



INNOVATIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL SOCIETIES

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SCHALKWYK: Today is the first of December, 2008. I'm here with John Kiyaga-Nsubaga, the director general of the Uganda Management Institute in Kampala. Before I start this interview, I'd like to ask that you've given your consent to be interviewed.

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: Of course, the consent is given. Unconditionally if you want.

SCHALKWYK: Thank you. I'd like to begin the interview just by talking about the role that you've played in public service and public sector reform. Could you start by telling me about your job now, the responsibilities that you have and the positions that have led up to that?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *OK. My job is to oversee capacity building in terms of training of the public service, meaning central government and local government. But in addition to this, I also enhance the capacity of non-governmental organizations as well as some elements of the private sector. Before I—this is my ninth year here—before I came here I worked in the Ministry of Local Government at the Decentralization Secretariat. That was a secretariat which was mandated with setting up and ensuring that the decentralization policy is implemented effectively. Our roles included putting in place appropriate legislation, putting in place structures, institutions, processes, evaluating them. Now, from the time that I joined this institute to today, I've played a number of roles, including, of course, designing the training programs, evaluating the Public Service Reform Program. The first evaluation after 10 years was done by a consortium of five people, including myself. I've designed certain operational documents for the Ministry of Local Government. I developed the Decentralization Policy Strategic Framework. I was very much involved in designing the Local Government Sector Investment Plan. Right now I'm head of the Ministry of Local Government to come up with a national, local government skills development strategy. So, to put it modestly, this is what I've been able to do.*

SCHALKWYK: OK. Thank you. So I'd like to begin talking about the substance of civil service reform by just asking you to give a very brief history of civil service reform in Uganda.

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *Right after independence in 1962, there was a phase where the people used to man the public service. These were from Britain, or from Europe, or from whatever; they had to be replaced. And there was a crash program to try to Africanize the public service, to try and find Ugandans who could put people and set in place—. But you know, because there were not very many well-educated Ugandans, there was a big problem because there wasn't quite enough to put in the right places. So at the time it was thought that if an institute of public administration was put in place, it would help the new people coming into the public service to enhance their skills through career progression, and so on and so forth. That is how this institute actually started, 1969. That phase was Africanizing the public service and helping the public service to grow.*

But you know very well that in 1971 we got Idi Amin, and the whole country was turned upside down, and all the Wudu people either were killed or they went to into exile. Then, we had a spell of Idi Amin, 1980 to 1985, where the contending factions failed to agree on the rules of political discourse, and this resulted into a civil war, which ended in 1986 with the coming to power of this regime, the National Resistance Movement. So from 1987 questions were asked: "What should we do with the public service?" And the first thing that was required was to find out what kind of state in which it was.

So a commission was set up [Commission of Inquiry into the Local Government System in Uganda], chaired by a famous Ugandan professor called Professor Mahmood Mamdani. Now this professor—really the direction of this commission was to find out on what basis should we set up the local government system, because during the guerilla war the local government, the authorities on the ground, the state structures, were broken by the guerillas, and they took it over. But when they seized power, it became very difficult for them to run, because while they had their own guerilla structures, in actual fact, the legal establishment was a highly centralized structure. So Mamdani's commission helped to provide the basis of the local government system that we have today. Its major recommendation was that power should be decentralized to popularly elected governments so that they can make decisions and implement them, decisions which affect them quite closely.

But after some time it became clear that the public service, generally, meaning a very large segment of the central government was ill-suited for the job of turning the country around, and so a commission was also set up in 1989, I think. The Mamdani commission was set up in 1987, but in 1989 a public service review commission [Public Service Review and Reorganization Commission] was set up, and it came up with 255 or 256 recommendations of completely changing the public service. And the major analysis was that the public service was corrupt, inept, disorganized, uncoordinated, poorly funded, demoralized, because people were paid very low salaries. That kind of stuff. That was the beginning of the reform, because at least the problem was recognized.

So from 1990, I would say, up to today the Public Service Reform Program has gone through three different phases. Each of those phases attempted to make the public service much more functional, much more people-centered, with its people understanding what it means to serve the public as opposed to being served by the public. Now, the reforms, the capacity building itself has focused, I would say, if you take different phases—. From 1986, when this regime had just come into power, to I would say the early 1990s, the major focus was on putting in place the necessary structures and systems. That was really the major problem because there was no government. The government had collapsed, and everything was in chaos.

I remember, when we were in local government, what we wanted to establish first were the key functions of capabilities which make a system function, like human resource management, financial management, accounting. You know, those basic ones. And when I was in local government, my primary role was to strengthen the capabilities of the local government system. So what we're doing in the central government was actually the same thing that was happening in the local government. I remember there was a World Bank institutional capacity building project, which was running alongside what we were doing. And for them, their main focus was on financial management, because the World Bank believes very strongly that financial management lies at the center of enabling a public system to function.

This phase, from 1986 to the early 1990s, the main focus was on putting in place institutions and then providing the necessary capacity for them to start and function. But after the mid-1990s, when a normalcy had been returned into government where you could see a functioning government—well, it was functioning poorly, but at least it was a functioning government. The attention now turned slightly to deepening the institutions and the processes that were created, and now also broadening the reach of the reforms, and that is where the

emphasis started being put on governance. Because it became quite clear that merely because people have the technical competence in human resource management or financial management does not necessarily mean that the government can function very well. But the manner in which power and resources are utilized were in fact of much more significance than even the technical competence itself, because it was demonstrated that the more technically competent people became, the more corrupt they became, helping themselves to public resources, and so on and so forth.

I would say that from the 1990s up to around this time, what we have been going through has been to broaden the interventions that were made, by creating new institutions, an inspector general of government, a Public Procurement and Disposal of Assets Authority, and all the other that you have seen, including, of all things, having a Ministry of Ethics and Integrity. All of this was indicative of the need to broaden intervention in terms of governance, but also to deepen the technical competence of all the members of staff in these institutions. That's what you'll find, if you look at our program here. Whereas in the late '80s and early '90s we're talking about purely financial management, now we're talking about post-graduate diploma programs, master's degree programs, you know, of people who already have a lot of experience to come and do much better.

Now, from today—from now, until the future—my view is that we should have entered into another phase where the emphasis is on changing the attitudes of public servants and instating particular values into them. Values of property, integrity, values of understanding and working in the interest of the public as opposed to the reverse. Unfortunately, we haven't gone very far in this—as you see, you read in the papers all the time, the very people who were supposed to get things moving right are actually in some cases part of the problem. So that is how I would distinguish among the different phases through which you have gone. Although if you look at the public service reform program, the phases are described differently.

SCHALKWYK: OK. Could you talk about the motivation for civil service reform? What has driven the civil service reform? Has it been donor conditionality for school needs, public anger, or political pressure?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *All of the above. First of all—*

SCHALKWYK: How would they play—how they played out together?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *[Laughter.] That's what I'm coming to.*

SCHALKWYK: OK.

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *OK. You see, we had the unfortunate history that most of the reforms that we have undertaken have been donor-driven. It has hurt us a great deal, because had conditions been created whereby the impetus for reform was generated from within, my view is that we would have gone a much longer way. But for a very long time, from 1986-87, early '90s, the donors pressed out conditions on the support they were giving, and this has created a situation where there's so much compliance with whatever the donors are saying, even if though some of it might not be in our interest. So that is part of the problem. But on the other hand, if you recall, this regime came into power on a reformist note. There was a great deal idealism at the beginning.*

SCHALKWYK: This was back in 1986?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *Yes. Even in the early 1990s there was a great deal of idealism, because we had suffered a great deal under the control of ruthless uncontrolled government. So there was a general consensus among academia, the private sector, the NGOs, the general citizens, that something, some reform, had to be done. Things had to be made better. Government had to be more transparent and whatever. So there was that impetus, and it was a very, very strong impetus. And President Museveni, to his credit, was at the forefront of this kind of thinking that the other country had to be changed. You see? So on the other hand, the people themselves were fed up. When you are under a repressive regime, many of the sentiments do not come out in public, but every person that you talk to, they express the same sentiments. People were fed up with governments which were unresponsive, with people using political power for their own ends, and so on and so forth. So I would say to a very large extent there was contribution from all angles, but the most significant, I would say, for the reform really came from the World Bank and other donors. They played a very, very critical role, which was negative in my view. Maybe we would have shifted our political and social dynamics a little bit differently had everything not been premised on the saying that unless you do the following, we'll not give you this kind of support.*

SCHALKWYK: Who was involved in the planning of the reforms, and what sort of planning went into them?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *First of all, I was not involved in the planning of the reforms. I can only look at the process in retrospect. But what I know and what I've read from some of the reviews, even from within the Ministry of Public Service itself, is that a donor would come and say, "We are going to support you to undertake the reform program, but we'll also provide you with an expert to do the reform." Or, "—you advertise globally for the reform." And normally, when you advertise globally, in most cases, if you've got weak systems from within, it automatically eliminates the locals. I've read somewhere where the public service people were complaining that the kind of reforms, the way they were designed, they were hardly involved. Experts came in and interviewed them, they assigned somebody to work with them, usually just to provide them with logistical support, and then a report was written, and then implementation was expected, and you can see that most of the Public Service Reform Programs have not been implemented very well because they were not owned by the people who were supposed to implement them.*

The only exception—there might be other exceptions, but I know of at least one exception, and that was the decentralization reform program. What happened in this case was that a Decentralization Secretariat was set up manned purely by Ugandans. It was set up as part of the Ministry of Local Government, but it had the local government—it had Ugandans only. It was funded by DANIDA [Danish International Development Agency], and the only thing that it—DANIDA was—people were asked, the ministry was asked to define how they wanted the system to run. The ministry defined this system, and DANIDA provided the support without necessarily attempting to influence the process, or at least unduly. I must qualify that, of course. That is why you find that the Local Government Reform Program has taken a much stronger route than the Public Service Reform Program involving the center. That to me would be the distinction.

SCHALKWYK: And what has the political support for the program been? Often, civil service reform efforts are seen as necessary in order to get donor funding, making people less enthusiastic about them.

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *When you talk of Public Service Reform Program, as far as Uganda is concerned—I wanted to distinguish between two. There's the Local Government Reform Program, which is under decentralization, and then there is the Public Service Reform Program, which, of course, also embraces all the local government, I mean all the systems including the center. In terms of political support, the decentralization program received very, very strong political support, there's no question about it. The president himself was a very strong advocate of the people, and even today, a very strong advocate of the people on the ground controlling their distance. When you come to the Public Service Reform Program involving the center, part of the problem is that the kind of political support that you have seen at the local government level is not as strong as it is as far as the center is concerned, because you can change institutions, you can put in place institutions, but you can undermine the operations. If you set in place rules and regulations and laws, those laws and regulations should be applied strictly across the board. One would say that that kind of strength has not been equally applied as far as the central government reform program, is concerned which is why you find that the central government is not performing as well as it should be, if you take account all those reforms which were undertaken in human rights, in financial management, in accounting, in being transparent and accountable, you know, that kind of stuff. There's a lot more that would have been done at the center.*

Also, this goes even with the local government, because even in local government there's a lot which could have been done in terms of how the system functions. But as far as allowing—as far as creating a local government system which is very heavily dependent on control from the people, I think we have gone much farther, as far as the local government system is concerned. You've got to look at the reform from so many angles. A great deal of progress has been made. Me, who was here, 20 years ago, and you see what you see today, this is a government which is functioning. The central government is functioning; all the systems are in place. They are not working very well; they are working in some places better than in others, but my argument is that we would have probably made greater progress if a great deal of emphasis was placed on ensuring that nobody is allowed to fool around with public institutions.

SCHALKWYK: Why do you think the government has given less—why do you think there has been less political support for public service reform and decentralization?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *Let's not put the question of where there has been less political support, because it depends in which section of government. Even within the central government there are certain areas that some people were saying, "Look, we should do more." There are other people who are not as tough as they should have been in terms of getting the government to function properly. But I want to explain this in terms of institutional development as opposed to in terms of individuals. The main problem, in my view, is lack of coordination within a government. What is happening in one area is not connected to what is happening in another area.*

SCHALKWYK: Could you give me an example?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *I'll give you an example. Only recently we were told that because of the poor state of the roads, the government has put aside 140 billion—no, maybe I haven't got it fully right, but it was a huge amount of money. The government has put aside this amount of money which they are going to give to the Ministry of Works [and Transport] so that they improve the roads. And, immediately after Parliament had pronounced itself on that, then we were told that the ministry had*

said, "No, we can't yet raise the money. We didn't plan for it." Now, how could that happen if they were coordinated? The first thing they would have asked, what they would have done, would have been to talk to the Ministry of Works to say, "Look, this is what we are planning." Everybody would have been brought on board, and by the time it was announced the Ministry of Works would have already—all the plans would have been in place. So there's a great deal of un-coordination.

The National Planning Authority is struggling to implement integrated national planning. Our government is organized in terms of sectors: the health sector, which has the Ministry of Health, and then other insular ministries, and natural energy ores and whatever in that sector. And so you've got a sector of health, education, agriculture, works, you know what I'm talking about. But we have seen cases where each of these sectors has its own management information system, and each of these have information on the same local government, but the information is not talking to each other, so that if you wanted to know something then you have to now get into another system. But if all this information—we have a huge amount of information which has been generated on this country, but this information is all over the place. It is not connected, and therefore nobody knows what is going on until something is done.

This is why we developed the Decentralization Policy Strategic Framework, because we had so many initiatives going but which were not connected, until we had to get them together. Because this ministry is doing this, another one is doing that, and another one is doing this, we cannot integrate or at least coordinate, you get lots of—the results do not give you the impression of a country which is moving in tandem. That's why you get certain ministries that are performing better than others. Education is an example, health is another. These are ministries which are working very well with a lot of support, but their work does not integrate well with the work of other ministries so that the country moves together. That is, in my view, a big problem. That's why you find that the reform initiatives are not moving as they should.

SCHALKWYK: Who are the people responsible for managing and coordinating reform?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *The Office of the Prime Minister is the one which reads government business, but the coordination of the reform itself is the responsibility of the ministry of public service. In fact, that's where it even has the Reform Secretariat. The deputy head of public service is the Secretary for Administrative Reform. So that is where everything is located, but the coordination of government business is done by the Ministry of Public Service. For a long time, coordinating all of this and getting all these systems to work together has been a problem, but I understand now things are getting better; the coordination is much, much better.*

SCHALKWYK: So you have said that one of the things you've done in the Public Service Reform Program is conducted a number of reviews. Could you tell me when you did those?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *I have done a number of reviews on decentralization, reviews on the Public Service Reform Program; I've participated as part of a consultancy where I've done consultancy assignments. If you want, I can give you a list of the things that we have done. But there've been—depending on the issue, there was a time when they wanted to know, "OK, after 10 years, how far have the reforms gone?" I was involved in that.*

SCHALKWYK: For that, what did you use as measures? How did you go about measuring how far the reforms have come?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *First of all, the reform itself has objectives.*

SCHALKWYK: What were those?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *Making sure that there is a change in the attitudes of public servants, that was one. Making sure that the public service as a body performs much better across a number of—what do you call them? I can't get the word. But they have even set their own targets that by this time we should have done the following, by this time we should have done the following... So we're evaluating them on the targets that they had set.*

SCHALKWYK: What sort of targets were those?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *Targets, for example, that by this particular time the financial management systems should be able to do A, B, C, D. So you would go back to their own documents and say, "OK, this is what you set out to do. You were supposed to do it by this time. What has happened?" And then they would say, "OK, from here we have moved from here to there," or, "From here we have not been able to go to there for these reasons." Sometimes the reasons are related to inadequate capacities. You want to make a change, but you don't have the capacity to make any change. Sometimes they're related to lack of resources, as opposed to the human capacities themselves. So, it's where they—the targets that they had set for themselves, the changes that they wanted to make.*

SCHALKWYK: How did they set targets for changing the mindset of public servants?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *How do we—?*

SCHALKWYK: How did you measure that sort of objective?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *For me, I'm not one of the people who set such a target, but for them they would have set such a target, and this is one of the questions that I would ask: "OK, you have trained so many people. Those are outputs, but how would you determine that the public servant has changed?" Now, one of the ways you do this is by reduction in complaints. And they could show in some instances that actually the complaints on a particular issue had changed, and on others there would be no evidence that they got the desired changes. Therefore, this would now constitute a new objective in the Public Reform Program, the new one which was being designed. Now, some of them were easier, but others which were supposed to result in impact were the difficult ones, and that is one of the major criticisms which have been carried through public service from program one, program two: while you can demonstrate that you have done A, B, C, D in terms of output, you don't have enough evidence that actually you have changed this so much in terms of how the public servants conducted themselves. And the evidence of this is that if you read the papers you can see evidence of this, that public servants, while they are better in a number of instances, in capabilities, but in terms of how they serve the public, and even how the public perceives of them, because a number of surveys have been not—conducted to find out what are [...] public perceptions are with respect to the public service. What just came out, I think this month, where they were listing the corrupt institutions, the police were there as usual, or the Justice Ministry, you know, the Justice Sector—not the ministry but the sector—was there [Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Justice Law and Order Sector (JLOS)]. So the issue that we're always*

asking, and which people are asking: if you can make all these investments in the Public Service Reform Program, how come, at the end of the day, the public servant has not changed very much in terms of attitudes and values?

SCHALKWYK: And in general what did your review find? Where was the Public Service Reform Program most successful?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *The public servants were much more technically competent, there's no question about that. Government functions competently, but the issue is whether this competence actually addresses itself to the real issues, because the real issues relate to solving the problems for citizens, making life better for the citizens. And the evidence that the public service is making a difference is seen in terms of the quality of the roads, in terms of the quality of the environment, if you go to the markets—now it has rained, it would be a good idea for you to go and visit one of the markets—and you look at the drainage. Now it does not matter how many people you have trained, how many reports have been written, how many vehicles your ministry has, or how many computers, and the courses people have been trained on. The conditions in which the people work in better, that's the ultimate attest. So while on the one hand there was clear—and there is clear evidence—that government is much more competent, people are much—the legislation is better, the monitoring and evaluation systems are better, the financial management is much more proficient, public procurement and disposal of assets is better—that is on the positive side, but on the negative side is the issue of impacts. What is all this doing in terms of changing the lives of the people for the better? That is really where the problem is.*

SCHALKWYK: What has the Public Service Reform Program done to try and get that impact?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *Well, they are—I hope you talk to them, because they have the technical details of what they have done. Some of us will look at it from a distance, merely by reading some of the documents which come out. I'm talking to a number of people. But it is quite clear that even within the public service there is now recognition that the measures which have been undertaken all are wrong, have not produced the results which are desired. I have attended a number of high-level discussions where the Ministry of Public Service people and the secretary general are questioning everything themselves, which is a very positive sign, because introspection is extremely important to say, "We have done this, but has it produced—or how far have we gone to achieve that?"*

So they have already recognized their limitations, and they are in a stage of redesigning their programs taking into account, of course, what is happening in other countries. Especially they have benefited greatly from the Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management, CAPAM. CAPAM has helped a great deal. They have conducted a number of leadership programs here; they have gone to a lot of meetings where various ideas are discussed. But in completed concrete terms the public service has sent a lot of their people here. Sixty percent of the people that were trained come from the public service, and of those nearly 58% are paid for by government. So that is a great recognition that while the basic competencies now are widespread within the public service, now what needs to be done is to deepen those competencies, so that you turn out a different person. They are investing quite a lot of money in this kind of thing.

For me, what I think they need to do more—and even here internally in my institute what we are trying to think about—is preparing the government to manage issues of complexity. You see, the changes in the economy are producing a dynamic which is creating more and more urban centers. Uganda is

rapidly driving towards becoming an urban country. In 20 years I suspect more than 60% of Ugandans will be living in urban areas. Now, that generates lots of problems. Problems of congestion, of urban sprawling, infrastructure provisions, street children, HIV/AIDS, and so on and so forth. Managing that will require skills which are much more—skills and competencies than we have now. Issues of globalization, you know?

The fact that people's knowledge is expanding faster through technology, the Internet, mobile phones, you know, that kind of stuff; we are now dealing with a population which is much more aware of what is going on. And when this continues that same population will become more sophisticated in terms of its demands. So that it is not just a road, but what type of road, and all ancillary services related to transportation, and so on and so forth. I'm not very sure that our public servants are well prepared for this kind of thing, so it means that we need a public servant who is different, one who is very good at modeling and forecasting, one who is analytical. Not this routine-ish oriented public servant, but one who is analytical, one who is quick at making decisions, one who understands the meaning of serving the public. We understand—people who understand immediately that if the interest rates rise in the United States, this is going to have an impact on us, and we need to put in strategies right now to make sure that by the time the blow comes we are well prepared, or if an opportunity is created by globalization, that we should position ourselves to take advantage of that opportunity. That is where part of our program lies.

SCHALKWYK: And I'd like to talk to you about the things that UMI does. What sort of training programs and degree programs do you offer?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *We train people who are already working only, with past experience. Our job is to enable these people to perform better, and also to help the organizations to perform better. To do that we've got a blend of programs. The short programs, a couple of days, one week, two weeks, three weeks, and then the medium programs: a couple of months. Then we've got the post-graduate diploma programs, for which somebody must have a degree and at least two years' working experience. They're in different fields: financial management, accounting, procurement, logistics, human resource management. The key functional areas of government.*

SCHALKWYK: How long are those?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *They're 12 modules. Each module is three weeks, depending on whether it is taken in the evening. The module is shorter if it's taken during the day. It is longer if the modules are done only over the weekends. The emphasis is on getting people from different backgrounds working for different organizations to come together, and through a blend of theory and practice trying to find solutions which are applicable to the organizations. Now, when someone has completed a post-graduate diploma, if they have performed well enough they can proceed to the next stage of writing a dissertation, where they identify a problem which could be related to either their organization or the sector in which they operate. They conduct research, write a dissertation, and if they can defend their dissertation successfully then you award them a master's degree. Our master's degree is called the Master of Management Studies, and it can be undertaken in any of the fields in which someone has mastered—has made a selection. I'll give you a copy of the prospectus which describes that particular.*

SCHALKWYK: Thank you.

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: Yes.

SCHALKWYK: And how many people does each of these programs have every year?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *The most popular programs tend to have a maximum in the range between 120 and 130. And then, of course, we've got some other programs which are in the region of 30, depending on the needs. But the signals from the market—Ugandans, in addition to studying to enhance their own skills, they also study to place themselves well competitively in terms of career development—signals outside that the people demand in this particular field—and then you begin to see a very, very strong demand for programs in that particular area. The programs which have been doing very well here have been project planning and management, procurement, financial management, human resource management, and so on and so forth. We've got a program which we're developing. It has not yet reached those huge numbers, but I know that it will. It is called urban governance and management. In my view, if I was a Ugandan, that's one of the programs I should want to take, because that's where the biggest problem is going to be in the future: how to manage our sprawling urban areas.*

SCHALKWYK: Can I ask you some questions about the short programs? What do those normally cover, and who normally attends those?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *They can cover any subject, but let us imagine that you've got a program. A short program, a three-week program, on project planning. This is intended for people already working on project planning and management, but they want a structured understanding of what they are doing. Now, these people could be from the government, they could be from the private sector, they could be from an NGO. In fact, when you look at the people who attend these programs, you find that they come from all of these places. So we have a list of the kinds of short courses that we have, but they're usually driven by the function requirement of the people who are taking them.*

Like, for example, I've another program called Budgetary Management and Expenditure Control for Non-Finance Officers, or Finance for Non-Finance Managers. The nature of things is that in whatever profession a person is trained, when they stay long enough in that profession they begin to rise into managerial ranks. You find hospitals: the senior managers in hospitals are doctors. Now, they find themselves—or they're engineers in other places, or they are whatever, but they started by training as professionals—or they are teachers, they are head teachers, or deputy head teachers, or they manage the department in schools. But these departments, what they manage has finance-related responsibilities. Now, they suddenly find themselves with these responsibilities, but they're not well primed to act as they should, where on the other hand they're head responsible should anything go wrong. These are the people who we contact—sometimes they contact us—and we say, "Look, we know your problem, but we can solve it for you, so that you understand at least the basics that are required in your capacity so that you can manage those resources appropriately."

SCHALKWYK: And have you done any efforts to identify gaps in capacity within the public service?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *Yes, yes. We do the analysis. We are so lucky that a lot of public servants study here, even ministers, members of Parliament. Very senior people—the director of the hospital is one of our students, so we've got very senior people—and we tend to debrief them to get a good sense of the gaps*

which are in their sectors. Remember that sectors also conduct reviews, annual reviews. Tomorrow there's going to be the Joint Annual Review of Decentralization. It is starting tomorrow: Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Three days where all the issues relating to implementation of decentralization of the previous year are analyzed to find out what kind of progress has been made, what kind of challenges are being faced, and what should be done about them, and we participate in these sector reviews.

SCHALKWYK: So, the UMI?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: Yes, yes.

SCHALKWYK: OK.

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *Yes, we participate in these reviews. We read the evaluations which are made. Annual, end-of-project, you know, we tend to study these. So that is how we begin to get a sense of what kind of responses we should make. But of late we thought that maybe we needed to go a step further, we needed to undertake a very detailed market analysis. So we have already tasked our marketing officer to prepare the grounds for an extensive market analysis, which we think will be conducted before the end of February next year.*

SCHALKWYK: OK.

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *So that will get a much better understanding of what is going on.*

SCHALKWYK: And, do ministries ever send you specific requests with regard to training?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *Yes, they do. We have generic programs, but we also have custom designed programs. In fact, you will not find them there because we cannot anticipate them. But very often I get letters on my desk: my people are outside there in the field, and they make a contact. They come and say, "Look, this particular firm, or client, or whatever, wants us to intervene like this." The ministries themselves, you see, public service. I'm telling you right now, of those postgraduate diploma programs, there are over 40 participants being sponsored by the Ministry of Local Government alone in various areas. You know, like the ministry, from its own analysis, it can say that one of the weak areas is on X. You know that they do annual assessments? When they agree, now, that next year we have to do the following, now, they make reviews and whatever, at the end they also make assessments of how that was implemented, and where the weakness is. Out of those assessments they can say that we need to make—. Despite kind of intervention across all local governments, or across these particular governments, we are creating new local governments, and the new ones require much more motivation than others, so they can select and say, "We want interventions for these." So they write to me and they say, "We'd like you to do the following." Then my people sit down with them. Either they want people in postgraduate programs which are already proven, or they might want a specific intervention for which a different set of interventions might have to be designed.*

SCHALKWYK: Do you evaluate the effect of the training programs that you have, and your degree programs?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: Yes.

SCHALKWYK: How do you do that?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *One, we'll have evaluation forms, which are an essential evaluation instrument.*

SCHALKWYK: And those are given to the students?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *To the students. But you know the limitations of that. That's why what we want to do now is to undertake a market survey, and part of that market survey will be an evaluation of the changes or the impact these higher programs have united within the system. Right now we cannot tell for certain that this kind of change has been brought about as a result of exposure to this particular program, because we're not the only trainers. But what we want to do is now to go out and find out in a structured way, using a professional firm to go and help us to be able to establish what is the impact of these programs and what needs to be changed.*

SCHALKWYK: I've heard that often people who get trained end up leaving the public service to go to the private sector. Have you found that to be true of the people who've come to UMI?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *Of course. Because of a disparity between the emoluments that are provided in the public sector, and those which are provided outside the public sector, like NGOs, a lot of people in this area we are training for purposes of acquiring those skills and competences which would enable them to leave the public service. That was a very big motivation in the beginning, and it might still be there. But those other sectors are also becoming saturated. In the meantime, the government is starting to pay better, either formally or informally, because people can use, you know, their offices to do other things which are not necessarily part and parcel of what they're paid for. There is that invisible element that you've got to understand. So further training or generating capabilities is also of benefit to these people. For example, they can increase their capability for consultancy work. If they do consultancy work, they can get more money. So there are so many motivations for why people are coming for a particular program, like the one I was talking about, Project Planning and Management—there was a big rush for that one, and there still is—or, for example, Procurement. Procurement is a new field, and there are so many public entities, and even in the private sector. People understand that procurement will be in demand; that's why you have lots of people in those programs. So the motivation, yes, it was there to acquire the skills and then leave, yes, and it's still there. But the areas where they're supposed to be going are becoming more and more saturated, because we have trained more and more people. So what will be required now is specialization. After someone has a good qualification in project planning and management, now they are required to distance themselves from everyone else so that they can command ahead.*

SCHALKWYK: Has the Public Service Reform Program asked for any particular training programs from you, or have you changed any of your programs in particular to respond to the Public Service Reform Program?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *Yes. I've just told you, Procurement; we introduced that program because of the reform which took place in—because when procurement reform took place, it became necessary now to get people who were well trained in these areas. Others, just to give you an example: Urban Governance and Management, Logistics and Distribution Management. These were brought as a result of the needs of the public service. We've got a program called Public Administration and Management. Nobody in Uganda can be elevated even to the level of an assistant chief administrative office—chief administrative officers here*

are called COAs—nobody can be made assistant COA unless they've got a diploma. So that is a clear requirement the Public Service Reform Program. We sat down with them, and they said, "We want these people to be able to do the following," and so that program was designed with that in mind. Urban Governance and Management: nobody can have a senior position in urban areas without taking that program, because it was designed to answer specific needs which were identified in the reform regimen.

SCHALKWYK: You said that you also had done some consultancy work. Could you talk a little bit about that? In what areas has that been? In the public sector?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *The broad area is governance. But there could be specific areas. For example, I just told you that I was responsible for developing the Decentralization Policy Strategic Framework. Now that helped to bring it together, all the different facets of decentralization which were in different places. They were brought together under the same framework. The Local Government Sector Investment Plan, all that was a part and parcel of it. We discovered at a particular point that the operatives in the local government system were confused about their roles. Sometimes the political leaders would interfere in technical issues. Sometimes the technical people would want to also to use up some of the political powers. The Ministry of Local Government asked me to develop a local government handbook for them. It's the standard document which is used throughout the country. Like I told you. I was involved in the review of the Public Service Reform Program in the first 10 years. Some of my people here have been involved in other different aspects. For example, right now government thinks that the most appropriate way of developing local areas is by providing them with credit, but not using the formal structures of the banks, which require collateral, because the people who need small monies, the reason why they need small monies is because they don't have anything. So they set up a Micro-Finance Support Center, but we have just been involved in developing a strategic plan, a new strategic plan for them. I headed that team. So we've been involved in a number of different aspects of public service. Not necessarily the mainstream, but doing a number of things which support the performance of the public service.*

SCHALKWYK: You've done a review of the program over a long period.

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *Yes, that was around 2000.*

SCHALKWYK: In many countries, there's a problem of keeping the effects of reform in place. What is in use to try and show that reforms have remained in place, and that the momentum has been kept up, and what sort of reforms have been unable to continue?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *Now, that is a deep question, which requires me to go back and consult a number of documents, just to make sure that I'm giving you the correct answer. But keeping the reforms, keeping the momentum has so many different aspects to it, one of which is having adequate resources. There was a time when the Ministry of Public Service was not funded for nearly three years when the reform program—if you see, from reform two to reform three...*

SCHALKWYK: What years were those?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *The reform was started around 2000, and ended at 2005 or 2004, but between then there is a gap of nearly three years before the third phase of reform started. I think it was 2007. The reason for this was that the donors for some reason did not provide the resources, and this is the problem of carrying*

out reforms which are highly contingent on somebody's good will. So had we started by limiting the reforms to specific target areas, basing on 80% our own efforts in terms of resources, these reforms, you'd have seen more change. So that was number one: being reliant on the needs of different donors and remembering that each donor comes with a different area in which they want to focus—you might end up that you've got about five different areas, but in two of them nobody's interested.

Like, for example, pension reform, because this meant that somebody had to pick up the tab for pension areas. Nobody was interested. So while everything else was moving around, the critical one, which was pension reform, nobody was touching. Meanwhile, the pension areas were growing bigger and bigger and bigger, and the people who had been laid off were becoming angrier and angrier and angrier, you know? So that's why you find that while in the design, pension reform was one of the components of public service reform, in actual fact and implementation it became something which laid back everything, see.

So if you want to ask me why some of these reforms were not moving according to the required pace, part of it was that the donors were very selective in the areas. Two, they were not providing the resources that were required. Three, the disbursement procedures of some of the donors were such a huge problem, taking six months before another tranche could be released; meanwhile, you have demoralized a lot of people, they start to regret a degree of enthusiasm. But another one: the lack of coordination even within the reform efforts. You know, something is running ahead of something else. For example, ROM. Results-oriented management, runs ahead of output-oriented budget, where they're supposed to in tandem. So people were—had a theory, but they didn't see how it linked to output-reoriented budgeting, so lack of coordination was also part of the problem. I'm sure they must have told you about this already.

SCHALKWYK: Are there any aspects of the civil service, the public service, or the reform program that reflect particularly Ugandan ideas or ways of doing things?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *Local government. That was completely a Ugandan idea, the nature of the system. It was grafted on the system which the British founded here. This is Buganda way where we are, and by the time the British came here, Buganda already had a five-tier local government system, and they were very surprised because it was very similar to something they had. Buganda already had a parliament understanding—this was in the 1800s something. So their approach of indirect rule—they said, "Look, why do you waste your time setting up a new system? Just work with this system, it works very well." So even today, the kind of system that you find: district, county, sub-county, parish, and village: that is nearly 200 years old, and it comes from here, and it is working very well as far as the local government system is concerned. So I would say in terms of reform, that is really something which was engineered from here.*

SCHALKWYK: And how have the local government reforms—what's their relationship with the Public Service Reform Program?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *Local government reform is part of public service reform. The only difference is that the local government's reforms are spearheaded by the Ministry of Local Government, with exceptions, where it comes to structures. The rest of the Public Service Reform Program is engineered by the Ministry of Public Service, but it is the lack of coordination between the reforms which has been a part of the problem, because even in the people's minds it looks like the local government system is different from central government system. It is simply a*

different face of the same government. That has been the problem. You find that better and more effective reforms have taken place within the local government system, even though today people are questioning some of those reforms because they seem to suggest a recent recentralization of some of the powers. But the way I look at them is that they are actually part and parcel with the broad public service reform. Because they are coordinated; they are handled from different centers, and without adequate coordination they look like they are two different reform agendas. One is running ahead of the other. You know, the Local Government Reform Program has been much further than that in the center. And even within the center, the reforms have been more pronounced in certain areas than in others.

That's why I'm saying, for example, education reform, health, procurement—procurement reforms are running ahead of most of the other reforms because of a very strong authority. You know, the Public Procurement and Disposal of Assets Authority is running very, very strongly and it has forced the rest of government to conform. Sometimes the big news that you see in the news is the failure by a government to conform to the requirements of this very strong organization. So even within central government, there are certain sectors where the reforms, you know, are very strong, and then the other sectors where the reforms are not very strong.

One of the reforms which I'm talking about is the changing of values. People's values haven't changed that much, public servants. You know, they sit in the office. In the past they would bring and put their coat there to show that they're here, and then they just disappear and do something else. But that ended. Most of them are in the offices, but what do they do when they're in the offices? Why is so much money disappearing? So that is an area where the reform needs to take a different tack. Something must be done to change the attitudes of public servants. Sometimes if you listen to the radio there are so many complaints. People go to hospitals and they—the way they are treated, you know?—they're mistreated. They go to offices, they're mistreated. Changing their attitudes of public servants, of getting people to put a human face, to see the other person as—to have empathy, to get into the skin of the other person and understand the suffering, and to think of ways of alleviating it.

SCHALKWYK: Why do you think that doesn't happen? What about the public service means that people aren't empathetic in that way?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *It's difficult to understand. It's something on which I can't put my finger. But part of the problem is that the design of the Public Service Reform Program did not put this into consideration in the beginning. As I told you, most of the emphasis was on developing technical competences to make government functional, and then, having reached a particular point, deepening those technical competences. But the values and the attitudinal change which was supposed to go hand in hand with the technical competences has not been catered for until now. Now they're scrambling to find out ways of bringing this about. It's long overdue. But at least now everybody recognizes that that is a very significant requirement if we are going to go very far.*

SCHALKWYK: If you had a chance to write a manual or a handbook for people who have to manage public service reform, what kinds of topics would you consider the most important?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *[Laughter.] You should have given me this question a long time ago before you came, so that I should have thought it through. One, definitely, would*

be managing complexity. That is one, and extremely important. Two, managing knowledge. There's loads of knowledge within a government, and this knowledge is stored in different places and not properly utilized, and when we require this knowledge, then we take out another consultancy to go and reproduce this knowledge. You find even within this ministry a consultancy is being undertaken to produce information which they already have. So how we manage knowledge is extremely important. Changing values and attitudes, that is a critical one, then leadership. We need to understand leadership, what it does to change societies and organizations, to change systems, so that we don't look at leaders as only those people at the top, because leadership can be exercised at various levels within a government, within an organization, within a ministry. There are several layers at which you can have different types of leadership. But how do we develop these leaders so that, as the others age, we've got a dynamic group which is coming. See, that's why you find the Americans have reached a moment in history where they can produce somebody like Obama, someone who you can see is of a totally different generation—there are many Obamas there, except that this one simply outshone everyone else, and also circumstances put him in the right places. But there are many Obamas at the political level, at technocratic levels. You know, how do we do this? To me, I would put my finger on each of those. To me they're very crucial. Technical competence, yes, very, very important. Those, and then coordinated government—very, very important.

SCHALKWYK: Do you have anything else to add before we finish? Are there any things in your experience that I haven't covered or asked you about?

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *No, I don't think so because, you know, the kinds of things I've been talking to you about are the kinds of things that we are grappling with, the kinds of discussions we're holding even within this institute with my own people. You know, my own thoughts are very much reflected in what I've just told you. We have the capability in this country, actually, to change a lot of things, but we have to do a number of things to coordinate what we do, to enforce regulations. Regulations, guidelines, laws, they are not enforced. Policies are not implemented. We agree we all want to do A, B, C, D, but actually implementing it is a problem. So if we can find a way of enhancing the capacity for implementation and for coordination of what we do, and we could find and develop the necessary leadership at all those different levels, and prepare the country for dealing with the complex issues which are coming out there. There was even a time when people were saying, "Oh, for us the economic crisis which is facing the rest of the world is not going to affect us." Now, how can you say such a thing? Everybody is running around like crazy, and you say for us we are OK? [Laughter.] So I'd like to thank you very much.*

SCHALKWYK: Thank you very much for your time.

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *I hope I've added some value to what you're...*

SCHALKWYK: You did.

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *Yes.*

SCHALKWYK: Thank you.

KIYAGA-NSUBAGA: *You're welcome.*