
Assessing The Role Of Local Governments In Disaster Management And Preparedness In Uganda: A Case Study Of Sibanga Sub-County, Manafwa District Local Government.

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Abstract

The general objective of the study was to determine the role of local governments in Disaster management and preparedness in Uganda. The study was guided by a general objective and specific objectives which included: To evaluate the role of local government in disaster management and preparedness, to investigate the challenges faced by local governments in disaster management and preparedness in Sibanga sub-county in Manafwa district and to evaluate the available measures for disaster management and preparedness in local government. The study used both primary and secondary methods of data collection guided by research questions which generated reliable findings. The study found out that local governments have a wide range of tasks in disaster management and preparedness which included, risk mapping, providing relief services and resettling the victims among others. The study also found out that local governments face a lot of challenges including limited finance, political interference from the central agencies, and community resistance among others. They concluded that local governments need to reinforce their partnerships with other stakeholders for effective management of disasters in their areas and the central government should be committed to fully funding the activities of the local authorities on time and also organize capacity building workshops to empower local officials. The government should become supportive to the local governments through prioritizing funding so as to enable local officials to implement their budgets, fund their activities and provide adequate compensation to the real victims and potential victims for their properties as well as provide relief services to them.

Keywords: Local Governments, Disaster, Management And Preparedness

Background of the study

According to the National Disaster Preparedness and Management Policy (2011) for the Republic of Uganda, "Disasters can be broadly divided into natural disasters and man-made disasters. Natural disasters include drought, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, floods, landslides and disease outbreaks, while man-made disasters include; genocide, political instability and unrest, war, cyber warfare and terrorism (Christopher, 2022). Geologists, engineers, and other professionals often rely on unique and slightly different definitions of landslides (Nicholas et al., 2023). This variety of definitions reflects the complex nature of the many disciplines involved in the study of landslides. For our purposes, a landslide is a general term used to describe the downward movement of soil, rock, and organic materials due to gravity, as well as the shape of the terrain that results from such movement. (Willies et al., 2022) define a landslide as the movement of a mass of rock, debris or soil down a slope. Landslides are a type of "mass wasting" that refers to any movement of soil and rock down a slope under the direct influence of gravity. The

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term "landslide" includes five modes of slope movement: falls, overturning, sliding, spreading, and flow. These are further divided according to the type of geological material, such as bedrock, debris or soil (Nicholas et al., 2023). Debris flows (commonly referred to as mudflows or mudslides) and rockfalls are examples of common types of landslides (USGS, 2021). Landslides are recurring natural phenomena that occur frequently in the Ugandan mountain Rwenzori, Mufumbiro and Elgon regions. In these areas, significant environmental, social and economic losses such as damage to road infrastructure and displaced settlements as a result (Abdi et al., 2020). Despite these impacts, no significant large-scale mapping efforts have been undertaken landslide prone areas in relation to road infrastructure. Maintaining stability road reserve and related engineering assets is a Uganda National priority. The Road Authority, and this requires a focus not only on the earthworks of the slopes, but also wider ones the terrain in which the road is built (Christopher & Felex, 2022). A web-based inventory of landslide data has been created within the Uganda National Roads Authority to record landslide events and impacts and this will be combined with other GIS and remote sensing resources to produce a map dangerous areas. Setting guidelines for maximizing environmental and social benefits due to optimal road reserve management, integration of engineering with community participation and agricultural extension would also benefit future practice. Community collaboration and interagency coordination on aspects of hillside management outside the road reserve, they are also decisive for the management of road assets within the road reserve (Abdi et al., 2020). Manafwa and the Elgon sub-region in general are undergoing rapid change and there are many existing and potential risks and hazards such as landslides that threaten to undo many of the development gains made over the past decade and have claimed thousands of lives and valuable property. as well as crowding out many. Landslides are the most common natural disasters in the sub-region caused by heavy rains and floods in the districts of Manafwa, Bulambuli, Sironko, Bududa, among others, for decades (Willies et al., 2022). National and international organizations are overwhelmed by the scale and number of disasters, while NGOs are still unable to meet aid demands, yet local governments lack disaster management capacity and preparedness, especially in rural local entities in Sibanga sub-district. It is worth noting that in recent disasters, it was not possible to complete all planned rescue operations, especially those whose objectives were not defined precisely enough. In multi-catastrophe events, such as where economic crisis and natural disasters occur simultaneously, these weaknesses become very obviously drastic. Current coping and relief mechanisms have proven inadequate (Patrick, 2024). The complexity of the problems caused by disasters requires a comprehensive and coordinated policy and legislation for disaster management. These tools should redirect national and local efforts to address disaster issues in a more comprehensive and integrated manner. This strategy represents the essential basis for achieving the overall policy objective and promoting sustainable development through disaster mitigation in Manafwa District Local Government Areas. Bukooli (2018) reports the ugly landslides due to heavy floods in Manafwa district that claimed several lives and properties and displaced over 200 residents in rural areas.

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Statement of the Problem

Landslide losses and damages in Uganda are mounting and have serious implications for the survival, dignity and livelihood of our citizens, especially the poor in the highly hilly sub-regions and peripheries, eroding the country's hard-earned development gains. Disaster risk is increasingly becoming a global issue and its impact in one region can have a corresponding effect on lives and livelihoods in another region and vice versa (Edgar & Moses, 2023). This is compounded by increasing vulnerabilities related to changing demographic, technological and socio-economic conditions, unplanned settlements, underdevelopment, environmental degradation, climate variability, climate change, geological hazards, competition for scarce resources, among others (Nicholas et al., 2023) . Landslides damage a country's wealth as well as its human resources, which is a major obstacle to development (Pandey, 2020). This points to a future where landslides could increasingly threaten Uganda's economy and its population.

Manafwa district has witnessed several disasters and mostly landslides during the rainy season, claiming thousands of lives and displacing several (Winny et al., 2023). The National Disaster Preparedness and Management Policy 2011 envisages the establishment of various structures at the local government level including; District Technical Committee on Disaster Management; District Emergency Coordination and Operations Center; Municipal / Urban Disaster Policy Committee; Municipal / City Disaster Management Technical Committee; Sub-District Disaster Management Committees (SDMC) and Village Disaster Management Committee. Unfortunately, the disaster management policy does not seem to be implemented effectively and local governments in the district seem to lack adequate capacity for disaster management and prevention in their localities, along with little financial and humanitarian support from the central government and their partners (Winny et al., 2023). If this trend continues, we are most likely to lose millions of people and valuable assets, witness the stagnation of agriculture and the diversion of huge national resources meant for national development only to deal with landslide calamities in the country that adversely affect our national economy and people's prosperity. Therefore, the researcher intends to explore the subject more based on these contexts and look for sustainable remedies.

Purpose of the study

The study mainly aimed at assessing the role of local governments in disaster management and preparedness by taking the case study of Sibanga sub-county in Manafwa district local government.

Specific objectives of the study

1. To evaluate the role of local government in disaster management and preparedness
2. To investigate the challenges faced by local governments in disaster management and preparedness in Sibanga sub-county in Manafwa district.
3. To evaluate the available measures for disaster management and preparedness in local government.

Methodology

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A qualitative research design was used, which was descriptive and explanatory in nature. The aim of this proposal was to ensure that the required data were collected objectively, accurately and economically to generate credible and reliable findings (L. A. Nafiu et al., 2012). A population is any collection of a given specified group of human beings or non-human beings such as objects (Shawkat W, 2000). The study population will consist of officials from Sibanga sub-district and Manafwa district, both civil and political officials, some civil society organizations in the district, officials from the Ministry of Local Government, officials from OPM and community members (L.A. Nafiu, 2012). This was because such a population can offer credible information/opinions on the state of affairs. The sample size for the study was 80 respondents out of which 20 were district officials, 15 from civil society organizations who have reliable information on the research topic, 5 from OPM, 5 officials from the Ministry of Local Government and 35 community members including landslide victims in Manafwa sub-county Sibanga. This was because such a population has reliable information about the subject of the study. The researcher used both primary and secondary methods (Rasheed et al., 2022). The researcher administered questionnaires to a selected number of respondents, using e-mails and mobile phones, especially in cases where it was difficult to conduct physical interviews. This helped the researcher to get as much information as possible. An interview is a personal conversation with the respondent. Structured and unstructured interviews were conducted either physically or online to obtain as much information as possible (L. Nafiu et al., 2013). The documentary review method of data collection was used by the researcher to verify the information collected from the primary sources. The researcher reviewed the literature of published materials such as district records and relevant reports, NGO reports, local government regulatory instruments, and reports from the Department of Local Government from OPM as well as UNHCR to gather enough data and harmonize the collected data. with primary methods (L. A. Nafiu et al., 2017). This included both primary and secondary sources. This included data collected directly from the above respondents. The aim was to enable the research to gather first-hand information. This included data obtained from written literature and records and statistics (L. Nafiu et al., 2013). This includes legal documents and policies and reports from relevant authorities. This helped to harmonize the data collected from primary sources. These included survey questionnaires and interview guides. Self-administered questionnaires and interview guides were used and distributed among respondents to obtain their opinion on the given topic (Jallow et al., 2021). The researcher ensured that quality control was done by pre-testing the questionnaire on at least 10 respondents to test reliability using Cronbach's alpha coefficient (CAC) (Olanrewaju et al., 2021). Qualitative data obtained from questionnaires and interviews were coded and tabulated on a scale and then calculated using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) (Nelson et al., 2022). Data were analyzed qualitatively. This is because the study was essentially qualitative and aimed to examine the relationship between the role of local governments and disaster preparedness and management. Data were analyzed sequentially using thematic qualitative analysis, which is a descriptive presentation of qualitative data. These methods were used in order to describe in detail the views and opinions of the respondents (L. A. Nafiu

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et al., 2013). Themes were defined and data were presented according to the identified themes, which were based on the objectives of the study.

RESULTS

Table 1: The table showing the response rate of the respondents on whether the local governments do prepare the disaster contingency plans for disaster management in Manafwa district and Sibanga sub-county local government.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	25	31.25
Strongly agree	45	56.25
Disagree	06	7.5
Strongly disagree	03	3.75
Not sure	01	1.25
Total response	80	100%

Source: primary source (2023).

The above table depicts that 45 respondents strongly agreed that local governments prepare contingency plans for disaster management which constituted 56.25%, and those who agreed were 25 respondents constituting 31.25%, only 1 of the respondents was not sure constituting 1.25%. There were 6 respondents who disagreed constituting 7.5%. While 03 respondents strongly disagreed constituting 3.75%. This meant that the majority of the respondents strongly agreed and confessed to have ever seen the district and sub-county disaster contingency plans.

Table 2: The table showing the response rate of the respondents on whether local governments do carry out regular vulnerability assessment and risk mapping for disaster management in Manafwa district and Sibanga sub-county local government.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	45	56.25
Strongly agree	25	31.25
Disagree	06	7.5
Strongly disagree	01	1.25
Not sure	03	3.75
Total response	80	100%

Source: primary source (2023).

Table 2 above depicts that 45 respondents agreed that local governments carry out regular vulnerability assessment and risk mapping for disaster management which constituted 56.25%, and those who strongly agreed were 25

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respondents constituting 31.25%, only 3 of the respondents were not sure constituting 3.75%. There were 6 respondents who disagreed constituting 7.5%. While 01 respondent strongly disagreed constituting 1.25%. This meant that the majority of the respondents agreed and confessed to have ever seen the district and sub-county local governments carrying out regular vulnerability assessment and risk mapping for disaster management.

Table 3: The table showing the response rate of the respondents on whether local governments do coordinate and manage disaster emergency events for disaster management in Manafwa district Sibanga sub-county local government.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	15	18.75
Strongly agree	05	6.25
Disagree	35	43.75
Strongly disagree	10	12.5
Not sure	15	18.75
Total response	80	100%

Source: primary source (2023).

The above table depicts that 15 respondents agreed that local governments coordinate and manage disaster emergency events which constituted 18.75%, and those who strongly agreed were 05 respondents constituting 6.25%, and 15 of the respondents were not sure constituting 18.75%. There were 35 respondents who disagreed constituting 43.75%. While 10 respondents strongly disagreed constituting 12.5%. This meant that the majority of the respondents disagreed and confessed that they have never seen the district and sub-county local governments coordinating effective for disaster management. This means that this lack of effective coordination undermines the capacity of local governments to manage disasters in their localities.

Table 4: The table showing the response rate of the respondents on whether the local governments do provide relief services and participate in resettlement programs for disaster management in Manafwa district and Sibanga sub-county local government.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	25	31.25
Strongly agree	45	56.25
Disagree	06	7.5
Strongly disagree	03	3.75
Not sure	01	1.25
Total response	80	100%

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Source: primary source (2023).

The above table depicts that 45 respondents strongly agreed that local governments do provide relief services and participate in resettlement programs for disaster management which constituted 56.25%, and those who agreed were 25 respondents constituting 31.25%, only 1 of the respondents was no sure constituting 1.25%. There were 6 respondents who disagreed constituting 7.5%. While 03 respondents strongly disagreed constituting 3.75%. This meant that the majority of the respondents strongly agreed and confessed to have ever seen the district and sub-county disaster committees and officials working closely with the OPM, civil society pooling resources together and providing relief services as well as resettling victims and people in high risk areas.

Table 5: The table showing the response rate on whether heavy rains cause landslides in Sibanga sub-county in Manafwa district local government.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	25	31.25
Strongly agree	55	68.75
Disagree	00	00
Strongly disagree	00	00
Not sure	00	00
Total response	80	100%

Source: primary source (2023).

The above table depicts that 55 respondents strongly agreed that heavy rains caused landslides in Sibanga sub-county which constituted 68.75%, and those who agreed were 25 respondents constituting 31.25%, none of the respondents was no sure constituting 00%. There were 0 respondents who disagreed constituting 00%. While also 00 respondents strongly disagreed constituting 00%. This meant that the majority of the respondents strongly agreed that heavy rains are the biggest causes of landslides in Sibanga sub-county local government.

Table 6: The table showing the response rate on whether earth quakes cause landslides in Sibanga sub-county in Manafwa district local government.

Response	Frequency s	Percentage
Agree	35	43.75
Strongly agree	25	31.25
Disagree	06	7.5
Strongly disagree	03	3.75
Not sure	01	1.25
Total response	80	100%

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Source: primary source (2023).

The above table depicts that 25 respondents strongly agreed that earth quakes cause landslides which constituted 31.25%, and those who agreed were 35 respondents constituting 43.25%, only 1 of the respondents was no sure constituting 1.25%. There were 6 respondents who disagreed constituting 7.5%. While 03 respondents strongly disagreed constituting 3.75%. This meant that the majority of the respondents agreed and confessed to have ever witnessed earth quakes in Manafwa district and Sibanga sub-county.

Table 7: The table showing the response rate on whether human activities such as stone quarrying, faming, brick making among others are one of the causes of landslides in Sibanga sub-county of district local government.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	50	62.5
Strongly agree	25	31.25
Disagree	04	05
Strongly disagree	01	1.25
Not sure	00	00
Total response	80	100%

Source: primary source (2023).

The above table depicts that 25 respondents strongly agreed that human activities such as agriculture, stone quarrying and brick making are among the causes of landslides which constituted 31.25%, and those who agreed were 50 respondents constituting 62.5%, and none of the respondents was no sure constituting 00%. There were 4 respondents who disagreed constituting 05%. While 01 respondents strongly disagreed constituting 1.25%. This meant that the majority of the respondents agreed and confessed to have ever witnessed landslides due to human activities mentioned above in Manafwa district and Sibanga sub-county.

Table 8: The table showing response rate on training and skilling as a mechanism for enhancing the capacity of local governments in disaster management in Sibanga sub-county in Manafwa district local government.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	65	81.25
Agree	15	18.75
Disagree	00	00
Strongly disagree	00	00
Not sure	00	00
Total response	80	100%

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Source: primary source (2023).

The above table depicts that 65 respondents strongly agreed that training and skilling of local officials is feasible mechanism of enhancing their capacity for disaster management and preparedness which constituted 81.25%, and those who agreed were 15 respondents constituting 18.75%, and none of the respondents was no sure constituting 00%. There were no respondents who disagreed constituting 00%. While 00 respondents strongly disagreed constituting 00%. This meant that the majority of the respondents agreed that the government officials need to be trained and skilled for effective disaster management and preparedness in Manafwa district and Sibanga sub-county.

Table 9: The table showing the response rate on increased funding as a mechanism for enhancing the capacity of local governments in disaster management in Sibanga sub-county in Manafwa district local government.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	65	81.25
Strongly agree	15	18.75
Disagree	00	00
Strongly disagree	00	00
Not sure	00	00
Total response	80	100%

Source: primary source (2023).

The above table depicts that 65 respondents strongly agreed that there is need for increased funding for local government as feasible mechanism of enhancing their capacity for disaster management and preparedness which constituted 81.25%, and those who agreed were 15 respondents constituting 18.75%, and none of the respondents was no sure constituting 00%. There were no respondents who disagreed constituting 00%. While 00 respondents strongly disagreed constituting 00%. This meant that the majority of the respondents agreed that local government funding for local governments is essential for effective disaster management and preparedness in Manafwa district and Sibanga sub-county.

Table 10: The table showing the response rate on private-public partnerships as a mechanism for enhancing the capacity of local governments in disaster management in Sibanga sub-county in Manafwa district local government.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	20	25
Strongly agree	50	62.5
Disagree	05	6.25
Strongly disagree	03	3.75

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Not sure	02	2.5
Total response	80	100%

Source: primary source (2023).

The above table depicts that 50 respondents strongly agreed that there is need for public-private partnerships within local government as feasible mechanism of enhancing their capacity for disaster management and preparedness which constituted 62.5%, and those who agreed were 20 respondents constituting 25%, and 02 of the respondents were not sure constituting 2.5%. There were 05 respondents who disagreed constituting 6.25%. While 03 respondents strongly disagreed constituting 3.75%. This meant that the majority of the respondents agreed that public-private partnerships are essential in local governments for effective disaster management and preparedness in Manafwa district and Sibanga sub-county.

Table 11: The table showing the response rate on massive sensitization of the public as a mechanism for enhancing the capacity of local governments in disaster management in Sibanga sub-county in Manafwa district local government.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	50	62.5
Agree	20	25
Disagree	07	8.75
Strongly disagree	03	3.75
Not sure	00	00
Total response	80	100%

Source: primary source (2023).

The above table depicts that 50 respondents strongly agreed that there is need for public sensitization about the dangers of landslides within local government as feasible mechanism of enhancing their capacity for disaster management and preparedness which constituted 62.5%, and those who agreed were 20 respondents constituting 25%, and none of the respondents was not sure constituting 00%. There were 07 respondents who disagreed constituting 8.75%. While 03 respondents strongly disagreed constituting 3.75%. This meant that the majority of the respondents agreed that promoting public awareness of the dangers of landslides was essential in local governments for effective disaster management and preparedness in Manafwa district and Sibanga sub-county. It also shows the public campaigns help in changing people's mindset.

Table 12: The table showing the response rate on of respondents on the various challenges faced by local governments in disaster management in Sibanga sub-county in Manafwa district local government.

Response rate on challenges	Frequency	Percentage
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Limited funding	40	50
Political interference	10	12.5
Limited capacity of local officials	10	12.5
Community resistance	15	18.75
Lack of effective partnerships	05	6.25
Total response	80	100%

Source: primary source (2023).

The above table depicts that 50 confessed that there is a problem of limited funding for disaster management and preparedness which constituted 50%, and 10 respondents said there is political interference constituting 12.5%, and 10 of the respondents said there a problem of limited capacity by local officials to handle disasters constituting 12.5%. There were 15 respondents who of resisting government strategy of resettling them constituting 18.75%. While 05 respondents agreed that there is lack of effective partnerships for disaster management constituting 6.25%. This meant that the majority of the respondents agreed that insufficient funding is the biggest challenge facing local governments hindering effective disaster management and preparedness in Manafwa district and Sibanga sub-county.

Conclusions

Disaster preparedness is very essential in local government especially in risky localities like Sibanga sub-county and the nearby districts.

Local governments are very vital agents for disaster management preparedness in Uganda. This is because they are the government next to the people who live with the people in the same localities and better understand the needs of the local people. They are also potential victims of the landslides who may work with experience.

Recommendations

Government should strengthen the capacity of local government in disaster preparedness and management. This can be done through organizing capacity building workshops to train the local officials and local masses to enhance their skills in what they do and for self-help respectively.

The non-state agencies such as the religious institutions, the media and non-governmental organizations and donors, activists should become more supportive towards the local governments. Concerted efforts are very effective in managing landslides as the stakeholders tend to pool resources and share experience for better planning and implementation of local plans and activities.

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