

BOOK CHAPTER

Chapter 3: Community Development in Uganda:

A Historical Inquiry in the Practice of Meeting Community Needs 🛒

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Community development in Uganda is rooted in both historical collective indigenous ideals as well the transformational endeavors of the post-independence governments. In the past two decades, community development has gained heightened attention as the country seeks to transform its society from a peasant low-income state to a middle-income society. This is evidenced by social-economic transformation being the theme of the past and present national development plans in this period. This chapter, therefore, discusses community development in Uganda as a historical practice of meeting community needs. It explores the historical roots and contemporary influences on community development in Uganda. It then outlines the challenges and opportunities of community development in the country. Using the human needs thinking as its theoretical framework, the chapter is constructed using a qualitative approach to guide systematic literature review, the analysis of secondary data and the resultant comparative thematic analysis. Recommendations that challenge the temporariness, politicization and foreignness of community development practice are offered. These include, among others, technical professionals leading the design of sustainable policies, building shared interests that incorporate technical and political considerations, the integration into policies of local development experiences, and building internal development funding through domestic mobilization of resources and inputs. It then draws conclusions suggesting that Uganda's community development could yield more if linked with bottom-up processes, informed by local community experiences/voices, and integrated with agrarian livelihood practices in which a majority of both rural and urban communities derive wellbeing.

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