Chapter 3
How to Understand Decentralisation in Africa
3-1 Introduction

In Chapter 2, we studied the current state of local administration in each of the three countries as well as their decentralisation reforms, based on which it was intended to identify and analyse the major issues that affect the outcomes of the reforms and derive some important lessons that could be learned. We could appreciate, at first glance, that: Uganda has vigorously promoted innovative reforms under the strong leadership of the president himself; Tanzania has also been struggling with ambitious reforms advocating D by D 67; while Kenya is in its preparatory stage where national discussions have been going on including the arguments on the constitutional amendment, but for the moment, still with a strong tinge of a centralised structure remaining. However, when we look into the details of each case from the perspective of the improvement of service delivery, the picture is not all that simple. Furthermore, the factors that influence the success of the reforms are extremely diverse and intricately intertwined with each other.

On the other hand, decentralisation is not always bringing about positive results. It may confuse the concerned parties and the system itself sometimes, only to make the service delivery stagnant. Furthermore, the development partners are facing the need to adapt and redefine their strategies to deal with this drastic change in the overall government system, even in the cases of conventional cooperation to each sector.

How should we understand the decentralisation reforms and their consequences that are emerging in many African countries in such a rapid and drastic manner? This question has become a major issue for JICA as well.

In this chapter, we start our analyses posing the following question; “Will decentralisation really lead to improvements in service delivery to the people?” Thereafter we attempt to extract and analyse major factors related to this question from amongst the phenomena that are occurring in the decentralisation reforms of the three target countries (Section 3-2).

In section 3-3, we will further analyse the factors identified in section 3-2 to reorganise them so as to be used as checklists when looking at the conditions in other countries. We will also attempt to

67 For further details, see Box 3-1.
develop a “Systemic Analysis Framework” with a view to this serving as a guideline when examining support for decentralisation in each country: that is, a guideline to clarify the points that need to be kept in mind when analysing the current situation as to what are the problems and what are the most effective forms of support.

3-2 Decentralisation Reforms in Africa — Evaluation and lessons learned from the perspective of improving service delivery to the people (outcome)

< Analytical framework in this section >

Based on the three countries’ experiences examined in Chapter 2, we will pursue the analysis of the following questions from the perspective of the “Outcomes” of Decentralisation:

- As a result of decentralisation reforms, can we confirm that the concerned service delivery has been improved?
- What is necessary to ensure the expected improvement in case the above is not happening?

In order to examine the above, we will verify the following four questions.

As a result of promoting decentralisation reforms, did the service delivery really become:

- more effective now? (effectiveness)
- more efficient now? (efficiency)
- more accountable to local residents and more transparent? (accountability)
- equitable enough, (not worsened instead)? (equity)

The above-mentioned four factors (effectiveness, efficiency, accountability and equity) are those comprising the analytical framework that was defined in Chapter 1. Here, in this chapter, we will extract the phenomena that are considered to have impacted upon each of these four questions. Then, we will identify both the facilitating as well as the impeding factors for the generation of respective outcomes in terms of the four questions, and eventually extract the lessons learned.

Figure 3-1 visualises the analysis in this section.
Before arguing “how to decentralise”: Decentralisation itself is not an objective but a means to achieve something

The purpose of section 3-2 is to analyse whether decentralisation leads to the improvement of service delivery. However, before entering this analysis, it is important to reconfirm that decentralisation is only a means and not an objective. Decentralisation is not always a proper measure of the economic and social development of a state, or for the reduction of poverty. Here we touch upon some of the principal points that should be kept in mind as preconditions for analysing decentralisation in any country.

(1) The adequate level and mode of decentralisation differs from service to service

Looking at the decentralisation reforms of Tanzania and Uganda, D by D is emphasised so much that it appears as if all services should be decentralised. Some also argue that the role of the central ministries should be limited to regulation, supervision and support. But looking at the realities more closely, we can see that, as alluded to in section 2-5-9, Uganda and Tanzania are far from merely promoting only D by D. Thus, it would not be appropriate to criticise them just for not obeying D by D.

It is not appropriate to consider that everything should be decentralised. There are definitely certain types of services for which centralised systems have merits. This can be understood well looking at a classic example of infectious disease control in the health sector services. In order to prevent the spread of infectious diseases, there needs to be wide-area strategic measures and a solid vertical chain of command to attack them. Decentralising these kinds of duties to local governments at their respective discretion is not an appropriate choice. On the other hand, in terms of preventive and primary health care, it is more important to ensure a thorough response tailored to the needs of local residents and services that reflect intrinsic local conditions, thus decentralised systems have clear advantages.
As shown in the above examples, it is essential to first analyse and appropriately define what kind of delivery system best suits their purposes according to the nature of each service, and to which level of government to allocate the responsibility for the provision of that service. This kind of examination needs to be carried out for each service.

Moreover, the most appropriate system will also vary from country to country in accordance with its conditions, timing, level of development, etc. This is one of the fundamental points that ought to be carefully discussed as a prerequisite when considering decentralisation and local administrations.

(2) It is important to always view the decentralisation Reforms with a vision of the Country’s CG-LG System as a whole

It is also important to realise that even in the decentralised services, there are cases where effective and efficient service delivery is not possible without involving the CG.

Even in the promotion of D by D, it would be over-optimistic to expect that individual LGs will suddenly be able to provide adequate services independently. As a matter of fact, both in Uganda and Tanzania, the importance of technical backstopping from the CG and/or its local branch offices is drawing attention again these days, and various actions are being taken to this end (2-5-6).

On the other hand, looking at the contents of services in each sector and their implementation mechanisms, we can also witness some instances where it is better to operate with close cooperation between the CG and LGs to take full advantage of the both capacities towards one end. (For example, health workers employed by LGs for primary health care services for the communities could assume an additional duty to help in the CG’s function of infectious disease control and vaccination operations at the community level, in view of the limited human as well as financial resources that the country counts on.) Indeed, coordination and collaboration between the CG and LGs should be considered as one of the important means for the efficient and effective provision of services.

Furthermore, in most African countries, the resources available in the country for development and the welfare of the people are severely limited. Decentralisation must not result in any further fragmentation of these already limited resources 68. Decentralisation Reforms should never be meant to create an “antagonistic relationship between the CG and LGs” by being seen as measures to deprive the central ministries of their power to be given to LGs. To the contrary, decentralisation reforms should be

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68 We should take note the fact that in the advanced Western nations, decentralisation had been laid on the table for discussion only after a centralised regime had been well established and a solid national governance system had already been built together with sufficient economic development. In contrast, the developing countries of today, particularly African countries, are trying to introduce decentralisation reforms without going through such a strong nation-building process beforehand. There is strong concern about this. The biggest question here is whether it is possible at all to ensure the full mobilisation of limited resources for the development of the country even under a decentralised structure despite the above-cited background.
something that build systems with an optimum balance and mode of collaboration/work-sharing between the CG and LGs, with a view to enabling the entire government system to provide the most effective and efficient services to the population. The principle of producing the maximum synergies through the optimal division of functions and responsibilities between the CG and LGs, as well as their collaborative relationships is fundamental. We should avoid, by all means, creating circumstances where the central ministries put up resistance and make it difficult to build collaborative relationships, like the situation that has been pointed out in Tanzania in the review of their reform programme (United Republic of Tanzania, 2004, p. 6).

(3) Institutional reforms vs. capacity development of LGs

One of the fears that occur when we look at the decentralisation reforms in African countries is the question of whether too much emphasis is being put on institutional reforms in a too drastic manner for the LGs’ absorptive capacities to catch up with them. Devolution (D by D) that has been pursued by Uganda and Tanzania as the guiding principle of their reforms, is the purest form of decentralisation (see Box 3-1). However, compared to the other two forms, the devolution requires LGs to have much higher capacities to perform large independent functions and responsibility assigned to them. Unless these LGs possess the necessary capacities to fulfil all the responsibilities and authority devolved to them, they can never achieve improved effectiveness, efficiency or accountability for their administrative services, but instead, there is a danger of drastically worsening them. It is therefore important to carefully review the previous experiences and the capacity accumulated in each entity of local administration first, based on which the following questions should be examined; (a) to which entities and to what extent should the responsibilities and authority of each service delivery be given; (b) whether it is necessary to establish certain support systems in order for (a) to function, as well as their feasibility; and consequently based on all of the above analysis, (c) the most reasonable transition process of institutional reforms while developing an adequate capacity among LGs.

In this sense, though it might be true that the ultimate goal of decentralisation reforms is devolution, we have to be aware that a lengthy process is needed to reach it. During the transitional phase of reforms therefore, it could also be prudent in some circumstances to consider strategic processes including options of applying “delegation” or “deconcentration” types of decentralisation as provisional measures. For example, in the case of Kenya, one possibility of the process could be as described in Box 3-4. The curious experience of Japan’s “Agency Delegated Functions”, an example of “delegation”, could be one of the useful examples to share with the African countries, in view of the fact that this delegation system functioned quite positively for the capacity development of LGs that were very weak at the initial stages.69

69 For information on Japan’s unique CG-LG relationship and its effect on the capacity development of LGs, see Muramatsu et al. (eds.) (2001), Muramatsu (1994), Muramatsu (1988) and Muramatsu (ed.) (2006). For an analysis of the characteristics of Japan’s civil service system, including CG-LG personnel exchanges, see Inatsugu (2000) and Inatsugu (1996).
Box 3-1 Three types of Decentralisation: Devolution, Delegation, Deconcentration

Recently, we frequently hear the term “D by D” in the decentralisation reforms of various African countries. D by D is an abbreviation for “Decentralisation by Devolution”.

The other classifications in looking at the type of decentralisation in each country, are “deconcentration” and “delegation”. An overview of each is provided below.

a) **Deconcentration**: is a dispersal of authority. Deconcentration refers to a way of decentralisation arrangements to give a certain level of discretionary power to the local branch offices within organisations of the central government. An example of deconcentration is the relationship between CG ministries and their local branch offices at the district level in Kenya where some authority is being given given from the former to the latter.

b) **Delegation**: is an entrustment of duties to other entities. Delegation refers to the act of entrusting duties that are supposed to be performed by the CG to external institutions, while keeping the eventual responsibility and authority with the CG. (In the context of decentralisation, this entrustment is most often to LGs.) The “agency delegated functions” that were practiced in Japan prior to the Year 2000 Decentralisation Reforms can be classified in this category. Under the “Agency Delegated Functions,” most of the daily operations of the relevant services were undertaken by LGs, but the final discretionary power was kept by the central ministries. They were criticised as CG control over the LGs, hence were finally abolished during the Year 2000 Decentralisation Reforms. However on the other hand, it was a undeniable reality that in this system the LGs in Japan were highly active in the country’s service delivery compared to other countries (ratio of CG:LG expenditure = 35:65). Furthermore, because of this system, the LGs could develop their capacities, through OJT over several decades, so as to eventually be able to provide appropriate service delivery, thanks to the know-how transfer from the CG without resistance from the central ministries. It should be appreciated that this process of know-how transfer and capacity development of the LGs led to the eventual D by D that occurred in 2000 in Japan.

c) **Devolution**: is a transfer of authority. Devolution refers to cases where the responsibilities as well as the authority and discretionary powers for administration are transferred to LGs. Unlike deconcentration where the responsibilities and authority are transferred only within the CG, devolution is where responsibilities for specific administrative service delivery are transferred to LGs with councils that represent the local people, together with the discretionary powers, human resources management and fiscal authority for operations related to these services.

As mentioned earlier, devolution is regarded as the purest of the three forms of decentralisation. When D by D is mentioned in Uganda and Tanzania, what they are aiming at is this, at least theoretically.

However, devolution is not necessarily the optimum form of decentralisation in all cases and for all kinds of administrative services at any stage of development. If we take another look from the perspective of the effectiveness, efficiency, accountability and equity of service delivery, there could be cases where other systems result in better delivery (at least for the moment) depending on the conditions of that country. Devolution requires a much higher level of absorptive capacity of the LGs compared to the other two forms. In circumstances where the capacity has not been properly developed on the side of LGs, rather disorder can be brought about by imposing D by D. Furthermore, this kind of classification normally indicates only a general direction of the reforms. In actually, if we take a closer look, we can confirm that devolution has not necessarily been applied in all the services even in countries that promote D by D, including in institutional aspects such as human resources and finance. This should not necessarily be criticised. For more information on the analysis of devolution, delegation and deconcentration, see 3-3-1 (1) and Attachment “Systemic Analysis Framework,” 1 (1) 2.

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70 For more information on the three types of decentralisation, see Litvack et al. (1998), Litvack et al. (eds.) (1999) and Yuliani (2004), etc.
Box 3-2  “Separated model” versus “intertwined model” 71

The “separated model” is a system where there is little overlap in the areas of jurisdiction between the CG and LGs. In contrast, the “intertwined model” is a system where both the CG and the LGs frequently have jurisdiction over the same issues and administrative services. Typical examples of the “separated model” are the British and U.S. systems, and examples of the “intertwined model” are the French and German systems. Japan is classified as an “intertwined model”.

This analytical framework is highly effective for examining the characteristics of decentralisation of each country, in addition to the criteria for centralisation/ decentralisation (centralisation-deconcentration-delegation-devolution).

A merit of the “separated model” is its clearness in demarcation of the responsibility for each particular duty. For this reason, a separated system has a clear merit from the perspective of accountability. Conversely, in this system, cooperation, collaboration and coordination between the CG and LGs are not easy.

On the other hand, in an “intertwined model”, the CG and LGs collaborate to provide the same services, and links between the two are maintained in a variety of ways, including collaboration, coordination, support and supervision. There is potential for various advantages compared to the “separated model,” including: that the maximum mobilisation of available resources in the country to derive synergies is relatively easy; and that it is easier to coordinate and harmonise local autonomy with national strategies. Another considerable merit is the fact that it allows LGs to develop their capacity based on OJT through direct and indirect instruction, supervision and collaboration from CG by working together practically. On the contrary, a possible drawback is that, compared with the “separated model,” the demarcation of CG-LG responsibilities tends to be vague (see Attachment “Systemic Analysis Framework,” 1 (1) 2).

(4)  Endogenous development and the importance of national debate

Observing the recent decentralisation reforms in African countries, it is worrying that they lack real nationwide discussions and that the reforms have been promoted without this indispensable process for endogenous development. Because of their harsh economic conditions, African countries are largely dependent on assistance from the international community. Amid these circumstances, structural adjustment programmes were uniformly promoted in many developing countries in the 1980s irrespective of the particularities of each country, as was the governance reform support including decentralisation during the 1990s. However, to what extent were these reforms decided endogenously based on the real needs of the people and their will? 72 Furthermore, is it OK to promote these kinds of


72 Japan has an experience of adopting external models for the nation building when it started its development as a tiny backward country outside the western civilisation 140 years ago. At that time, while eagerly studying external models and trying to apply them in our own society, we gradually realised that it does not function in our country by simply copying the models of the others, and eventually reached the establishment of a so-called “half-Japanese half-Western model” (“Wayo-Secchu”). It was a long and winding process of seeking a style that best suited its own country's context, picking and choosing those aspects that were relevant and modifying them. These experiences of learning from external models are something that could be shared with developing countries and that Western countries do not have. The development of the LG system is among them. Based on these experiences, Japan has been focusing its cooperation on “awareness building” type of support, with the intention of facilitating the process of the recipient country’s “self-help efforts” (endogenous development process) through offering relevant information including Japan's own experiences and the lessons learned. It was to play the role of “catalyst,” rather than imposing some external models (See Box 3-3). For more information on Japan’s experiences in selecting external models and creating Japanese models, see Ishikawa (1995) and Muramatsu (1994), etc.
reforms based on the assumption that “there is a universal model applicable to any country and they should drive themselves along the track designed for them to follow as fast as possible without deviation”? We pose a question as to whether it is not more important to pursue their own way forward through discussions among themselves and repeated “trial and error,” which is an endogenous development process (experience-based learning process), even though it appears slow and imperfect. As was touched on in section 2-5-2, one of the possible causes for the success of the Ugandan reforms compared to other countries was the existence of this endogenous will.

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<th><strong>Box 3-3 Example of “awareness building” type of support: Country-focused training programme: “Support for the Local Government Reform Programme in Tanzania”</strong></th>
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| The country-focused training programme “Support for the Local Government Reform Programme in Tanzania” was conducted from fiscal year 2002 to 2006 at JICA Osaka with cooperation of the Graduate School of Law and Politics of Osaka University. Under this programme, leaders from LGs as well as other key persons involved in decentralisation reforms in Tanzania were invited from all 21 regions over a period of five years. Through this programme, JICA tried to pose all the questions described in 3-2-1 (4) above to the Tanzanian participants, sharing Japan’s experiences in decentralisation reforms and nation building together with the lessons learned there, with a view to providing them with an “opportunity for awareness-building”. During the training programme, the following issues were raised with the Tanzanian participants:

1. Rather than indiscriminately accepting a model presented from outside as if it is the only model, perhaps they had better collect more examples from various different country’s experiences so that they can relativize them and then consider the best way forward on their own. This endogenous development process through active discussions to decide the future of their own country is of vital importance.

2. Too hasty decentralisation (institutional reforms) without the LGs’ absorptive capacities being sufficiently developed may lead to a disastrous stagnation of indispensable basic service delivery.

3. Thus, although the model of decentralisation itself might be correct, the process of applying such a model is also important. It requires careful consideration of the appropriate strategic process to reach the goal, taking into account the specific conditions of the country.

4. In this context, as a reference, it could be useful to study the experience of Japan in its efforts towards nation building by creating a “half-Japanese half-Western model” after a long process of “trial and error” during the Meiji era.

5. Japan followed a rather slow process in its decentralisation reforms ensuring the capacity development of the LGs before drastic devolution so that the LGs could assume the devolved duties well when they arose, or at least follow a parallel process between the two, always ensuring that the devolved services are delivered well without stagnation. And the system that Japan adopted to secure the above-mentioned process was a more intertwined relationship between the CG and LGs, thanks to which the transfer of know-how from CG to LGs was naturally realised through OJT by routine collaboration between the two. It served as a built-in mechanism for technical backstopping at the same time. This experience could be useful in the sense that it offers a different model of decentralisation process in addition to the one offered by Western donors.

Based on the above, the following topics were presented during the training, through a combination of lectures and observation trips to the LGs and the local societies.
(1) Process towards the eventual creation of a “half-Japanese half-Western model” during the Meiji era concerning local administrative system

(2) Post-war LG system and post-war reconstruction/economic development

(3) Process for the slow-but-steady LG absorptive capacity development oriented type of decentralisation, including “Agency Delegated Functions”

(4) Role played by the personnel exchange system between the CG and LGs for the OJT of LG personnel

(5) Personnel management system to maximise mobilisation of the limited human resources

(6) “Local Allocation Tax” (Japanese unique unconditional grant system) and ensuring national minimum standards

(7) Local economic development in Japan and the roles played by the LGs in it

(8) Case study of local agricultural development through collaboration among the CG, LGs, Agricultural Cooperatives (JA) and farmers

This was a tailor-made programme designed especially for Tanzania, with cooperation from Japanese researchers on Tanzania, and was made as interactive as possible with facilitation by a JICA Senior Advisor throughout the Programme, which made it truly Tanzania-oriented. Towards the end of the training, each of the participants summarised the lessons learned in Japan and made action plans considering how they could apply them to the reform in Tanzania. Furthermore, on their return to Tanzania, the participants held local seminars in their respective regions to share the experiences with their colleagues. In this way, the number of direct and indirect beneficiaries of the training reached up to 1,500.

Furthermore, an association of the ex-participants of this programme was established on their own initiative. It is serving as their groundwork to get together to follow up on their action plans, and share the experience of each member as well as their good practices. It is anticipated that the association will function as an entity for disseminating information and voices from LGs nationwide in Tanzania. The members are made up of leaders and prominent scholars on Decentralisation, including the chief executive officers from LGs and Regional Secretariats, as well as the executive members of the PMO-RALG; therefore the association has a strong influence and could play a highly significant role in the reforms of the country.

In addition to the above, it is also noteworthy that the outcomes of the training are also being fully utilised in the formulation of JICA's future cooperation programme for decentralisation reforms in Tanzania.

The role played by JICA Tanzania Office as well as the JICA expert assigned in PMO-RALG was extremely significant in all the above-mentioned processes of development after the Osaka Training. It is believed that this form of development of support programmes – designing the future cooperation programme through mutual consultations with the recipient country, by way of “awareness building” type training in Japan and the subsequent follow-up by the JICA Country Office – is highly effective and relevant, taking full advantage of the merits of the Japanese style cooperation which pays maximum attention to the self-help efforts and the endogenous development processes of the partner country. We also believe that this style of cooperation should be an effective way of supporting reforms in developing counties.
3-2-2 From the perspective of effectiveness

It is said that decentralisation makes service delivery more effective, since it allows the administration to reflect local needs and particular conditions of each area of its services more accurately. Is this really true?

Are services being effectively delivered under the current administrative system? Will the delivery of sector services become more effective by promoting decentralisation reforms? What should be done so that the local needs and particularity of the area can be best reflected in administrative services? What are the impeding factors, and what are the important matters to be kept in mind?

The main aim of this section is to pick out issues and phenomena related to the above questions from the experience of the three countries, and to verify their significance.

(1) Funds and services that have come to reach local areas in one way or another, thanks to the decentralisation reforms

What is frequently given as a political and administrative problem for African countries is the problem of centralised politics exhibiting a strong tendency toward neo-patrimonialism and administrations that have become corrupt. This led to the problem of the benefits of administrative services and development activities not reaching most of the residents in local areas, except for certain privileged regions or individuals. Against this background, it is noteworthy to be able to observe cases where certain funds are coming to reach the local areas thanks to the decentralisation reforms by means of development grants or various other grant systems. Furthermore, as was touched on in sections 2-5-3 and 2-5-4, by introducing a formula-based grant system and by combining it with a system for participatory local development planning, regional allocation of funds became clearly fairer and more equitable than before. It would be fair to recognise this as one of the advantages of decentralisation reforms in Africa.

(2) Bottom-up participatory local planning: Its ideal versus reality

In addition to the above, another aspect that has been commonly emphasised and prioritised in most of the recent decentralisation reforms in African countries, is the policy of formulating local development plans in a bottom-up and participatory manner. The concept is to take maximum advantage of the funds that are now reaching the local areas as seen above, to lead to really effective service delivery by ensuring people’s real needs and voices being reflected on their contents. For the citizens of most African countries who had never benefited from their government in the past, this concept is revolutionary.

Thus, theoretically speaking, the concept of the participatory local development planning is
something that guarantees an effective administration and an ideal form of local autonomy. However in reality, there are a number of hurdles which must be overcome in order to truly achieve this aim. There exist various fundamental and difficult challenges. For example, how should cross-sector and across-the-board participatory community development plans that emerge from the villages be integrated with sector plans that are vertically formulated for each sector at the district level? To what extent and how should bottom-up local plans and top-down plans be combined? How should consistency be maintained between local characteristics and national strategies?

Furthermore, the presence of too many kinds of grant systems makes actual planning and budgeting at local level more difficult. Complicated procedures hamper the efficiency. Unconditional grants hinder flexible allocation of the available funds, which may not allow the planning officers allocate funds required for realisation of the projects and services prioritised in the bottom-up plans. If we want the participatory planning mechanisms to function as expected, it is indispensable to rationalise the grant systems and to make them unconditional as much as possible (As seen in 2-5-4).

On the other hand, as was also seen in section 2-5-3, careful checks need to be made to see the “participatory planning” whether it is really designed and realised in a way to guarantee the needs of local residents be truly reflected. There are still many aspects that must be improved in this regard, for example, the capacity of facilitators, the way workshops are conducted, the selection of participants, and how to guarantee sustainability of the planning exercise in a periodical manner. There are some cases - Kenya’s CDF, for instance - where problems can be indicated regarding the transparency of the actual selection of members to take part in the planning process as representatives of the residents. Observing all the above-mentioned challenges, there still remain quite a lot of needs for further research, application and verification as to how to proceed with participatory local social development.

Finally, with regard to the question of integration of respective sector plans into this participatory local development planning process, careful examination is needed as well. There is a problem of resistance from each sector against it, as touched on in section 2-5-3. On the other hand, there is more fundamental question as to whether it is really feasible and effective to do so in the first place. Sectors cannot make their plans on the basis of the “wishes of the public” alone, but technical analyses as well as strategic perspectives of each sector is indispensable even for the local service delivery.

There is also a problem of the inconsistency of the development projects planned and implemented in a participatory manner, with the recurrent budgets. For example, there were cases observed where schools or dispensaries were built but no arrangements have been made for the assignment of teachers or medical staff to work there nor recurrent funds for actual operations. Consideration must also be given to the consistency with national sector policies. Rather than consecrating “participatory local development” to an extreme degree, there needs to be objective
analyses and discussions to see what is the most adequate form in the present context of the country towards the aim of “maximising the effectiveness of administrative services”.

(3) Optimal level and setting of service delivery points to guarantee effective administrative services and the optimum size of LGs

Looking at the objective of effective administrative services, there are two different factors in the meaning of “local administrative units”. One is the role as the provider of administrative services (implementer of policies), and the other is the role as the unit to organise local residents and integrate local demands (unit of local residents autonomy). From the perspective of the former, each unit must be large enough to possess the functions and capacity required to provide the services. In contrast, from the perspective of the latter, each unit needs to be as close to the residents as possible and small enough to enable local autonomy.

It is important to keep this question in mind when looking at the cases of African countries as well. It is important to check each level of local administration units to clarify which of the above two roles are they designed to cover, or whether they cover both. In addition, it is also necessary to verify whether service delivery points have been set at optimum levels so that the current structure can guarantee the effective provision of services.

This point is very much related to the “efficiency” of administrative services as well, thus will be examined further at 3-2-3 (3) bellow.

(4) Technical backstopping and the intertwined system between the CG and the LGs

Although the promotion of decentralisation reforms can be regarded as a positive move in many senses, if authority is devolved too suddenly and drastically, there is a risk that the LGs will not have developed enough capacity to fulfil the substantial responsibilities and authority devolved to them.

73 Incidentally, in the case of the formulation of the comprehensive development plan in municipalities in Japan, a number of activities are conducted as a means of ensuring community participation and the reflection of local residents’ views and needs, including public questionnaires, public hearings, and discussions with community development committees at the community and neighbourhood association levels. However, eventually it is each technical department of the municipal government coordinated by the general affairs and planning department, to formulate the municipal development plan. Looking at the cases of Iida City in Nagano Prefecture and Kora Town in Shiga Prefecture that are two examples famous for their well functioning participatory development in collaboration with local communities, they have established “regular meetings” and/or “community development committees” that are self-organising community organ based on the traditional communities (natural villages). Then, in addition to the above-mentioned comprehensive municipal development plan, each community separately formulate a development plan that incorporates the priority projects of them, and they promote the resident-led implementation of these plans.

74 It is important to note here that we are referring to “local administrative units” and not “local governments”. The units that implement services do not necessarily have to be LGs. Wards in Tanzania and Divisions in Kenya do not have a council function, but they can still be described as important administrative units. Furthermore, in the case of Kenya, the unit that is mostly responsible for local administrative services is “District administration” which is not LG, but is in fact the local branch offices of different central government ministries at the District level. The analysis here also includes these levels.

75 Attachment “Systemic Analysis Framework”, I (1) explains how different the structure of local administration in African countries (Regions, Districts, Wards, Villages and other levels) from the image based on Japan’s administrative structure in terms of population, land area, staff numbers and other elements.
Under such circumstances, decentralisation can, instead, lead to reductions in the effectiveness and efficiency of administrative services. Considering the above, it is extremely important to carefully ensure a system of technical backstopping from the CG to provide support for the successful implementation of the reform (See 3-2-1 (2), (3)).

(5) Other issues

< Staff who are still not able to reach out to the communities even after decentralisation >

From the perspective of the objective to provide effective administrative services, decentralisation is supposed to make the government staff closer to the residents, thus they should be able to reach out to the community much more frequently than before. However, as explained in section 3-2-3, in reality, there are serious constraints on LG staff in visiting communities: there are very few staff; the scope of the work to be covered by the staff is very wide; the budget is extremely limited; access to the communities including roads and transportation is poor, etc. In this sense, the situation can not be expected to differ so much whether the administrative system is decentralised or centralised as far as the above-mentioned conditions remains as it is.

On the other hand, it is noteworthy that amid all these harsh conditions, complementary attempts through collaboration with the community’s self-help actions have been witnessed, such as cooperation with SC and other user groups, as well as collaborative structures with community health workers and other resident volunteers. From this perspective, it could be very significant to pay attention to the potential role that the lower unit of local administration (including lower LGs) can play. The LC1s (Villages) in Uganda, Kitongoji in Tanzania, and the Division, Location and Sub-Location levels in Kenya (with populations of several hundreds) can be examples of these cases.

< Balance of centralisation and decentralisation against all the harsh realities at present >

As seen in section 2-5-5, in both Tanzania and Uganda, a “recentralisation” type of move is occurring in which appointment of the top bureaucrats of LG is reverting back to the CG after several years of the start of the decentralisation reforms. As alluded to in Attachment “Systemic Analysis Framework” 1 (3) 2, , there are unavoidable circumstances indeed due to practical personnel-related difficulties such as the need to secure personnel in remote rural areas and the need to guarantee career incentives for capable professionals. However, from the perspective of the effectiveness of service delivery and its accountability to local societies, it could also be argued that the practice of top LG executives being appointed by the CG runs counter to one of the most fundamental principle of local autonomy. The question of where to find solutions between the two above-mentioned requirements is a difficult challenge.

A similar phenomenon in public finance is the abolition of local taxes, which was also referred to in section 2-5-4. The abolition of unreasonable taxes (nuisance taxes) itself was an inevitable measure.
However, in such cases, a countermeasure to cover the gap created by this abolition must be taken, so as to enable LGs to maintain their important activities. In reality, this countermeasure will be based mainly on fiscal transfers from the CG, but in this case, they should be in the form of unconditional grants in order to guarantee fiscal discretion to the LGs. On the other hand, we should be aware that it is indispensable for the LGs to remain with a minimum amount of their own sources of revenue from the perspective of the principle of autonomy. This is because LGs need at least funds to convene council meetings, pay the membership fees and share of expenditures for the LG Associations, etc. that must be paid from their own sources of revenue. Discussion should be made to secure the above as minimum conditions for local autonomy.

3-2-3 From the perspective of efficiency

Are services being able to be efficiently delivered under the current administrative system? Will the delivery of sector services become more efficient by promoting decentralisation reforms?

(1) Improved operational efficiencies resulting from the acquisition of discretionary power

Decentralisation reforms brought about the transfer of discretionary powers to local administrations in relation to budget implementation, procurement and other operations which used to be under CG control. This has clearly contributed to improved operational efficiencies. The procurement of medical supplies is a good example. Whereas local administrations used to be able only to wait for supplies to be centrally determined, procured and sent in the past, now that discretionary powers have been decentralised to the local level, the necessary medical supplies can be procured whenever necessary without delay.

However, if we look at this through the devolution-delegation-deconcentration analytical framework, we realise that it does not necessarily have to be the purer form of devolution to achieve efficiency of administrative services. But even with the Kenyan form of deconcentration, this efficiency could be achieved if discretionary powers are properly given to the local administrations.

(2) The basic problem: an absolute insufficiency of personnel, and poor support systems

Instead, the biggest and the most fundamental problem in terms of the efficiency of service delivery, is the categorically insufficient number of personnel assigned to the local administrations. Moreover, as seen in section 3-2-2 (5), the logistic support systems needed for the staff to work steadily and closely with the community (means of transport, equipment and materials, budgets, etc.) are also categorically scarce. Without some kind of solution to this, improvements to services cannot be

76 However, as seen in section 2-5-5, the extent of this varies from country to country. In Kenya, they have about twice as many personnel as Tanzania and Uganda, although they have problems in the quality of these LG employees. In any case, the problem of personnel assigned to the local administrations in African countries, either in number or in quality, is a serious one.
expected regardless of whether the system is decentralised or centralised. Decentralisation by itself will not serve as a fundamental solution in this regard.

However, we cannot expect that the above staffing problem will be resolved overnight. Under these circumstances, we must think about how to maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery in the given conditions with this limited complement of personnel.

As mentioned above, the capacity of administrations to provide services is extremely limited at present, and so it would be difficult for them to achieve objectives only using conventional approaches by themselves. What must be considered therefore is how to put together all the existing capacities of the local society as a whole to move toward achieving the objectives together. In other words, build a total system that works best in a particular local society, by identifying the available actors which exist in that region, including community members themselves, their organisations, NGOs, FBOs as well as private sector entities, and then fully mobilising these resources (See 3-3-3). This is difficult to achieve by remote control from the CG with their standard policy nationwide. A system needs to be built based on the particular circumstances of each local society to take full advantage of them. This is where the decentralised system has a great advantage, which forms one of the key elements of the justification of decentralisation reforms for better service delivery.

(3) Optimal level and setting of service delivery points and the size of local governments: the effectiveness of multilayered structures

It is essential to define appropriate levels of administrative units and service delivery points for many different reasons including for the above-mentioned objective. For the sake of coordinating and collaborating with the local community and for identifying local needs, it is important to establish service delivery points as close as possible to the residents, in most cases to be based on the level of natural villages. Conversely, from the viewpoint of capacity for service delivery, an administrative unit of a certain size is required, and from the viewpoint of fiscal capacity, even larger size is needed. This point was also mentioned in section 3-2-2 (3). The best outcome would be to find an appropriate level that satisfies all three aspects; but in reality, it is difficult to do this. One should be fully aware that there are the above-cited three aspects, and it might be necessary in many cases to prepare a multilayered structure to respond to each of the three respective aspects.

In this context, it is not only the higher level LGs (Districts) that is important, but the structure of the lower levels is as important as the higher LGs. Uganda’s LG multilayer structure is one of the good examples in this regard, and it could be a reference for other countries. Uganda’s local administrative units are divided into five levels from LC1 (Villages) to LC5 (Districts). The highest of these levels,

77 Support for the development of such mechanisms could also be an effective means of our cooperation.
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namely Districts (LC5), have about the same population as the other two countries (approximately 300,000), and in terms of land area, they are about one third the size of a Japanese prefecture (they are slightly smaller than the Districts in Tanzania and Kenya). While it seems that about this size is needed in terms of fiscal capacity and personnel management, from the perspective of providing more responsive service delivery, a smaller scale would be appropriate. In this respect, Uganda also has a lower level local government, Sub-Counties (LC3), and the existence of this level keeps local autonomy and administrative services effective. LC3s are headed by a university graduate Sub-County Chief, and the technical staff for the respective sectors are assigned to them (2-2-7 (1)). Then, for the purpose of identifying local needs, Villages (LC1) are positioned as the smallest unit of local community autonomy. LC1s are established at sufficiently small population levels of about 500.

When considering the circumstances of local autonomy in various African countries, this multilayered Ugandan type structure could be a highly effective system. In fact, since all countries have similar layers traditionally, if they decide to take advantage of these structures, it is very possible.

Box 3-4 How to design decentralisation reforms in a centralised structure — the case of Kenya

Examining the possible ways to design future decentralisation strategy for Kenya could serve as a good basis for considering what points should be kept in mind when designing decentralisation reforms from scratch in a country that still has a centralised system.

Looking at the actual state of local administration in Kenya, LGs (Cities, Municipalities, Towns and Counties) are practically not given any important authority nor do they possess the absorptive capacity to assume large responsibilities, except for a few big cities like Nairobi.

On the other hand, the local branch offices of different sector ministries exist at the district level. Moreover, at the district level, there exists certain mechanisms and experience in the local development planning process with the presence of the DDC, which used to function well during the 1980s. In light of these past experiences and of the actual state of the organisation as well as personnel, districts are considered to be more suitable to be higher level units of local government rather than the current LGs.

Below this level there is a unit called a Division. Each Division has a Division Officer, and the frontline of each sector ministry also function at this level. Moreover, the sector administration at the division level is closer to local residents and is better at identifying community needs. It also has a characteristic of achieving better cross-sector collaboration and coordination than the higher level administration units. Furthermore, below each division, there are units called Locations and Sub-Locations, which correspond to natural villages. Traditional community activities can be seen at this level, including community assemblies called Baraza and cooperation among residents called Harambee. It is preferable that local administration systems be built based on such existing local social and administrative structures.

In the short term, the reform could be designed with “deconcentration” to the district level as most realistic way. However, it is fortunate that in many cases districts tend to coincide geographically with counties which are the current local government units. It is conceivable that the administration of districts could be made accountable to the county council. Then eventually, it could be the design of Kenya’s future LG system in which Districts become a unit of local autonomy through “devolution”.
And if they can assign the right personnel and right roles to the right level of local administration, there could be a significant improvement in the functions of overall local administration.

It is also important to establish a system of support from the CG to the higher levels of LG, as well as a system of collaboration and support from the higher level LGs to the lower level LGs and to the service delivery points (e.g. chains of command, technical backstopping systems, coordination and collaboration mechanisms). Each of the above mentioned layers has its own significance and roles. It is important to build a total system that connects and strengthens each of these layers in a multilayered fashion.\(^78\)

(4) Adverse effects of too many channels of grants

In section 3-2-2 (2), it was confirmed that the existence of too many kinds of grants is impeding the effectiveness of administrative services, but it also has adverse effects on the efficiency of services. LGs are required to set up and manage a separate account for each of the different grants, and they are obliged to report on them in line with the separate conditions required one by one. This situation is making the volume of operations required for each LG increase unnecessarily, while reducing the efficiency of administration. Both in Uganda and Tanzania, efforts are under way to rationalise these grants and make more grants unconditional.

(5) Introduction of performance-based incentive system into grant programmes

As was mentioned in section 2-5-3, systems in which grant allocations to respective LG are defined according to the performance of them, have been introduced to development grant programmes such as LGDP in Uganda (2-2-7 (2)) and LGCDG in Tanzania (2-3-3 (2), (3)). Furthermore, in Tanzania, by creating capacity building grants called LGCBG (2-3-3 (3)) with LGCDG, a measure has been devised to provide opportunities for poor performing LGs to train personnel and facilitate capacity development with a view to improving their performance. These systems have been recognised and are receiving attention as being a possibly effective measure to improve the operations of LGs (efficiency perspective).

Conversely, there is also some anxiety that it would be unfair to put small LGs in poor remote areas in competition with large and rich urban LGs. The performance of the former can never be the same as the latter at initial stage of decentralisation even though LGCBG provide a certain degree of guarantee for capacity development. Thus it is indispensable to consider how to avoid the potential for

\(^78\) Considering the importance of this point, there is an interesting possibility that we can discover new merits in one of the typical ways of Japan’s technical cooperation which is an area-based approach with pilot project implementation for community development. In this approach, a hypothesis is given and a development model is designed based on it, which is to be verified through pilot projects implemented in some communities. The intention is to demonstrate the effectiveness of the hypothesised model so that it could replicated in other regions by proposing political recommendations to the CG based on such pilot experience. For this scenario, it is important to have a multilayered approach to deal with each level of administration from the lowest to the CG level. This type of Japanese cooperation may lead to strengthening the community, the lowest local administration and/or LGs, higher level LGs, up to CG, as well as the interlinkage and coordination between each of them to eventually consolidate overall local administration system in a multilayered manner (See Chapter 4). There are also cases where this kind of support has been provided by NGOs in Uganda, and positive outcomes have been produced.
such arrangements to widen regional disparities (equity perspective).

(6) Challenges in technical/administrative aspects

< Development of financial management capacity >

There are some specific factors in technical/administrative aspects of LG operations, improvement of which can lead to a remarkable betterment in the efficiency and accountability of their performance. Strengthening of financial management capacity is one of them. MTEF, which have been widely introduced in developing countries promoting reforms, as well as the financial management system in Tanzania called EPICOR and their associated training courses, are examples that have produced tangible results.

< Grants not reaching governments in a timely manner >

On the other hand, a typical example of an impediment to the outcomes of the reforms due to a purely technical problem, is the delay in sending grants from CG to each LG. The following situation frequently occurs: Particularly during the first few months of a fiscal year, there are hardly any remittances, and so LGs can not conduct operations. Conversely, it is often the case that there is a surge in remittances towards the end of the fiscal year, and that LGs are compelled to work very hard to spend their budgets. And if they are unable to fully expend the remitted funds in the end, they have to repay them to the National Treasury. It is really a pity that the already limited financial resources are unreasonably underutilised in this way. A serious solution in this regard is desperately required.

3-2-4 From the perspective of accountability

Can the current administrative system ensure accountability of service delivery to the local residents? Is the current service delivery transparent? Will promotion of the decentralisation reforms facilitate them?

There are various parties to whom accountability is directed, including upward and downward. Here the main object of our analysis is accountability to the local residents. As the means to guarantee accountability to and transparency for the residents, we will verify: (1) direct accountability to the residents; (2) accountability to the councils; and (3) disclosure of information in a form that can be accessed by the residents.

(1) Merits of being close to the residents (from the viewpoints of devolution, delegation and deconcentration 79)

From the perspective of accountability, being close to the residents has its advantages.

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79 See Box 3-1 and Attachment “Systemic Analysis Framework”, 1 (1) 2.
Accordingly, devolution certainly makes it easier to guarantee (1) and (2) above compared to the other two forms of decentralisation. Even with delegation, since LGs are the ones that are entrusted with operations and act as the service provider, they are relatively visible to the residents. Under such circumstances, it is possible that (1) and (2) above can be improved even with delegated services, provided that a certain degree of checks by the local councils are guaranteed.

However, with both delegation and deconcentration, accountability for administrative services tends to be directed upwards by nature. In such cases, the issue becomes: Is there any way to make checks possible not only by the CG but by the local councils as well? Is it possible to establish some easily visible mechanisms for the local residents?

It is necessary to analyse whether there are certain ways to overcome the above-mentioned issues in a deconcentrated system such as in Kenya. Because, if devolution-type decentralisation reforms cannot be introduced in the short term, seeking these possibilities would be the only possibility to somehow ensure accountability as a second best.

(2) How can information be disclosed in an accessible form to the residents?

With regard to disclosure of information to the residents, various technical devices can be utilised to contribute to it with deliberate designing. In Uganda, key information, including approved budgets and accounts, are disclosed at LC3 offices. Furthermore, where the contact between LC1 (Village) chairpersons and LC3s is well established, information flows well to the villages through the chairpersons.

In Kenya, the “Baraza” of “Locations” and “Sub-Locations” can be similarly utilised. In Tanzania, the Village Assembly and “Kitongoji” could be used. In Tanzania, there used to be a system of ten-person neighbourhood organisations below the “Kitongoji” as well. It could be also a pertinent means to review these traditional local systems. In addition, systems like the circulars used by neighbourhood associations in Japan might also be of some reference (though there is a problem of literacy rates for them to work).

(3) Ensuring accountability through councils

Not only for the guaranteeing of (2) above but for the purpose of promoting (1) and (3) as well, it is extremely important that the local councils be equipped with the appropriate capacity to check the performance of the local administration, which could even be regarded as one of the essential
conditions for local autonomy to function properly. However in reality, local councils have not been able to fully function as they are supposed to in this regard, due to the fact that: There are problems with the competence of councillors; the conditions for councillors to actively fulfil these duties have not been provided for. Starting from their remuneration, councillors are working only on an allowances basis without a proper salary (Tanzania, Kenya).81

With regard to the role of local council to check on local administration, it would be even more important in a country like Tanzania where the chairperson of the local council also directs the executive branch of the LG as the mayor, compared to other systems like Uganda where the heads of the LGs are elected through direct popular vote thus checking over performance of the local administration is in the hands of somebody apart from the council itself that directly represents the people (For further details, see 2-1).

Thus, it is considered essential that more emphasis be placed on strengthening the functions of local councils, including the training of councillors.

(4) Relationship between the promotion of participatory local administration and accountability

From the perspective of accountability, efforts for collaboration between local administration and communities are considered to be a highly desirable trend. Cases can be seen such as; the introduction of participatory local development planning processes, the activities of user groups including school committees, health committees and community health workers. Monitoring of service delivery based on involvement of the residents themselves is considered to be the most direct means of ensuring accountability.

However, there are still some challenges to be tackled with even in these hopeful practices. As mentioned in section 3-2-2 (2), in reality, the residents who participate in these kinds of activities are limited. Consequently, close attention needs to be paid to ensure transparency of the selection process and its results. Furthermore, there is still much room for improvement for the participation of local residents, not only at the planning stage, but also during implementation as well as at the evaluation stage.

Talking about free service delivery such as free primary education under UPE policy, while this is a good policy in itself with the intention to benefit the poor, some cases of negative impact were reported during the present survey, where the level of parents’ participation in the school activities as well as monitoring of the same have been lowered (See Box 3-5).

81 In Uganda, local councillors are paid a salary. It should be recognised that these differences impact on the performance of local councils.
82 If NGOs and FBOs can be involved here to contribute to the monitoring of local administration performance, this will also complement the limited function of local councils.
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Box 3-5  Relationship between decentralisation of primary education and UPE

If decentralisation of primary education and FPE/UPE (the name varies from country to country) policies are implemented simultaneously, there would be areas of contradiction. This is because, under FPE policy, the political intent of the Central Government to “disseminate” primary education “equally” to all the people in the Country, has the potential to become a move to suppress diverse identities of different local areas as well as individual parents’ opinions. Let us look at some of the relationships of “division” at the local government level and at the school level.

First, at the local government level, a “divide” is occurring especially between politicians and education administrators. Local politicians do not necessarily have a strong interest in the education sector, and they prefer developing infrastructure, such as the construction of primary schools, where the individual politician cuts a conspicuous figure to the public in making a sizable contribution. Furthermore, while there are differences among different countries, generally, politicians have less schooling experience than administrators, and so they are unable to fully deliberate on specialised measures.

Second, at the school level, “divides” can be seen between public schools and private schools, and between urban areas and rural areas. Prior to the FPE policy, public schools had been delegated the authority to collect and use tuition fees that are almost the same as private schools. In conjunction with the FPE policy, these autonomous powers were uniformly abolished, and instead, financial decentralisation was introduced from the central government to schools (via local governments in Uganda and Tanzania, and directly in Kenya). Previously, schools had received requests from parents and the community, and so they were expected to fulfil a kind of “downward accountability”. But under the new conditions, schools have become devoted to dealing with the “upward accountability” to the central government, which is the source of their revenue.

Another “divide” that is occurring is between schools in urban areas and schools in rural areas, or between schools in affluent areas and schools in poor areas. At schools in affluent areas, the abolition of tuition fees and financing of school funds were nuisances, because it meant a reduction in school revenue, and it led to a decrease in the quality of education due to the influx of large numbers of students from outside areas. On the other hand, at poor schools in rural areas, because the collected funds had been meagre, in many cases, financing of school funds meant that they could now conduct a standard level of school administration for the first time. Thus, for wealthy schools in urban areas, the decentralisation of education accompanied by the FPE policy brought about the effect of narrowing the options and activities that a school could manage. For this reason, parents came up with various adaptive strategies, such as giving incentives to teachers and children by paying them in kind with goods, and moving children from a public school to a private school, which was thought to be advantageous to proceed to the secondary education, once they reached grade four. On the other hand, at poor schools, while many children are able to start schooling for the first time, there are many parents who do not understand that they can make requests and express opinions regarding the management of the school.

(5)  The uncertainties of current reforms from the perspective of accountability

Amid the current decentralisation reforms, the greatest element of concern from the perspective of accountability is the problem regarding the influence of the CG in personnel and financial affairs. As was mentioned in the section 3-2-2 (5) <Balance of centralisation and decentralisation against all the harsh realities at present >, the recent move of “recentralisation of appointment of the high-rank LG officials, and the high degree of dependence on grants have meant that the direction of accountability cannot help becoming towards the CG who is the appointer of officials and the patron of funds. While it is true that there is an unavoidable background underpinning these “recentralisation-oriented”
arrangements, we still need to be aware of the fact that they bring some serious problems regarding accountability, as we have repeatedly stated.

3-2-5 From the perspective of equity

Can equity of service delivery be guaranteed under the current administrative system? Has the promotion of decentralisation reforms made this fairer, or has the opposite occurred?

Ensuring the national minimum standard

While devolution of responsibility and authority can be regarded as a good move in many aspects, there is a risk that it might lead to widening disparities between LGs in poor remote areas and wealthy LGs in large cities.

Decentralisation of human resource management may create undesirable situations where the weaker LGs in remote rural areas suffer from difficulties in securing competent personnel. Similarly, promotion of fiscal decentralisation with devolution of tax revenue sources, may lead to a situation where poor LGs in rural areas are unable to secure the necessary revenue to provide services.

On the other hand, those LGs in poorer areas are more burdened with the needs of service delivery to the people. The poorer the area is, the more needs are there for administrative services since more vulnerable people are living there.

This is the paradox of decentralisation. Measures need to be taken to ensure a national minimum standard so that the above-cited realities do not lead to widening disparities in service delivery, both in quality and quantity.

With respect to personnel affairs, in both Uganda and Tanzania, appointment of the heads of LG administrations were “recentralised” as mentioned repeatedly. However, it has fundamental effects on effectiveness and accountability of decentralised administrative services, as we have reiterated (3-2-2 (5), 3-2-4 (5)).

On the other hand, the problem of absolute shortage of personnel in local areas is really in a worrying state. Only a minimum number of staff posts are allocated that is far from the level to satisfy the huge need, but may also make matters worse, and the governments are not even able to fill them. In response to such circumstances, certain safety nets need to be prepared by all means, including pooling of CG staff to be assigned to LGs.\textsuperscript{83}

\textsuperscript{83} See the section “Existence of measures to redress shortcomings in the devolution of personnel management authority” in 1 (3) 2 of Attachment “Systemic Analysis Framework”.

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As far as the fiscal decentralisation aspect is concerned, it can be appreciated that fairly adequate measures are being taken in both Uganda and Tanzania from the viewpoint of equity. Rather than blindly seeking a purer style of fiscal decentralisation with “revenue autonomy” through the transfer of tax revenue sources, reforms have been promoted along the line of first ensuring “expenditure autonomy” by way of unconditional grants. Moreover, put in the context of Africa, we should appreciate that it has been a remarkable impact of decentralisation reforms that regional disparities and unfairness in the distribution of financial benefits that used to be fatal due to neo-patrimonialism, tribal discrimination, etc., have now proceeded to be alleviated thanks to the introduction of the grant systems with objective formula-based calculation mechanisms (3-2-2 (1)).

Finally, introduction of a performance-based incentive system for the allocation of grants, as mentioned earlier in section 3-2-3 (5), involves a risk of widening regional disparities. From the perspective of equity, this fact also needs to be kept in mind.

3-3  Systemic analysis framework and important check points for analysis of the local administration system as well as the decentralisation reforms of different countries

< Analytical framework of this Section and its utilisation >

In the previous section 3-2, we analysed experiences of the three countries, and we derived lessons to be learned with respect to the two questions: Are decentralisation reforms really leading to better service delivery? What points need to be kept in mind for achieving these outcomes?

In this section, we will first delve deeper into the lessons and important points that were extracted from the analysis mentioned above. We will then reorganise these findings to come up with guidelines indicating what sorts of information should be obtained and what kinds of important points should be kept in mind and paid attention to when looking at the state of local administration and decentralisation reforms of each country, to eventually elaborate “systemic analysis framework”. (Accordingly, please note that much of the analysis done in the previous sections are repeated and reworked in this section.)

Figure 3-2 shows an overall image of the objects of our analysis.

As we have reiterated many times, the main focus of this study is on verifying decentralisation reforms from the perspective of improving service delivery. Consequently, the fundamental objects of analysis in this section is also government administrative systems, centring on the CG-LG relationship in the respective countries, as well as the service delivery systems of different sectors (Figure 3-2(1)).

However, in order to examine precisely the state of governance and administrative systems in Africa, it is indispensable to understand their historical, social and political backgrounds. Furthermore,
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unlike the advanced countries that set about decentralisation reforms only after they had built a solid system of national governance, African countries have started their decentralisation reforms without consolidating their national governance system yet. Thus there are serious fears of risks that the decentralisation reforms might lead to the fragmentation of already limited national resources, and difficulties in maintaining consistency with national strategies. On the other hand, a distinguishing feature of the recent decentralisation reforms is that they are placed within the nationwide trends for poverty reduction, and they have characteristics of being part of higher-level programme called PSRs. Therefore, when looking at the decentralisation reforms, their relationship with these kinds of national goals also needs to be sorted out (Figure 3-2 (2)).

As we have seen earlier, even before discussing centralisation or decentralisation, more fundamental problem is that of the extremely weak lowest level local administrations which are being unable to fulfil the duty to provide service delivery to the local people on their own. However, there are some hopeful moves emerging amid this harsh reality. Some interesting cases of collective action have begun to be seen, where solutions to problems are being sought based on the self-help efforts of local communities in the most basic sectors such as primary education, primary healthcare, water supply, roads construction and maintenance, etc. There have also been instances of activities in cooperation with support organisations such as local NGOs, faith based organisations (FBOs) and universities.

Figure 3-2 Overall image of the objects of analysis on local administration and decentralisation reforms

(1): Administrative system (CG-LG relationships, service delivery systems of different sectors)
(2): National context, relationship between decentralisation reforms and national level development goals
(3): Relationship between local communities/residents and local administration

Source: Compiled by the author.
Looking at these examples of collective action, there are three positive aspects that attract our attention. The first aspect is the fact that local residents themselves, through collective action, are complementing the functions of LGs/local administration, which enables service delivery to be provided in some way or other. The second aspect is an advantage in that the views and the needs of the residents could be reflected directly in the service delivery through this kind of resident involvement (effectiveness perspective). The third is that through the same process of involvement of the residents, accountability would be improved. Furthermore, these specific experiences of collaboration among the entire local society including the local administration, the local residents, NGOs and other support organisations, have an effect of nurturing mutual trust between the local administration and the residents, something that has hardly been developed ever before. Furthermore, by accumulating these kinds of practical experiences of “local autonomy” unifying the efforts of the entire local society, it is expected to bring about the development of civil society towards the eventual achievement of “substantial decentralisation based on real local autonomy and bottom-up demands from the local society” in future.

Considering all the perspectives described above, it is very important to pay special attention to the relationships between local administrations and local communities/residents when looking at local service delivery system and decentralisation, particularly in African context (Figure 3-2 (3)).

As described above, while the principal object for analysis in this section is “1. the state of administrative systems”, it is considered important to widen the scope of analysis, both upwards to its relationship with “2. the national background as well as with national level goals”, and downwards to “3. the relationship between local administration and local communities/residents”.

Due to space constraints, the full contents of “Systemic Analysis Framework” will be put in the Attachment, while in this section itself, only a summary of it is described.

3-3-1 Check points on the structure of administrative system (CG-LG relationships, service delivery systems in different sectors)

We will make an analysis of the nature of administrative systems according to the following five pillars:

(1) Policy, system and administrative structure
(2) Fiscal decentralisation
(3) Decentralisation of human resource management
(4) Decentralisation of the development planning process
(5) Decentralisation of service delivery operation
Overlooking the whole picture of the present analysis, it is composed of 1. the nature of administrative systems composed of the above-mentioned five elements; 2. the national perspective; and 3. the local communities/residents perspective. Figure 3-3 shows an overall image of them.

Figure 3-3 Conceptual Image of the Systemic Analysis Framework

(1) Policy, system and administrative structure

The LG system of each country is something that strongly reflects the historical and social background of the country, thus the contents and nature of it varies significantly from country to country. Accordingly, if we interpret different country’s system based on assumptions from Japanese experience, we will end up seriously misreading the situation. It is essential therefore to properly grasp the image of “Regions/Provinces”, “Districts”, “Villages”, etc., on a basis of objective data such as population size, land area, and staff numbers. This is our starting point. (The importance of this is apparent if we look at the specific conditions in the three target countries of our study which is shown in Attachment “Systemic Analysis Framework”, 1 (1) 1.

Next, we will see at which levels the respective responsibilities and authorities are given to among various entities of CG (as well as its local branch offices of different levels) and different levels LGs. This varies depending on the sector and depending on the type of services. It is also important to look at the current status of the relationships of authority between the CG and LGs in such aspects as fiscal and personnel affairs.

In addition to the above, the “devolution-delegation-deconcentration” framework as well as the “intertwined system - separated system” framework are effective in examining nature of
decentralisation reforms of different countries. By using these frameworks in combination, analysis would be easier and more precise concerning the degree of decentralisation as well as the LG-CG relationship of the target country.

With regard to “decentralisation,” many countries are advocating D by D to promote their reforms, and many people tend to believe that the “devolution” type decentralisation with a “separated” CG-LG relation system is the best form, being the opposite extreme of centralisation. However, this is not always true. The optimum system differs depending on each country’s specific conditions of the moment. For example, if LGs are not equipped with sufficient absorptive capacity to assume the responsibilities to be given, any sudden reforms may instead bring about disastrous stagnation of the services that are devolved to them. It is often observed in many African countries which are promoting decentralisation reforms, that their local administrative units are extremely weak. Under these circumstances, it is considered to be more prudent to provide LGs with adequate technical backstopping together with transfer of know-how from CG as a support for decentralisation, so that the LGs can perform necessary duties devolved to them. Therefore, rather than a “separated” model in which the CG and LGs are completely divorced, an “intertwined” model which more easily guarantees such support, is possibly more appropriate, at least as a “transition measure.” Furthermore, in African countries that are struggling against poverty, the resources available in the country for national development and welfare for the people are severely limited. Decentralisation must not result in any further fragmentation of these already limited resources. This perspective is highly important to bear in mind when we think of reforms. Thus, it should be emphasised that any decentralisation reforms must be seen from the overall national context as well, not regarding them as an attempt to separate LGs from the CG, but to improve the total system of the country placing LGs as an integral part of the entire system for administrative services and other purposes, thinking of the best division of functions and responsibilities together with an adequate collaborative relationship between the CG and LGs.

On the other hand, with decentralisation reforms, there is one important point about which we must be careful, as being potentially detrimental. That is the widening of regional disparities between wealthy and convenient large cities and poor remote areas. Although transferring tax revenue sources for the purpose of fiscal decentralisation is important for local autonomy, what would happen to poor areas without strong economic activities to form a tax base? Similarly, although there are clear merits in the decentralisation of human resources management from the perspective of local autonomy, will LGs in remote areas be able to secure a sufficient number of well qualified personnel? We need to be aware of this side of the coin when looking at local government systems.

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84 For definitions of “devolution-delegation-deconcentration”, see Box 3-1 and Attachment “Systemic Analysis Framework”, 1 (2)
85 See 3-2-1 (3).
Decentralised Service Delivery in East Africa

< Check points >

• Types of local governments, their sizes (population, area), and their hierarchical structures. The same information for CG local branch offices.
• Divisions of responsibility and authority relationships among different layers of LGs, CG and its local branch offices.
• Is the nature of decentralisation reforms based on “devolution”, “delegation” or “deconcentration”? Is the CG-LG relationship “intertwined” or “separated”?
• Are there any measures that guarantee the mitigation of disparities among regions?
• Are decentralisation and local autonomy stipulated clearly and in detail in the constitution and laws?
• How is the coordinating relationship between the central ministry in charge of decentralisation and each of the sector ministries?

(2) Fiscal Decentralisation

In this section we will look at the levels of activities of LGs and their degrees of autonomy from the perspective of public finance.

To this end, first we will look at the share of LG expenditure in the total government expenditure. By doing so, we will be able to get a rough idea of how much of the work is being borne by LGs within the total government activities. (Incidentally, in Japan’s case, LGs account for 65% of the total, and the CG only 35%. You can see that Japanese LGs are responsible for a lot of the administrative services and activities of the government.)

Next, we will measure the degree of autonomy in terms of financial aspects: To what extent are the LGs free to decide on how money is spent and allocate budgets to activities that they see as necessary under their jurisdiction? The revenue sources of LGs can be broadly divided into the following categories: (1) own sources of revenue, such as local taxes and service fees; (2) conditional grants from CG (subsidies, sector grants, etc.); and (3) unconditional grants from CG. Increasing “(1) own sources of revenue” is called “revenue autonomy”, and is the highest degree of fiscal autonomy. This is realised by transferring certain tax bases from national taxes to local taxes (devolving certain taxation authority from the CG to LGs). This type of fiscal decentralisation is the one that corresponds to the so-called “Trinity Reforms” which has been the subject of debate in Japan in recent years. (Of course, efforts to search for new tax revenue sources or to expand the tax base through economic stimulation, etc. are important means of increasing own sources of revenue as well.) However, considering the current state of local economies in African countries, it would be unrealistic and even unreasonable to immediately aim at “revenue autonomy” (See Attachment “Systemic Analysis Framework”, 1 (2) 2).

The second highest degree of fiscal autonomy is “expenditure autonomy”. This is the aggregate of “(1) own sources of revenue” and “(3) unconditional grants”, and is so named because the discretion
for deciding where to spend the budget rests with LGs. Securing “expenditure autonomy” has important implications in guaranteeing local fiscal autonomy. For the most part, fiscal decentralisation that is being promoted as part of decentralisation reforms in African countries, aims for this type of autonomy. When examining the state of fiscal decentralisation in individual countries, it is imperative that we have a grasp of the degree of “expenditure autonomy” and “revenue autonomy” described above (For further details, see Attachment “Systemic Analysis Framework”, 1 (2) 2).

African countries have some characteristic elements with regard to their grant systems. One of them is that development grants are separated from recurrent grants. However, coordinating the two is not easy and often discrepancies arise, such as staff or funds for activities not being guaranteed despite the facilities having been built (See Attachment “Systemic Analysis Framework”, 1 (2) 2 “Development grants and recurrent grants”). The second characteristic challenge is that there are numerous complex and wide-ranging grants. Consequently, the management of many accounts and obligation to make complicated financial reports weighs heavily on LGs, and it leads to administrative inefficiencies. In Uganda and Tanzania, rationalisation of the grant systems is being promoted to tackle this problem, based on the consolidation of diverse grants. Furthermore, with respect to the types of grants channelled through members of parliament such as Kenya’s CDF, although it is true that they somewhat enabled national funds to reach each local area to benefit people (something that used to fail), it would be difficult to accept that they are a sound system that should be permanent, in view of the fact that they have also introduced confusion to the administrative channels (3-2-2 (2), 3-2-3 (4)).

In addition to the above, what is of particular significance in the African context is the establishment of objective and fair standards for calculating grants as being promoted in Tanzania and Uganda, called a formula-based grant allocation system (3-2-2 (1)). Previously, against a background of tribal conflicts and neo-patrimonialism, unfair allocation of resources by political leaders had been prevalent, and there was a strong sense of inequity. The establishment of these standards is attracting attention as something to try to rectify. Such standards are expected to be a tangible positive impact of decentralisation reforms in Africa (see Attachment “Systemic Analysis Framework”, 1 (2) 2 “Calculation of local grants”).

< Check points >

- Size of LG budgets (their share of the total national budget – revenue as well as expenditure base)
- Degree of autonomy in LG finances (amount and proportion of own sources of revenue, amount and proportion of unconditional grants, amount and proportion of conditional grants, number of grant types)
- Method of calculating grants (Are there fair and clear criteria and formula?)
- To whom is accountability directed concerning budgeting and budget implementation of LGs?
- Capacity of LGs to manage public finances
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(3) Decentralisation of human resource management

On this matter, it is important to grasp the situation with regard to the following three broad aspects:

a) Number of personnel assigned to individual entities in local areas (LGs, local branch offices of CG, etc.) (Compared with the volume of work and responsibilities assigned, are they enough?)

b) Current state of local personnel management systems of the country, in view of the merits and risks that can be brought about by the decentralisation of human resource management

c) Systems for the capacity development of LG personnel

a) The importance of grasping the state of personnel assignment in local administration as basic information

Looking at the situation of the personnel assigned to local administrations in Africa, we can see that, without exception, it is an extremely difficult situation, both in terms of number and capacity. Even before discussing centralisation versus decentralisation, we cannot help wondering what we can expect them to perform with this personnel provision. It is important to understand this situation objectively before anything.

Then analyse to what extent it is possible for the LGs with this staff to assume duties that are planned to be devolved to them through the current decentralisation reforms. It is important to understand this situation objectively analyse the current state of decentralisation reform programmes and for sketching out necessary countermeasures. Furthermore, in places like Kenya where the service delivery is made mainly by the local branch offices of central ministries, we need to grasp the conditions of these offices as well (See Box 3-4).

b) Merits, risks and points to be considered regarding the decentralisation of human resource management, and the current state of personnel systems

Once we have understood the basic situation mentioned above, we look into the degree of decentralisation for human resource management. There are several advantages in decentralising human resource management, such as: the accountability of staff to local residents improves; the overall management of LGs becomes easier enabling them to allocate required personnel for each prioritised activity, which consolidates the structure for autonomous administration of the LGs to effectively respond to local needs; and it will facilitate the appointment of local people who have more knowledge of and devotion to the local society (For further details, see section 1 (3) 2 “Merits of devolving Personnel Management Authority” in Attachment “Systemic Analysis Framework”).

On the other hand, human resource management is not an easy task. For example, the following questions have to be sorted out: If it is decentralised, will sufficient numbers of competent people be able to be secured by LGs? What will happen in particularly remote LGs with poor conditions? Also,
from the perspective of incentives and careers as professionals, decentralisation may deprive the professionals of opportunities for relocation and promotion to the CG and other LGs, thus concern remains over whether LGs will still be able to attract these professionals (See the section 3-2-2 (5) “Balance of centralisation and decentralisation against all the harsh realities at present”).

There is another possibility of adverse effects in this regard where human resources management is inappropriately influenced by some local councillors or other prominent persons (local bosses). Due consideration is also required to avoid such situations. Taking all these points into account, analysis needs to be done on the current status of personnel management systems as well as their decentralisation reforms (For further details, see section 1 (3) 2 “Matters requiring attention in the devolution of personnel management authority” in Attachment “Systemic Analysis Framework”).

c) Systems for the capacity development of LG personnel

Decentralisation of human resources development systems has advantages from the perspectives of effectiveness of training (training contents that meet region-specific needs) and efficiency (reasonable training at locations close to the workplaces). However, it would be unrealistic for each and every LG to have its own training system and facility. Therefore, it would be more feasible to start with developing a total national training delivery system in coordination with the CG, and involving various training providers (public as well as private) that exist in the Country. Nevertheless, it should be noted that it is important to take adequate measures to ensure room for the specific needs of each region and LGs to be responded to in the contents of training provided under this system.

On the other hand, OJT is considered to be very important and even indispensable for the capacity development of LG personnel, in addition to formal training. We can learn from the Japanese experience that it is highly effective to promote capacity development of LGs through OJT based on technical backstopping from the CG ministries on the service delivery operations, and CG-LG personnel exchanges/collaboration. It is significant as well to see if there exist any cases of this nature in the target country.

< Check points >

- Number of personnel assigned in the LGs and their capacity (Is the number of personnel assigned to LGs appropriate for the scale and substance of the responsibilities and authority devolved to them? What levels of qualifications are required?)
- Who has authority over the personnel management of LG officials (recruitment, appointment, promotion, transfer, dismissal, salaries and wages, etc.)?
- Have any disparities developed among different LGs in terms of personnel numbers and capacity, that is, between LGs of big cities and those in remote rural areas?
- What is the situation regarding the training system for LG personnel?
- Are there any sorts of OJT mechanisms, such as technical backstopping from higher level governments, personnel exchange systems, etc.?
Decentralisation of the local development planning process

One of the characteristics that are common among the decentralisation reforms in various African countries is the fact that local development planning processes are being promoted with a bottom-up and participatory approach. Even in Kenya that has not yet initiated substantial decentralisation reforms per se, each of its ministries as well as the district administration have begun pursuing community participation methods in the formulation of its sector plans. This is considered to be a positive move. However, under a centralised system like that in Kenya, even this kind of participatory local plan cannot escape from the strong ministry chains of command and vertical budget formulation processes. Comparing them with the local planning processes of Uganda and Tanzania where authority has been transferred to LGs by way of D by D, the picture is completely different even though the same terms “participatory”, “bottom-up” and “local development plans” are used. Consequently, it is of foremost importance to grasp the nature of the local planning processes, including the above-mentioned points, checking as well who formulates plans, and how they are formulated (For further details, see the section 1 (4) 1 “Modes of decentralisation in the formulation of plans” in Attachment “Systemic Analysis Framework”).

From the perspective of the principle of decentralisation, one of the most fundamental authorities required for local autonomy is that the LGs be entitled to formulate their own local development plans addressing individual intrinsic local conditions and needs. In Uganda and Tanzania, where decentralisation reforms are underway, this kind of authority has been institutionally devolved to LGs. However, in reality, this bottom-up and participatory local development planning process still remains with a variety of challenges to overcome (2-5-3, 3-2-2 (2)). The key issues and impeding factors are listed below, and for each of them, we need to see: How do things stand at the moment? To what extent are countermeasures to overcome these factors ensured?

a) The participatory planning process has been emphasised, but to what extent is the current process of this kind that is applied in the field, actually guaranteeing fair participation of the residents to identify and reflect the real needs of the residents on the formulated plan? (For further details, see 1, 1 (4) 1 “Methods of community participation” in Attachment “Systemic Analysis Framework”)

b) Since what eventually counts in decentralisation reforms is improvement of service delivery, the local development plans are practically broken down to each sector’s service delivery plans as the main pillars supporting their contents. Moreover, in reality, sector plans are being formulated by the respective technical departments of the LGs in accordance with their technical standpoints, even though attempts at participatory measures are adopted into each of them. In parallel with the above, cross-sectoral participatory local development plans, like O&OD in Tanzania, are brought up from each Village. The task of integrating these plans is normally assigned to planning officers at the district level, and it is an extremely complicated and arduous task.
Can such a system really function effectively? (For further details, see Attachment “Systemic Analysis Framework”, 1 (4) 2 “Actual circumstances surrounding the formulation of local sector plans”)

c) How are bottom-up local development plans and top-down national plans and strategies reconciled, and how is their consistency guaranteed? (For further details, see the section 1 (4) 3 “Harmonisation between bottom-up and top-down plans” in Attachment “Systemic Analysis Framework”)

d) Even if local development plans are formulated, unless the necessary budget is allocated, they won’t be realised. However, as seen in sections 3-2-2 (2), 3-2-3 (4) and 3-3-1 (2) above, LGs are heavily dependent on the grants from the CG, and these grants are complex, wide-ranging, and in many cases conditional. Systems of unconditional development grants, such as LGCDG (Tanzania) and LGDP (Uganda), were created for the purpose of implementing these participatory development plans. However, since they are not enough at all to cover all, the district planning officers eventually have to look at the diverse range of grants and manage to apply possible funds piece by piece like a patchwork. Under these circumstances, the effectiveness of “formulating one’s own local development plans in a way that addresses individual intrinsic local conditions and needs” is logically hampered.

In this regard, concerning the budgets required for realising the formulated local plans, it is important to check the extent to which LGs have discretion in allocating them, that is, the extent to which “expenditure autonomy” is secured (For further details, see 1 (4) 4 “Local development plans and budgetary measures for planned programmes” in Attachment “Systemic Analysis Framework”).

< Check points >

- Who formulates local development plans, and in what way are they formulated?
- To what extent and in what form is resident participation ensured in the local development planning process? In what way are the needs of the residents reflected on the plans?
- In what way are the local sector plans integrated into the overall local development plans, and how this is ensured?
- How are budgetary measures implemented for these local development plans?

(5) Devolution of services implementation

The followings can be given as the merits of decentralising service implementation: (1) it becomes easier to grasp the local needs, which enables service provision to be more effective and relevant (effectiveness); (2) Services are able to be delivered more promptly (efficiency); and (3) Improvement in its monitoring by the residents can be expected (accountability).

On the other hand, in situations where the absorptive capacity of LGs is not sufficient, yet they are required to assume all the duties devolved to them; there is a risk that the technical quality of services
will deteriorate. Unless certain countermeasures are guaranteed to avoid such situations, the principal aim of the reforms would be imperilled.

In view of the above, it is extremely important to determine to what level and to which entity the authority and responsibilities of respective service delivery should be assigned, based on a careful analysis of the capacity of each entity in terms of personnel, budget, etc. as well as its closeness to the communities to enable it to assess their needs and reality (3-2-2 (3), 3-2-3 (3)). Therefore, when investigating the state of each country’s service delivery implementation, the most important thing of all is to gain a clear understanding of the division of roles among respective entities (both CG and LGs). (Which entity has responsibility and authority over which services?) We must also take note of whether each of the different entities have personnel, funds and other conditions necessary to fulfil the responsibilities given to it.

Furthermore, with regard to the services devolved to LGs for their provision, it is also important to ensure technical backstopping and collaboration from the CG to LGs whenever they are required in order to guarantee the quality of services, depending on the capacity of the respective LGs. It should be checked whether any system to guarantee the above arrangements has been established (3-2-1 (3), 3-2-3 (3)).

On the other hand, from the viewpoint of the necessity for the decentralisation reforms to contribute to the improvement of service delivery, one of the important issues is the question of how the services of each sector are to be implemented under a decentralised structure. However, as with the countries that are being surveyed, sectors are carrying out respective SWAp-based reforms in addition to the decentralisation reforms, and harmonisation with these respective sector reforms has been a great challenge. Whereas consistency must be ensured at the central level between respective SWAps and the decentralisation reforms, at the local level, cross-sectoral coordination systems and central-local collaboration systems need to be established. The question of to what extent these systems have been developed should be covered in the analysis as well (2-5-3).

As was emphasised at the outset of 3-3, from the perspective of effectiveness, efficiency as well as accountability, we found great hope in the cases of local community collective action and collaboration between these efforts and the local administration for the implementation of services under a decentralised structure. Another impact that can be expected from these cases is the development of relationships of trust between governments and local residents through these types of practical collaborative experiences, and the foundations for a true local autonomy. With such expectations, we should verify what types of cases of such collaboration exist, and to what extent these cases hold promise for the above effects (This point is examined in more detail at 3-3-3). There is potential for these cases to develop themselves to become a basis for the support for area-based development which
combines sector administration support and local administration support with community development support that JICA has implemented in the past (See the footnote 78 in 3-2-3 (3) as well as Chapter 4.)

Finally, some unfortunate cases that were often observed during this study were those of stagnation in service delivery under decentralisation reforms, due to some simple logistic problem of a delay in sending grants from the CG to LGs (3-2-3 (6)). It is highly important to identify these problems since they can be resolved with comparatively simple technical support, and that their solution can have broad positive effects over the whole system.

< Check points >

• Division of the authority and responsibility for implementation of key services among different tiers of central and local administration
• What kinds of mechanisms have been established to provide LGs with technical backstopping from the CG, and to ensure necessary coordination between the CG and LGs?
• Are there examples of authority being devolved to user groups?
• Are the existing mechanisms functioning well for coordination between the chain of command of the respective sector ministries and that of the LGs in the local areas?
• To what extent are there examples of community participation in project implementation and service delivery? In what way is the collaboration between the local administration and the community residents functioning?

3-3-2 Check points on the relationship between decentralisation reforms and the national context and development goals at the national level

(1) History and society

By nature, modern states are “imagined communities”; but in Africa, because ethnic fragmentation is significant (and further accentuated by colonial systems), because they have a relatively short history, and because national borders were drawn in an extremely unnatural manner, states were formed that were markedly artificial. When many African countries achieved independence, they retained their internally fragmented and unstable nature; during their democratisation following the end of the Cold War, questions as to the legitimacy of this framework were revisited. (As a result, many countries experienced armed conflict.)

There are diverse ethnicities: sometimes there are disparities between the rich and the poor, and sometimes there are some regions within a country which identify with or have more historical connections with neighbouring countries. Furthermore, social cohesiveness also varies depending on the region. However, one can also recognise certain advance in integration and reconciliation due to modernisation, urbanisation as well as education policies.

In some cases, politics are governed by the links of the informal chain between influential patrons and clients, rather than by the formal institutional setups of the state. In case such informal human
relationships are formed to link between LGs and CG, decentralisation process may progress on a basis of such relationships. The CG devolves resources to the LGs, and in turn it acquires political support from local leaders.

**Check points**
- Relationship between the governance systems originated from the colonial period and the local societies
- Regional disparities attributable to ethnicities and other social aspects
- Effects of neo-patrimonialism on local governance

(2) **Political and governance systems**

Since the 1990s, there have been countries where democratisation evolved in consonance with decentralisation (Tanzania), while there have been countries where decentralisation evolved as a temporal alternative to democratisation (Uganda). Multi-party systems formed under democratisation due to pressures from outside and were driven from within, but as most political parties are organisations that reflect some ethnicity, multi-party systems had a function of encouraging ethnic conflict at the central level (Rwanda, Burundi). Decentralisation was also being recommended as a mechanism for alleviating that pressure (Uganda).

In order to extend control by the central state administration as far as local societies, to start with, a local organisation is necessary which functions to a certain degree. However, undemocratic central control has normally prioritised resource allocations and language policies that target specific ethnicities or regions. The very principle of decentralisation is to opposed this. It prevents any rise of discontent by giving a certain degree of autonomy to each level of local organisation.

**Check points**
- Relationship between a single-party dictatorship/multi-party system and political interventions in local areas
- Balance between central government control and local autonomy

(3) **Development strategies and economic growth**

Since many poor people live in rural areas, from a policy point of view, the principles of PRS accord with those of decentralisation in the sense that they direct resources to regional areas. Furthermore, as policy mechanisms, since budgets related to PRS (and Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPCs), depending on the country) serve as funds for local grants that are directed toward rural areas, there was no conflict between the two (Although all three countries have raised PRS, Kenya is not a HIPC). Uganda and Tanzania are trying for MTEF and other initiatives, even at the district level.

Since centralised and repressive systems that followed independence tend to be systems of governance for specific ethnic groups, merely advocating decentralisation has a tendency of becoming
a symbolic gesture, promising a new style of governance to the people (However, there is also a tendency for the majority who have promoted centralisation to be wary of this). Furthermore, it can also alleviate the central government from assuming the major burden for policies or taking the rap for failed policies. Structural adjustments policy had led to local services being cut, and so in the 1990s, the public sector was called on to restore them. There was a point of view that local governments and the private sector should take charge of this task — rather than the former central government — and with the support of donors, this viewpoint came to the fore.

< Check points >
- Positioning of decentralisation in frameworks such as the PRSP and MTEF
- Effects of structural adjustment and other past policies on the current structure of local administration

(4) Governance reform frameworks

As outlined above, in some respects, the philosophy of PSR, namely an appropriate balance between the public and private sectors, the provision of services to the citizens as a client, and an improvement in the efficiency of services, accords with the principles of decentralisation. Tanzania is the country that most attempted to promote decentralisation from this perspective. In Uganda, prior to making a dramatic push forward for decentralisation, it had already achieved a certain measure of PSR. Kenya had to work on PRS simultaneously without being able to achieve PRS prior to decentralisation reforms in this sense.

Furthermore, coordination and cooperation with public financial management reforms, legal and judicial reforms, and other administrative and financial reforms is also an important point.

< Check points >
- Positioning of decentralisation in PSR and other reform frameworks
- Relationship between PSR and PRS
- Coordination and cooperation with other governance-related reforms

(5) Sector strategies

In order to supply resources to local service points, there needs to be definite sector policies and the formation of systems. However, because sector policies come under the jurisdiction of sector ministries and because decentralisation reduces these functions and budgets, there are also contradictory factors. Although conditional grants with no diversions of monies from budget items are suited for the purpose of monitoring and providing parity and consistency between the plans and budgets of the central government and the actual operations at the bottom, conversely, they also have the disadvantage of constraining the discretionary power of local governments.
3-3-3 Check points on the relationship between local communities/residents and local administration

(1) Community participation as a complementary measure to the weak lower-level local administrations

It is common for the lowest-level local administrations in developing countries to be extremely weak, and it is virtually impossible for them to satisfactorily provide all necessary services independently. Now, as a way of supplementing this inadequacy, attention is being drawn to the collective action of residents and administrations as an alternative pattern for performing administrative services.

Here we identify cases of collaboration between administrations and residents and/or private sector entities, and examine to what extent these exercises fulfil the above function, as well as the extent to which this could be effective as one of the options for service delivery implementation by local administrations.

(2) Community participation as a means to reflect the needs of beneficiaries onto the administrative services

It is expected that the process of collaboration between local residents and administrations, namely participatory planning → involvement of residents in implementation → enjoyment of the benefits of services, can be an effective means of reflecting the needs of the beneficiaries. This point should be verified by analysing individual cases.
Check points

- In what manner and to what extent are residents participating in the planning processes for local administrative services?
- To what extent are there collaborative relationships between the local administration and local communities in the delivery of services? How are the needs and the opinions of residents being reflected in this?
- Are there examples where collaboration between local administration and people's collective actions has resulted in better access to services for the poor and the weak?
- What level of satisfaction have local residents felt through participating in the planning and/or implementation of service delivery and through benefiting the services?
- Have these kinds of collaborative relationships resulted in greater contact between the local administration and the local residents? Have the local administration and residents appreciably changed their perceptions and attitudes towards each other?

(3) Improvement in accountability/transparency of administrative services as a result of community participation

It is expected that community participation in planning and implementation processes of administrative services can also be effective from the perspective of accountability/transparency to the local residents. We analyse individual cases to verify this point.

Check points

- What kinds of perceptions do local residents have with respect to the local administration and local administrative services?
- What kinds of information does the LG disclose/present to the local residents with respect to the relevant collaborative activities?
- Through collaborating with the administration, do the residents feel that the transparency of the administration has improved?

(4) Development of credibility between the local administration and the residents/local communities through participation and collaboration (perspective of legitimacy)

In the past, African states and governments provided hardly any significant administrative services for the residents from which they were able to feel benefits. Therefore, building legitimacy as a state has been an important issue for the governments of various African countries. This also gives cause to the justification of decentralisation reforms, and it is said that, through decentralisation, governments will attempt to provide basic services from a position closer to the residents. From this perspective, development of concrete relationships of trust through collective action and collaborative experiences between residents and administrations is perceived as an effective means for achieving this. We will verify this point through examination of individual cases.
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(5) Enhancement of the self-organising capability of the smallest unit of local autonomy (communities/natural villages) and enhancement of networks between them and LGs

As the smallest units of local autonomy, LC1s in Uganda, Villages and Kitongoji (Vitongoji) in Tanzania, and locations and Sub-locations in Kenya have played a highly important role historically in the decision-making of the residents. At the national level and at the higher LG levels, relationships of trust have tended to be weak (at least as things currently stand) as a result of being influenced by tribes, political parties and other factors, and as a result of being further removed from the residents. From the perspective of self-governance, the lower units mentioned above have become extremely significant as being like natural villages. Also from the perspective of administration, in contrast to higher levels of government, which are more prone to being strongly influenced by the vertical administration of sector ministries, at the lower levels of LG, these effects are weaker. Moreover, being closer to the residents, they reflect community needs more easily, and they are relatively more conducive to relationships of collaboration and coordination among different sectors. Collective action and collaboration with administrations are expected to be valuable opportunities for the capacity development of each of these units, which is perceived as being tremendously important for development of local autonomy in Africa.

(6) Nurturing a perception of self-governance (Village Autonomy) for residents and local communities through participatory development

It is expected that the experience of local communities resolving their own problems for themselves, and overcoming problems in cooperation with the administration and other support organisations will lead to a stronger perception of self-governance among residents and local communities. Participatory Local Social Development (PLSD) has been put into practice in the Project on Strengthening Sulawesi Rural Community Development to Support Poverty Alleviation Programmes in Indonesia as well as other JICA cooperation.

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Ohama (2007) as well as Sharma and Ohama (2007) are informative regarding the concept of participatory local social development, collaboration and networking between local residents and administrations/other support organisations, as well as the consolidation of the self-organising capabilities of communities and development. Participatory Local Social Development (PLSD) has been put into practice in the Project on Strengthening Sulawesi Rural Community Development to Support Poverty Alleviation Programmes in Indonesia as well as other JICA cooperation.
organisations will be a valuable opportunity to stimulate an awareness of self-governance by local communities. We will verify this point through looking at individual cases.

< Check points >
• Through collective action, to what extent has the perception of self-governance been enhanced, developing the awareness and willingness of the residents to participate to make their community better?

(7) The experience of local autonomy as a “school of democracy” (experience-based learning process) 87

In order to realise true local autonomy and decentralisation, which is based on the development of a civil society, the local civil society needs to be enhanced through accumulation of these types of experiences over the long term.

< Check points >
• In view of all of the above, as an experience-based learning process, has the experience of collaboration through collective action between the local administration and the local community led to a stronger democracy?

3-3-4 Epilogue: How to use the “Systemic Analysis Framework”? 87

As noted at the outset of this section 3-3, due to space constraints, the “Systemic Analysis Framework” is not included in this main text, but attached as an Attachment. And in the sections 3-3-1 to 3-3-3, only the check points and brief comments on each issue are presented as a summary of this “Framework”. Accordingly, if this paper is to be used as a systemic analysis framework, readers should also see Attachment as long as time permits. Another option could be to use sections 3-3-1 to 3-3-3 to gain an overall view, and then look at Attachment “Systemic Analysis Framework” for those topics that are of particular relevance to see further details.

This “Systemic Analysis Framework” is expected to be useful when considering and planning a cooperation programme to support a specific partner country’s decentralisation reforms or strengthening of their local administration. In other words, it has been designed with the idea to elaborate “something that can actually be utilised” for JICA experts, the field offices of JICA, and relevant Departments of its HQ’s together with their counterparts in the partner countries. In this “Framework”, we have attempted to explain the important matters that should be checked carefully to understand the situation of any target country with regard to each of the aspects shown in the

87 For information on the participatory approach and the experience-based learning process, see Ohama (2007), as well as Sharma and Ohama (2007).
conceptual diagram of Figure 3-3. These explanations include: What kind of issues needs to be focused on; What kind of information needs to be collected; What kind of analysis needs to be done. And similarly, as to the phenomena of great significance, we have tried to describe how they should be understood and interpreted. Of course, since the object of our study was only three countries, the scope of analysis is limited. Therefore, it is not a perfectly comprehensive analysis that covers all sorts of independent variables that determine the success or otherwise of decentralisation. Nonetheless, we believe that it at least provides many significant and useful points of view that are likely to be instructive for analysing other countries.

Needless to say, the framework can be used for formulating programmes and projects for governance support type of cooperation, including decentralisation. But we do hope that it could be put to use for the conventional cooperation programmes of each sector as well. Many of the sectors that have been the principal targets of technical cooperation are now subject to decentralisation, including such sectors as: education; health; agriculture; water supply and sanitation; roads; and waste disposal. In order to carry out effective and successful cooperation in these sectors, it is now inevitable to understand the structure of the respective sector's service delivery systems and their working mechanisms, as well as the demarcation of responsibilities and authority among the different entities of the CG and LGs. It is expected that this systemic analysis framework could be highly useful for these purposes.