the Moral Panic reflected most extremely by the Anti Homosexuality Bill but also by the proposal to ensure that our ladies and daughters don't wear miniskirts; a Police Panic as evidenced by the establishment of a police post at the Kalerwe-Kyebando roundabout (simply because the police needs to monitor the movements of a certain gentleman around that side of town); and, a military panic." To Oloka, all this was reflective of the Constitutional Panic in Uganda. Accordingly, the panic of succession, commonly referred to as the Muhoozi project, was uncalled for because the political reading showed that the constitution was amended to remove term limits for Museveni not for his son, Muhoozi Kainerugaba. "The succession planning therefore is for Museveni to succeed Museveni until kingdom come," he noted.

Hon. Eddie Kwizera thanked CBR for organizing the Baraza and noted that there was need for professionals such as lawyers to perform their role of guiding matters of constitutionalism.

Ogot presented a highlight of the potential for electoral reform in the region in general and Uganda in particular.

Hon. Beti Kamyia-Turwomwe, President of Uganda Federal Alliance, emphasized that the torch should flash on the right spot as opposed to dealing with symptoms.



And in her view, the fundamental question lay with Article 98 of the Constitution that gives enormous power to the President of the country.

On the whole, all speakers and contributors noted the need for a continuous debate on constitutionalism in Uganda.

4.0. ONGOING ACTIVITIES AND RESEARCH PROJECTS

4.1. IGAD/Conflict Early Warning (CEWARN)

The Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) is a collaborative effort of the seven IGAD Member States (Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda). Centre for Basic Research (CBR) has been the National Research Institute (NRI) for Uganda since CEWARN's establishment in 2002, through a series of annual contracts. The NRI assists the IGAD Secretariat/CEWARN Unit to establish a functioning early warning and response structure in the IGAD region with a focus on pastoral conflicts along borders of IGAD Member States.

CEWARN and IGAD Member States to actively contribute to the prevention of violent conflicts in the IGAD sub-region through the monitoring and tracking of critical indicators, analyzing the causes of conflict, develop possible future scenarios and to propose response options with particular reference to cross-border pastoral and related conflicts in CEWARN's pilot areas of the Karamoja, Somali and Dikhil clusters.

A pivotal component of the CEWARN mechanism is the CEWARN Reporter, a software-based tool that assists in the collection, coding and analysis of data. The Centre for Basic Research (CBR) assists CEWARN in data collection, analysis and report writing while adhering to high quality control standards in data collection and coding into the CEWARN Reporter. In addition, CBR provides technical and administrative support to the implementation of the Conflict Early response by the Conflict Early Response Unit (CEWERU), Ministry of Internal Affairs, Government of Uganda.

4.2. Interrogating Large-Scale Land Acquisitions (ISLAs) in Sub-Saharan Africa and its Implications for Women's Land Rights

In 2013 CBR concluded a preparation process for the project on large-scale land acquisitions in Sub Saharan Africa. This project is to be undertaken in collaboration with the University of Buea Cameroon, and the University of Ghana. The project is supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC)

The study seeks to explore land governance in Africa in terms of the various processes of land acquisition, the winners and losers in these transactions, the ways in which the losers, specifically rural African women who lose their lands respond to the situation and finally the extent to which these responses are successful. This research and the policy interventions envisaged is hoped to contribute to the formulation of gender-equitable land governance policies that are sensitive to issues of accountability and legitimacy on the continent.

4.3. Innovative Approaches to Creating Opportunities and Incorporating the Youth into the Labour Markets in the East African Community

This is a regional study on innovative approaches to creating opportunities and incorporating the youth in labour markets in the East African region. Supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the study is being undertaken in Rwanda, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. It is intended to generate insights into the problem of youth unemployment in the region and identify lasting solutions to the problem.

4.4. Employment, Empowerment and Living Standards in Kampala - Giga project

In 2012, CBR in collaboration with The German Institute for Global and Area Studies (GIGA) implemented a study on employment, empowerment and living standards in Kampala. The study involved a quantitative enterprise survey, experiments and a qualitative study including interviews and focus group discussions among micro and small entrepreneurs in Kampala. The main objective of the study was to explore the linkages between employment, empowerment and living standards. The focus was on micro and small entrepreneurs in developing countries including Uganda, Burkina Faso and Sri Lanka.

5.0. RENOVATION OF CBR PREMISES

The year 2013 saw a complete makeover and renovation of CBR buildings. The new face of CBR premises enhances its capacity to carry its proposed public agenda forward.

Special acknowledgement goes to Mr. Yusuf Karmali of Omega Plastics, Kyambogo, for the mobilization and encouragement. CBR would like to acknowledge the following individuals for their contributions towards the renovation of its buildings: Mr. Anis Mamdani, Mr. Andrew Rugasira, Prof. Mahmood Mamdani, Mr. Peter Otim, Dr. Maria Nassali and Dr. Earnest Okello Ogwang.



Figure 13: CBR Premises before renovation



Figure 14: CBR Premises after renovation

6.0. RECENT CBR PUBLICATIONS

It all begins with me: Citizens' voices on Uganda @ 50 and beyond, by Josephine Ahikire; Samson James Opolot & Aramanzan Madanda. CBR Working Paper No. 102. 55p. 2013.

Uganda at Fifty Years of Independence and Beyond: Citizens' Voices on the past, present and future of Uganda – Ngikarimojong Speak Out, by Samson James Opolot. CBR Working Paper No. 103. 33p. 2013.

The Cooperative Movement and the Challenge of Development: A Search for Alternative Citizens welfare, Vitality and Wealth Creation Approached in Uganda, a Report by CBR, Action Aid International Uganda and The Uhuru Institute, 2013

Women, Culture and Decentralized Land Administration in Kenya, by Karuti Kanyinga & Winnie Mitullah. CBR Working Paper No.101. 47p. 2011.

Decentralization of Land Administration and Women's Rights in Tanzania: Some Experiences from Mlali Village, by Sherbanu Kassim. CBR Working Paper No. 100. 52p. 2011.

Women's Land Rights and the Local Face of Culture, by Richard Ssewakiryanga. CBR Working Paper No. 99; 39p. 2011.

Decentralized Land Administration and Women's Land Rights in Uganda: An Analysis of the Legal Regime, State Institutional Arrangements and Practice, by Maureen Nakirunda. CBR Working Paper No. 98; 86p. 2011.

"Cutting the Coat According to the Cloth": Decentralization and Women's Agency on Land Rights in Uganda, by Josephine Ahikire. CBR Working Paper No. 97; 54p. 2011.

The Male Body and Prostitution in Kampala City, Uganda, by Raphael Musoke & David Lameck Kibikyo. CBR Working Paper No. 96; 40p. 2008.

The Female and the Prostitute: Historical Perspectives on Prostitution in Kampala City, Uganda, by Winnie Bikaako. CBR Working Paper No. 95; 31p. 2007

Fiscal Decentralisation Audit in Uganda: A Study of Service Delivery in Soroti and Hoima Districts, by Lawyer Kafureeka. CBR Working Paper No. 94; 39p, 2007.

7.0. CBR RESEARCHERS

Ahikire, Josephine
Barya, John Jean
Byaruhanga Rukooko, Archangel
Gariyo, Zie
Kafureeka, Lawyer
Kanyesigye, Juliet
Kayunga, Sallie Simba
Kibikyo, David Lawrence
Kintu Nyago, Crispin
Kyomugisha, Charity
Mamdani, Mahmood
Muhereza, Frank Emmanuel
Murindwa-Rutanga
Mwambutsya Ndebesa, Pat
Nakirunda, Maureen
Nassali, Maria
Okello Ogwang, Ernest
Oloka-Onyango, Joe
Opolot, Samson James
Otim, Omurangi Peter
Rutabajuuka, Simon
Ssenkumba, John
Ssewakiryanga, Richard
Syahuka Muhindo, Arthur



Contact

Plot 15 Baskerville Avenue, Kololo. P.O.Box 9863. Kampala UGANDA. Tel: +256-704-342987

E-mail: cbr@cbr.ug, cbr.uganda@gmail.com, library@cbr.ug

www.cbr.ug