

BEACH MANAGEMENT UNITS AND INTEGRATED LAKE MANAGEMENT

**Paper Presented at the International Workshop
on Community Participation in Fisheries
Management on Lake Victoria**

**IUCN - The World Conservation Union
and
Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation**

**Kisumu, Kenya
7-10 October 2003**

**Ivan Ebong¹
Monday Lwanga²
James Scullion³**

¹ Lake Management Specialist, Integrated Lake Management Project, Soroti, Uganda

² District Fisheries Officer, Department of Fisheries, Bushenyi District Local Government, Uganda

³ Team Leader, Integrated Lake Management Project, Kampala, Uganda

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	2
1.1 National Importance of Capture Fisheries.....	2
1.2 Ownership and Access to Capture Fisheries Resources	2
1.3 Threats to Fisheries Resources	3
2. PAST FISHERIES MANAGEMENT	4
3. NEW FISHERIES MANAGEMENT APPROACH	5
3.1 National Fisheries Policy and Plan	5
3.2 National Fisheries Legislation.....	7
3.3 Institutional Restructuring	8
4. BMUs AND CO-MANAGEMENT: WHAT'S NEW?	8
5. BENEFITS OF BMU MEMBERSHIP	9
6. THE ROLE OF BMUs IN NATIONAL POVERTY REDUCTION	12
7. ESTABLISHING BMUs IN ILM STRUCTURES	13
7.1 Background	13
7.2 LAGBIMO	13
7.3 LAKIMO	16
8. BMUs ROLES IN FISHERIES PLANNING	20
8.1 Training	20
8.2 Community data collection: a major breakthrough	20
8.3 BMUs in development planning	21
9. BMU ROLES IN CONTROLLING FISHERIES ACCESS	23
9.1 Decentralised fisheries licensing	23
9.2 BMUs and fisheries licensing	23
10. SUSTAINABLE FINANCING OF CO-MANAGEMENT	23
10.1 Financing BMUs	23
10.2 Financing lake wide management organisations	25
11. BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF BMUS	25
12. MONITORING THE PERFORMANCE OF BMUS	26
13. OPPORTUNITIES FOR LVFO	26

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 National Importance of Capture Fisheries

The fisheries sector makes significant contributions to poverty reduction and economic growth in Uganda. It does this in a number of different ways. First, it provides a source of direct employment, and livelihood support for about one million people. Secondly, it generates substantial economic benefits for the country. Recent evidence estimated the total value of the sector in 2002 to be about \$220 million and contributing 12% of total GDP in that year. This is a considerably higher estimate than previously reported in Government statistics. A major part of the total economic value (63%) was generated by domestic fisheries whilst the remainder (37%) resulted from the export of fish and fish products, contributing \$81 million in 2002. Fish currently ranks as Uganda's highest agricultural export earner and the considerable export revenues play an important role in contributing overall foreign exchange earning capability. Fish is very important in nutrition and food security. It provides vital nutrients and a source of animal protein, especially to the poor. It is estimated that capture fisheries feed about 17 million people at an estimated average annual per capita consumption of 10 kg. The species of fish that play an important role in food security and nutrition of the poor, differ from those supporting export earnings. The geographical distribution of the different species is a key factor influencing policy and management objectives on different water bodies.

1.2 Ownership and Access to Capture Fisheries Resources

In order to achieve wise use and sustainable management of fisheries resources, it is necessary for fisheries stakeholders to understand the nature of ownership of these wild resources and the rights of access to use and benefit from them. Fish resources of Uganda, and the waters and wetlands within which they live, are common property resources held in trust by Government on behalf of the people of Uganda. Common property means they are shared resources, shared by the people of Uganda and not private property. Held in trust means that the State does not own the resources but rather, retains overall mandate for taking care of these resources for the benefit of its people now and in the future as directed by the Constitution of Uganda. This function introduces the important concept of good stewardship of fisheries resources undertaken by the State on behalf of its people. Access to use, and profit from these common property resources is one of the key aspects of fisheries management.

In Uganda, it is often thought that, with the exception of lakes Edward, George and Wamala, all other capture fisheries are "open access", meaning almost anyone can become fishers. In legal terms, this is not true since the State uses a licensing system as a means to control access. According to the law, fishing boats require licences and fishermen require permits. In practice, however, licensing has not been widely used as a management tool. It is only on the above mentioned lakes where an upper limit to fishing boat numbers has been set by the State to control the amount of fishing effort. On all other waters, local governments use licensing as a way of raising local income through taxation but not for resource management.

The principle underpinning the licensing system is that the user must pay for the right to access, and benefit from fisheries resources. Obviously, the whole population of Uganda, who share these resources, cannot all have direct access to them since this would quickly lead to the destruction of the resources by too much fishing effort. However, being shared resources, the population has a right to benefit from these resources too. It can do this through the consumption of fish as high quality food, for which it must pay. Secondly, the revenue raised by government from fisheries licensing and taxation can be used to provide wider social services (e.g. schools, clinics, roads) to the non-fisheries population.

The licensing system, seen in this way, is not only a management tool to control access and fishing effort, but also a means of more widely dividing and distributing the shares of benefits to be derived from fisheries resources. Because of its critical importance to resource management, and in view of an expanding human population putting increasing pressure on fisheries resources, it is essential that future access to fisheries resources is controlled through setting limits to the number of licensed operators. The international Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, to which Uganda is a signatory, strongly advocates for an end to "open access" fisheries since they are not sustainable. In Uganda, progress is being made using licensing to developing controlled but more equitable access agreements made in a participatory and transparent way in partnership with resource users. This is discussed in more detail in Section 9.

1.3 Threats to Fisheries Resources

Inadequate understanding of the significant contributions made by capture fisheries in fighting poverty and boosting economic growth has resulted in meagre central

government budget allocations apportioned to the sector. This has undermined the ability of the sector to fulfil management responsibilities. In addition, past management approaches have not involved local people and local governments have not understood the importance of resource management. As a result, the routine collection of fisheries information (statistics) upon which to base plans and management decisions is inadequate or lacking, management rules face widespread non-compliance and management capabilities are insufficient to safeguard resources.

Consequently, fish resources and the many livelihoods they support in Uganda are threatened by the use of illegal and destructive fishing gears and methods, especially when used on fish breeding grounds. One of their most damaging effects is the capture of young, immature fish and its subsequent illegal processing and marketing. Increasing human population has led to increased fishing pressure, which in turn creates problems of overfishing and resource depletion. In the absence of effective integrated management, factors outside fisheries also pose a threat. These include a range of environmental problems such as soil erosion and siltation, agro-chemical, industrial and domestic pollution, eutrophication, and destruction of wetlands.

2. PAST FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

Fisheries management in the past was under the control of central Government using out-posted fisheries staff. The administration and management was based on a centralised "command and control" approach. There was very little or no participation by fisheries communities in resource planning, management and development. Prior to decentralisation, local head fishermen, known as *Gabungas*, controlled fishing operations at fish landing sites. At some fish landing sites, Landing Site Committees (LSC) were established under promotion by Government. With the advent of decentralisation, and an episode of serious fish poisoning in the late 1990s, came the establishment of Fisheries Task Forces formed to curb fish poisoning. At about the same time, on lakes where fishing boat numbers were legally controlled e.g. Lakes George, Edward and Wamala, lake wide Fish Rehabilitation Committees were set up to reduce illegal fisheries activities.

Gabungas, landing site committees and task forces were not democratically elected, their functions were not clearly defined and their operations often lacked transparency and accountability. The decentralisation policy is designed to transfer

many decision-making responsibilities and service delivery to local governments. Whilst the State retains overall mandate for taking care of fisheries resources, both local governments and the State are responsible for ensuring the conservation and rational use of natural resources. Despite their new responsibility, many local governments have inadequately addressed issues of fisheries management. They have, however, recognised the importance of these resources as a source of local government revenue generated through various taxes and fees, but have reinvested too little of this income towards sustainably managing fish resources.

Despite the existence of *Gabungas*, landing site committees and fisheries taskforces, the process of decentralisation has not sufficiently protected fisheries resources and the many livelihoods dependent on these resources. A new management approach is therefore needed. It is within this background that the leaders of the fisheries sector realised that there was need for radical change if resources were to be used wisely and livelihoods, especially of the poor, were to be secured. Precisely how this is being achieved and how it relates to legally empowered Beach Management Units (BMUs) and integrated lake management are outlined in the following sections of this paper.

3. NEW FISHERIES MANAGEMENT APPROACH

3.1 National Fisheries Policy and Plan

The fisheries sector is undergoing a period of major transition during which reforms are underway to develop and improve national policy, legislation and institutional efficiencies. The transition involves improvements in civil society organisation, closer links between communities, private industry and government, improved linkages between different levels of government and between different government sectors that have traditionally remained largely disconnected.

For decades, the fisheries sector in Uganda has been managed without an explicit policy document. It is only in 2000 that the DFR began a participatory process to formulate a new and visionary National Fisheries Policy (NFP). The policy-making process involved a wide range of stakeholders at all levels and therefore took quite a long-time, finally resulting in the policy being submitted to Cabinet in 2003.

The policy strongly promotes a new and exciting management approach involving local people in the co-management of fisheries resources in partnership with local governments throughout the country. There has been much publicity about problems on Uganda's lakes, such as overfishing, catching immature fish and using illegal fishing methods. This new approach means that for the first time local people will be involved in monitoring fishing activities and in making decisions about how the lakes are managed. Local people will work alongside local government fishery officers, together working towards better management and more productive fisheries. They will be supported by the Government's Department of Fisheries Resources (DFR).

It is also an approach in which communities control the access to and the share of benefits from fisheries resources in partnership with local governments. In this new co-management approach adopted throughout Uganda, Beach Management Units provide the institutional structure within which fisheries stakeholders will work in partnership with local governments and the State to improve planning and to sustainably manage fisheries resources.

The fisheries sector operates under the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) and the over-arching Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture (PMA) and Government's policy on decentralisation. In its shift to co-management, the sector is clearly putting the general principles underpinning the PMA into practice. The fisheries policy also highlights the need to link directly with the National Agricultural Advisory Services, an innovative vehicle of the PMA designed to provide publicly funded, privately delivered demand-driven advisory services to farmers and fishers. Here, there is need for continued efforts by the sector to increase awareness of NAADS policy makers of the relevance and importance of integrating capture fisheries within the NAADS framework. This requires NAADS fiscal and policy reform related to capture fisheries and other common property natural resources. It is using these bodies to influence NAADS in key areas of fiscal reform with major relevance for the fisheries sector. The DFR is advocating the establishment of special funds established at district level to support common property natural resources. These will be used to provide capacity support through training of BMUs and other advisory service support such as the local delivery of research.

The fisheries policy is put into action through the development of a new national Fisheries Sector Strategic Plan (FSSP). This plan is nearing finalisation and provides a framework for the allocation of central budget support operating under the national

Medium Term Expenditure Framework. The FSSP provides an entry point for support both from Government and from international development partners using national budget support mechanisms and a Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) to development planning and budgeting. The FSSP provides the national planning framework within which local government plans (District and Sub-County Development Plans) are made.

3.2 National Fisheries Legislation

The Fish Act (1964) is the principal legislation for managing fisheries in Uganda. It directs the control of fishing, the conservation of fish, the purchase, sale, marketing and processing of fish. The Fish Act is old and needs revision to reflect the changes that have occurred in the fisheries, especially in recent years, and to align it to the new fisheries policy. Efforts to revise the Act by the Department of Fisheries Resources are on-going but in the meantime, DFR has introduced additional fisheries legislation that is urgently needed in key areas.

It has achieved this through the development of a series of Statutory Instruments. The most visionary of these is new legislation establishing co-management of fisheries resources⁴. The Government has made a major leap forward in trusting its people to co-manage resources in partnership with local governments. This has been achieved through legislation empowering the formation of community Beach Management Units for fisheries planning and management.

A second key area relates to control of access to fisheries. Legislation introduced in December 2001 delegated licensing powers from the centre (DFR) to district governments. On lakes receiving project support from Integrated Lake Management, new poverty focussed and gender sensitive licensing procedures were designed and implemented that significantly improved equitable access to resources (Section 9).

A third area of legislative development relates to the introduction of a new tax on trading fish involving the issue of a Fish Movement Permit. A part of the revenue generated locally by the issue of the permit is designated under the new BMU Statute to fund BMU operations (see Section 10).

⁴ The Fishing (Beach Management) Rules, Statutory Instrument No. 35, 11 July 2003

3.3 Institutional Restructuring

Fisheries structural reform is taking place simultaneously at three levels - micro, meso- and macro-level, with new links between these levels. At micro-level, or village level, a national network of 500-700 community BMUs is being created. At meso-level, new integrated lake management organisations are being formed as local government associations that cut across district boundaries to include whole lake ecosystems. At macro-level, the DFR is in the process of transforming into a new National Fisheries Authority to improve its institutional efficiency and service delivery.

4. BMUs AND CO-MANAGEMENT: WHAT'S NEW?

The Establishment of a national network of BMUs requires extensive awareness raising programmes implemented at different levels. During these programmes it is vitally important that the reasons for transforming past local management institutions into BMUs under co-management are clearly explained and fully understood by stakeholders. The differences between them need to be clearly understood by all stakeholders. The key differences that have been presented so far during sensitisation programmes on lakes George, Edward and Kyoga are outlined below.

(i) Legal Powers

The BMU is the first community organisation to be legally empowered under the Fish Act for planning and management purposes. Past fisheries management institutions were not legally recognised institutions. This is a major and visionary step taken by the State in entrusting management through effective partnership between local governments and civil society resource dependents.

(ii) Representation and democracy

The BMU includes all fisheries stakeholders and represents their interests in its operations. Past institutions did not do this. The latter were typically dominated by the more influential members within fisheries communities and largely excluded the poorer labour force and women. BMUs use free and fair elections by all members to elect BMU Committee members, past institutions were more exclusive, less transparent, often involving only boat owners.

(iii) Inclusion of the poor: affirmative action

Fishing crew are amongst the poorest members of fishing communities. They can now join the BMU and even stand for election. They will be involved in planning and decision-making. Their interests and concerns will be reflected in decisions made. BMUs will ensure that crew members have at least 30% of the seats on the BMU Committee. Past institutions did not normally include poorer crew members.

(iv) Empowering women

For too long, women's interests in the fisheries sector have been marginalized. They have not been allowed to be involved in making decisions and have had limited access to fishing and related activities. The BMUs will promote the role of women by ensuring that they hold equal rights in membership to men and that they have at least 30% of the seats on the BMU Committee. Exemptions to this will only be allowed where there are not enough women members present, though efforts must be made to promote women's interests in fisheries. Women largely bear the responsibility of feeding their families and must have better access to resources to increase their income. Past institutions did not have this gender sensitivity.

(v) Forming higher associations

BMUs can legally associate with other BMUs to form higher level assemblies for lake wide management. Past institutions were not legally empowered to do this.

(vi) Collecting and using fisheries information

BMUs have a legal responsibility for the collection of fisheries planning information, past institutions did not. With their new powers of fisheries planning and management, they will need information upon which to base their decisions.

(vii) Making management plans

BMU have many more functions than past institutions, especially in terms of planning by linking with and influencing national and local government development planning.

5. BENEFITS OF BMU MEMBERSHIP

For BMUs to succeed in co-management, the incentives of being a member of a BMU must be very clear for all individuals in different stakeholder groups. The key benefits that have been presented, among others, during sensitisation programmes on lakes George, Edward and Kyoga are outlined below.

(i) Legal access to resources

The only legal right of access to exploit fisheries resources through designated landing sites is by joining a BMU. If fishing crew, fishing boat owners, fish processors or fishmongers, etc do not join, then they cannot operate legally in fisheries.

(ii) Decision making and control of access to resources

Fisheries stakeholders within fishing communities register as a member of a BMU and thereby become part of the BMU Assembly. Membership allows active involvement in decision-making processes governing the management of fisheries resources in partnership with local government by attending BMU Assembly meetings and standing for election to the BMU Committee.

Membership allows the opportunity, in partnership with local government, to control access to fisheries resources by being involved in fisheries licensing procedures that may decide to limit numbers and types of fishing boats and gears. Membership also allows the chance to be able to set management rules locally and at lake wide level through developing by-laws and ordinances in consonance with national law.

(iii) Making fisheries management plans

BMUs have, for the first time, a legal mandate to make local and lake wide fisheries management plans. In order to do this well, they will need reliable information. They also have the mandate to collect, analyse and use information for planning and management purposes. It is now in their own interest to ensure good quality information is collected and used locally in their planning meetings.

(iv) Improved compliance with fisheries rules

Sustainable use of lake resources, especially fish, requires that all users of the resource comply with the laws governing that lake. The involvement of local fisheries stakeholders in periodically reviewing management rules, setting local rules and lobbying to change nationally-set rules, should lead to more appropriate rules being made. This, in itself, should lead to greater compliance with rules and regulations.

BMUs are, however, legally empowered to enforce fisheries laws, inspect visiting boats, conduct patrols and generally ensure compliance with legislation. This localised "Monitoring, Control and Surveillance" (MCS), when linked to more appropriate rules being made, agreed by the majority of stakeholders, should result

in considerable improvement in compliance and a reduction in illegal, harmful fishing practices.

(v) *Improved sanitation and healthy environment*

Under the Statutory Instrument, BMUs have powers to enforce safety guidelines for fish quality assurance, sanitation and fishing operations in their area of jurisdiction. Improved fish handling, sanitation and waste disposal will not only make the lake and the landing sites safer places to work, but will guarantee good quality fish for the market. Improved safety of fishermen on water is in the best interest of all.

(vi) *BMUs as advocacy groups*

BMUs will also act as advocacy groups, using their amalgamated experience and knowledge to lobby government at all levels for improvements and changes, where necessary, in policies and laws that affect them. When BMUs join with other BMUs to form bigger and stronger organisations, their voice will have a bigger impact. Their lobbying force will be especially powerful where they are part of a larger lake wide management organisation.

(vii) *BMUs as an avenue for attracting training and funding*

As organised groups with a strong, clear purpose and mandate, BMUs will attract training programmes to improve various management skills of their members. In addition to being able to legally raise local revenue for their operations, they are likely to attract investment and improvement of facilities from other development initiatives, leading to improved services, more employment and improved income generation within their communities.

(viii) *BMUs as an avenue for local government development planning*

BMUs are organisations at the grassroots level. They will provide an important avenue for mobilizing communities for development purposes. They will provide experienced and stable community groups that are able to link with, and engage in, broader annual development planning cycles and processes. For the purposes of integrating environment and natural resources issues into development planning, using BMUs, who already have experienced planning on a quarterly basis, will not only reduce time, effort and costs in annual planning for this particular sub-sector but also contribute usefully to wider local development planning. This again should result in improved services and facilities and increased income generation and living standards within their communities.

(viii) Resource productivity and livelihood benefits

Less harmful and illegal fishing and fish trading combined with the implementation of other improved management strategies, will lead to increased productivity of fisheries resources. This in turn, will lead to improved fisheries livelihoods through increased incomes, employment opportunities and food security.

6. THE ROLE OF BMUs IN NATIONAL POVERTY REDUCTION

BMUs will involve women and the poor in decision-making structures and processes to ensure their interests are included in the management and sustainable use of the resources. The fisheries sector goal, as set out in the national Fisheries Sector Strategic Plan, is to see:

"Poverty in fisheries communities eradicated and the sector contribution to national economic growth maximised".

The priority areas of action in the FSSP that contribute directly to poverty reduction are to:

Establish, and build the capacity of, a nationwide network of Beach Management Units for fisheries co-management. About 700 BMUs will form a network of higher level BMUs and will work with local and central government. These grass root fisheries custodians will safeguard the resources upon which their livelihoods depend by reducing harmful and illegal fisheries activities on water and land.

Improve post harvest quality and safety to increase exports, whilst ensuring small-scale fish processors and traders, who are often women, benefit. The competitiveness of, and investment in, the sector must be increased to deliver this. BMUs will be a major vehicle for increased investment by promoting members with similar fisheries business interests to form associations to maximize the profitability of their enterprises. The BMUs will also promote sanitation and hygiene at landing sites to improve fish quality and safety.

Promote community-based information collection, use and transfer systems and integrate with local and central government systems. A major constraint on

sector planning has been the absence or inadequacy of fisheries data. It is expected that through BMUs, fisheries information will be collected and used starting at community level to enable local people, including women and the poor, to contribute to decision-making, planning and management.

Develop and support institutional arrangements for sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction within the fisheries sector, operational and sustainably funded at all stakeholder levels. The fisheries sector is undergoing major transformation. This involves building a network of BMUs as a grass roots institutional foundation operating within lake wide management organisations under the guidance and support of a central fisheries management body.

7. ESTABLISHING BMUs IN ILM STRUCTURES

7.1 Background

The ILM project is supporting the Government in the establishment of an integrated lake management approach on lakes George and Kyoga. Lake fish resources are highly mobile and not restrained by man-made administrative boundaries. In order to protect and use these resources wisely requires a single lake wide organisation that brings together the many and varied stakeholders from different levels and sectors who have an interest in maintaining the health of the lake.

In bringing these stakeholders together in a single forum, issues on both land and water can be discussed, differences of opinion expressed, agreements reached locally, and cohesive and effective management plans developed and implemented in a coordinated manner. This involves helping local communities and governments develop institutional structures, processes and plans. Lake George being the smaller lake (280 km²), covering 3 districts and containing only 8 landing sites, was selected as a pilot area for the transfer of lessons learned to the larger Lake Kyoga (2,800 km²) covering 10 districts, 50 sub-counties and 420 landings.

7.2 LAGBIMO

Ownership of the institutional development process

The local District Governments of Bushenyi, Kamwenge and Kasese worked with communities around Lake George and national Government institutions for three years (2000-2003) to create a lake wide institution for planning and managing the

natural resources of the lake and its basin for the social and economic benefit of lake dependent communities. The process was driven by an Institutional Development Working Group (IDWG) with representatives from local communities, sub-county and district governments and national agencies including the Department of Fisheries Resources, Directorate of Water Development, National Environment Management Authority, Wetlands Inspection Division and Uganda Wildlife Authority.

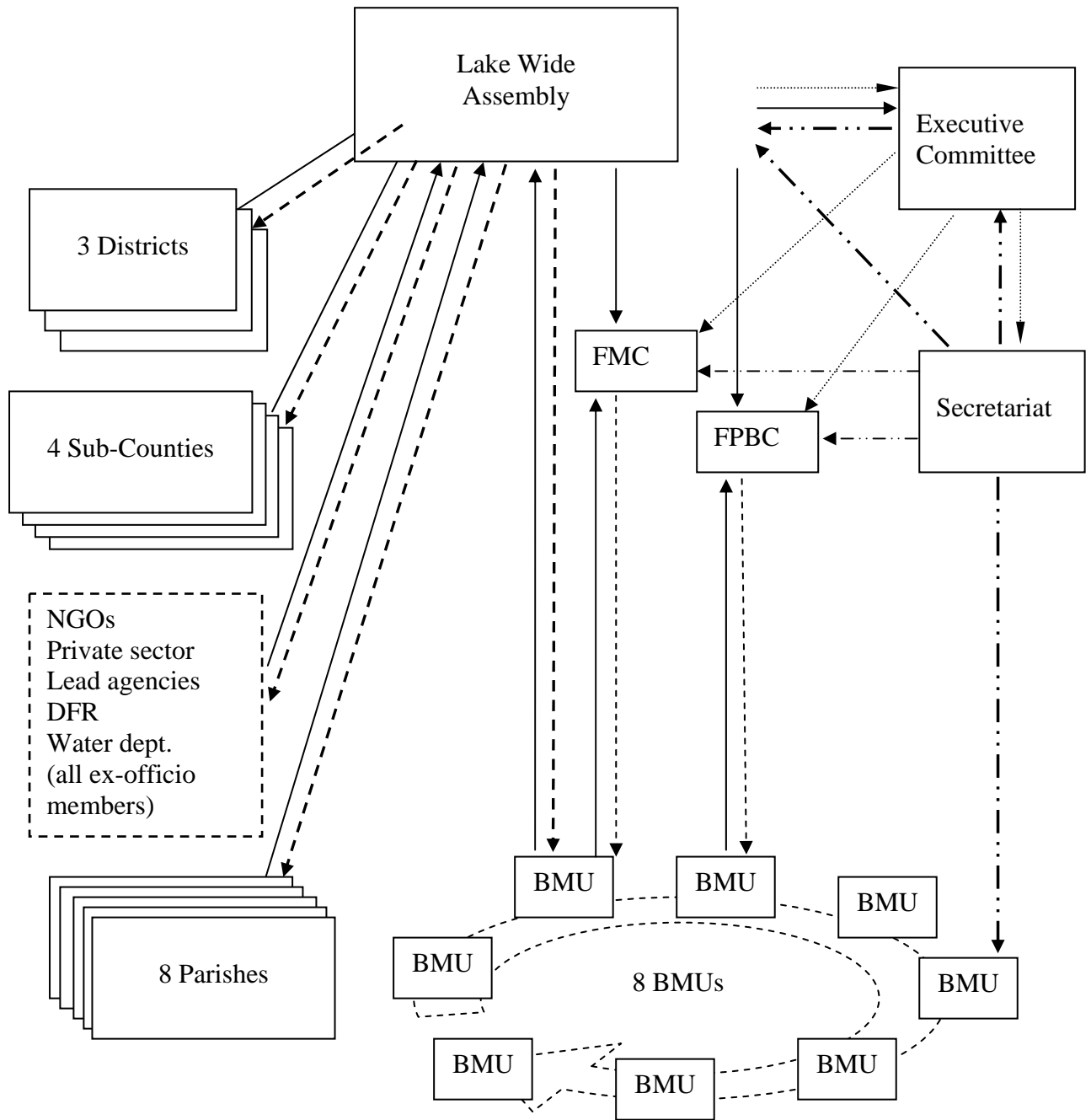
Integrated legally empowered structure

All their wisdom, hard work, patience and determination finally paid off and culminated in the establishment of the Lake George Basin Integrated Management Organisation (LAGBIMO) in March 2003 (Figure 1). This is the first organisation of its kind located totally within the borders of Uganda. The organisation brings together district and sub-county government representatives from different sectors, civil society stakeholders, private industry and NGOs as an Association under the Local Government Act, 1997. The LAGBIMO structure is based on a solid, legally empowered institutional foundation made up of community BMUs. Representatives from BMUs come together with representatives from different sectors of local and national government to form the LAGBIMO Lake Wide Assembly (LWA). Here, private industry and NGOs are also represented. The Lake Wide Assembly has an Executive Committee and the whole organisation is served by a small permanent Secretariat with an office in Kasese District. Two standing committees have also been formed to meet at least at quarterly intervals. They are the Fisheries Management Committee (FMC) and the Finance, Planning and Budgeting Committee (FPBC). BMU representatives form the majority in the FMC.

Civil society, especially the poor and marginalised, are given a voice

Careful consideration and deliberate actions have been taken to ensure BMUs play a pivotal role within LAGBIMO structures and processes. Representatives from BMUs form the most essential part of the membership of LAGBIMO Lake Wide Assembly within which they work with members from local and national government, private industry and NGOs. The poorer stakeholders who were previously marginalized from decision-making, for example, fishing crew members, are legally allocated one of three posts as representatives of each BMU to the Lake Wide Assembly. There is also a specific allocation of BMU representatives on the LAGBIMO Executive Committee.

Figure 1 LAGBIMO Structure



Women are given a fair deal

Considerable attention has also been focussed on the need to give women a much more active role in decision-making processes. This is evidenced by the allocation of 30% of seats on each BMU committee, a 30% representation from each BMU to the LAGBIMO Lake Wide Assembly and a 25% allocation of BMU representation on the higher LAGBIMO Executive Committee. These allocations have legal backing through the LAGBIMO Constitution and BMU Guidelines to the Statutory Instrument.

Government connected at all levels

The LAGBIMO structure has been carefully designed to ensure that there is a close working relationship between civil society, local governments and key central government institutions. The LAGBIMO Assembly provides a forum for different ministries to meet, discuss and plan together with BMU representatives and various administrative and political representatives from districts and sub-counties. In this way, LAGBIMO forges links that were weakened or broken by decentralisation and joins government from top to bottom to connect them to grassroots communities.

7.3 LAKIMO

Ten district local governments are currently working with communities around Lake Kyoga and national Government institutions to create the Lake Kyoga Integrated Management Organisation (LAKIMO). It is expected to be established in early 2004. The process is being driven, as on George, by an Institutional Development Working Group with representations from local communities, governments and national agencies. The Lake Kyoga IDWG has presented a draft LAKIMO constitution to stakeholders and it is currently being ratified by the ten district councils. The proposed structure of LAKIMO is shown in Figure 2.

Scaling up the institutional development process

Scaling up the institutional development process from the smaller Lake George with 8 landing sites to Kyoga with 420 landings meant that a different approach in integrating the BMUs into the overall structure had to be taken. For instance, all BMUs on Lake George are well represented in the LAGBIMO structures. This is not possible on Kyoga since there are about 180 BMUs to be formed across the 420 fish landings. Therefore, some form of BMU associations is needed to provide representation at the lake wide level. This will be achieved, as shown in Figure 3,

Figure 2 LAKIMO Structure

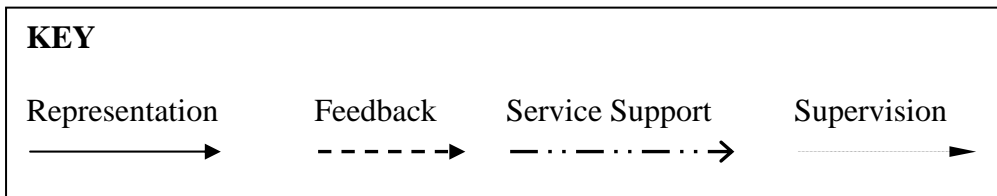
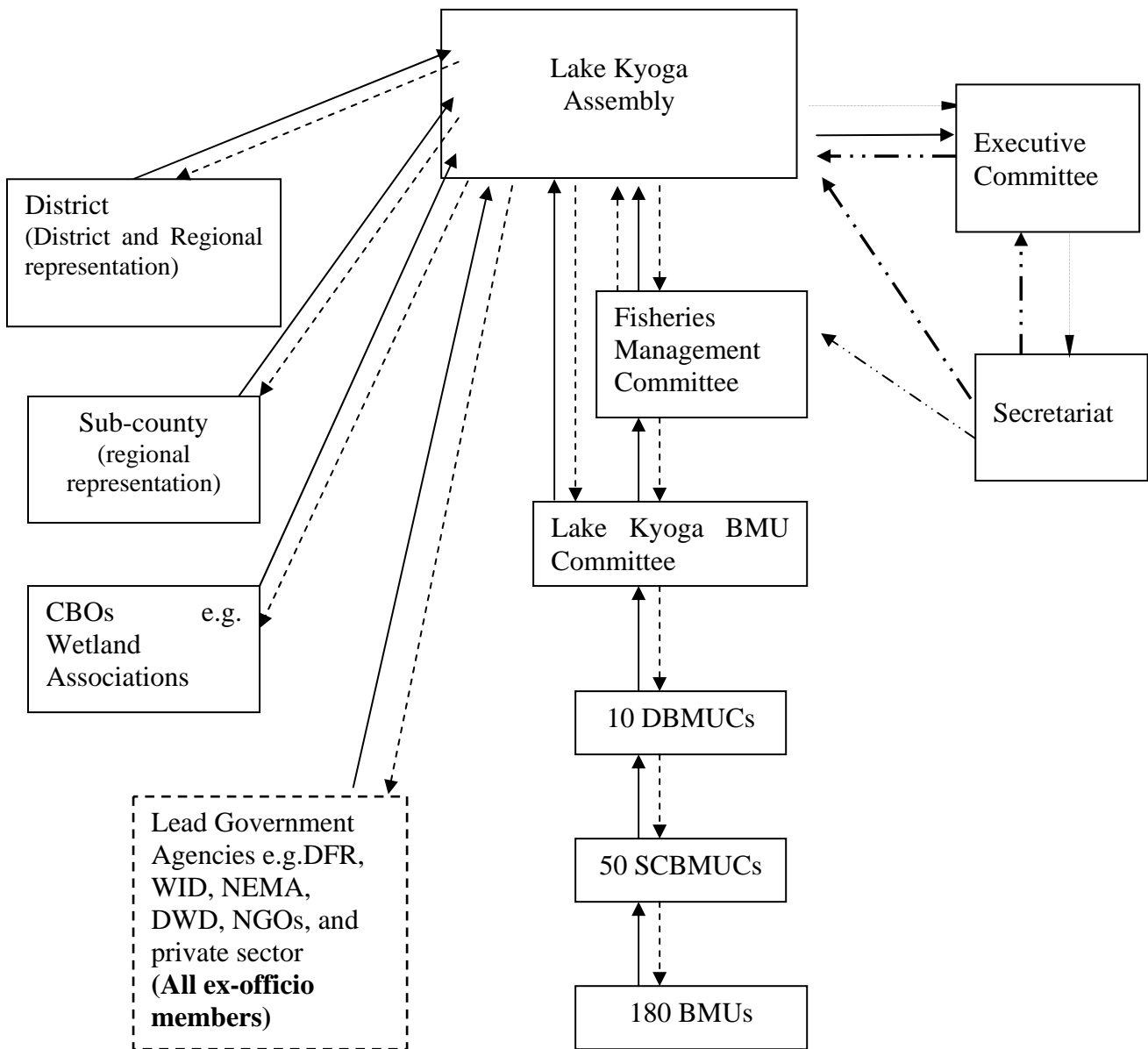
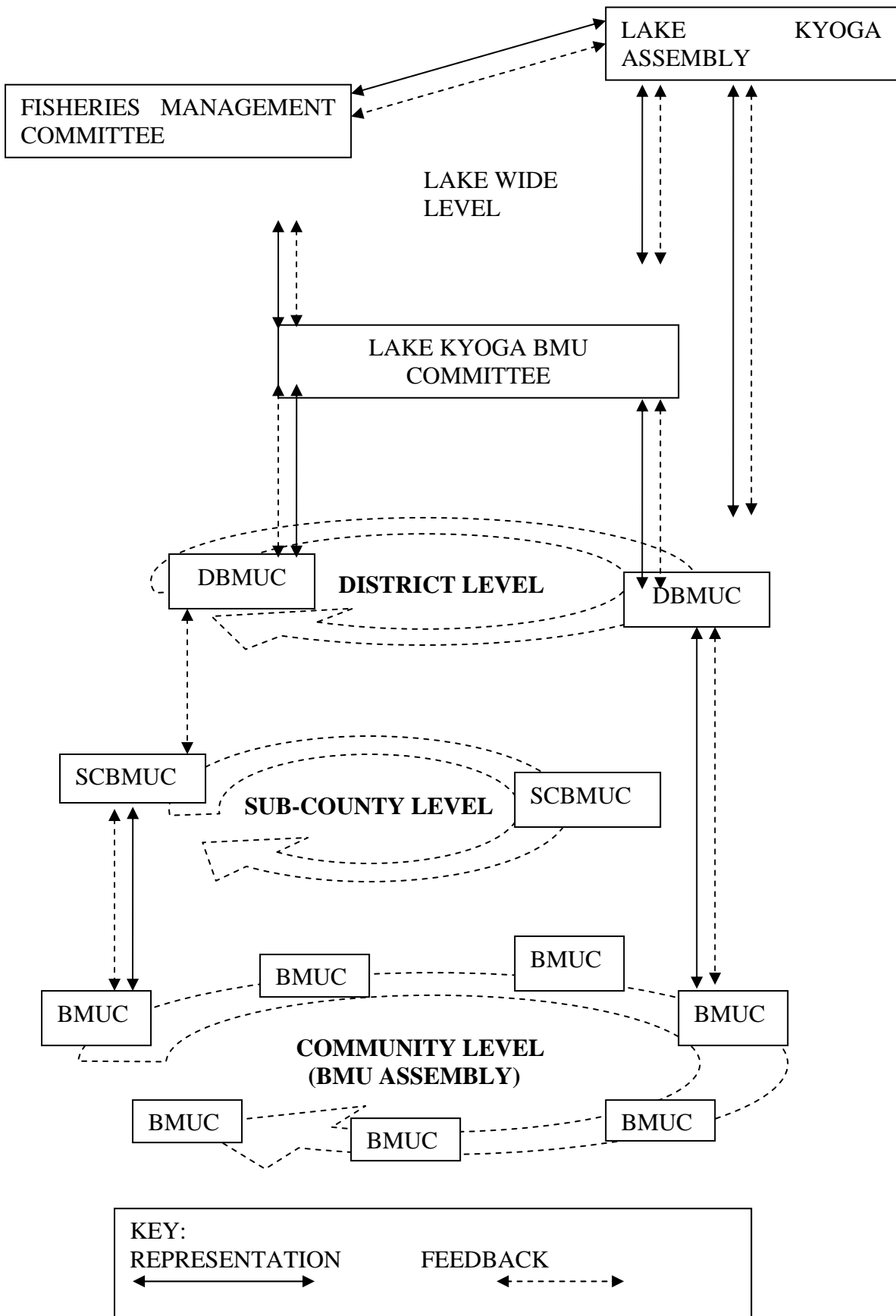


Figure 3 BMU Associations within LAKIMO



by forming sub-county and district BMU Committees (BMUCs). Representatives from district BMUCs will form a Lake Kyoga BMUC and all members of this committee will also be members of the LAKIMO LWA. The Lake Kyoga BMUC will probably also link with government to form a Fisheries Management Committee.

Awareness raising out-reach programme

The setting up of 180 BMUs on Lake Kyoga started in February 2003 with a series of three inter-district awareness raising workshops for district and sub-county government leaders. These were combined with training workshops for government "change agents" during which about 120 staff were trained to deliver an information package on BMUs and co-management to communities in 420 landings and to other government staff and council members in 50 sub-counties. This extensive out-reach programme was monitored by district government staff. Additional awareness raising workshops were held for local civil society organisations whose members served as monitoring agents.

Identification of BMU locations and registration of BMU members

Following the initial sensitisation programme, the same trained change agents then supported the process of identifying locations for 180 BMUs. Once this was completed, registration of BMU members was undertaken at 180 sites covering 420 landings. Care was taken that stakeholders fully understood the importance of registering in BMUs. Consequently, this process took up to 5 days at each landing followed by steps to verify registration books by local leaders to ensure transparency of the process and its results. The registration process was completed in August 2003.

Election of BMU Committee members

A further round of support is currently on-going to elect BMU Committee members using standard procedures outlined in draft national guidelines. This is quite a complicated process involving two round of elections at each BMU held on the same day. This is needed to ensure that stakeholder representation of the BMUC adheres to the Guidelines (30% crew; 30% boat owners; 10% fishmongers; 30% others as defined in the law, with an overall 30% allocation of places to women). Election of BMUCs is scheduled for completion in October 2003.

8. BMUs ROLES IN FISHERIES PLANNING

8.1 Training

One of the principal functions of BMUs is planning. They must help make plans, implement them and monitor their impacts. Reliable information is a prerequisite of sound planning. One of the great global challenges to the management of artisanal fisheries management is the provision of accurate information upon which to base management plans. One solution to address this problem is to use a co-management approach in which communities themselves, supported by local governments, are involved in fisheries information collection and analysis to improve planning and management of the lake resources.

The ILM project has supported this approach and provided guidance in establishing sustainable information collection, analysis and transfer systems at all levels. ILM and DFR have developed a fisheries information collection and analysis system based on the FAO system introduced to Uganda in the early nineties. A series of training workshops held at quarterly intervals has been on-going for almost two years on Lake George, and more recently, on the neighbouring Lake Edward. Similar workshops started on Kyoga in July this year.

The workshops aim at building the capacity of communities and local fisheries staff in collecting, analysing and using fisheries information for resource planning and management. The training improved understanding amongst communities of the importance of the fisheries information in addressing resource management issues. The involvement of the communities in data collection has created and promoted a sense of ownership of the information and the collection process. The training sessions were also used to monitor progress and discuss constraints on the community-based collection system. In addition, trained community data collectors and leaders receive mentoring and guidance through regular monitoring visits to landing sites by fisheries staff.

8.2 Community data collection: a major breakthrough

At community level, the project has encouraged communities to support a community information collector to collect and compile information on the fish catch, value and fishing effort. To help compile accurate and reliable information, ILM facilitated the

process by providing the weighing scales, calculators, information storage facilities and protective wear for the data collectors. The communities remunerate the collectors by offering fish from the landed catch on the data recording days. This represents a major breakthrough in fisheries information collection. Communities recognise the importance to themselves in collecting information and using it in fisheries management planning. Within LAGBIMO, BMUs are compiling this information for use by the Fisheries Management Committee supported by the . LAGBIMO Secretariat.

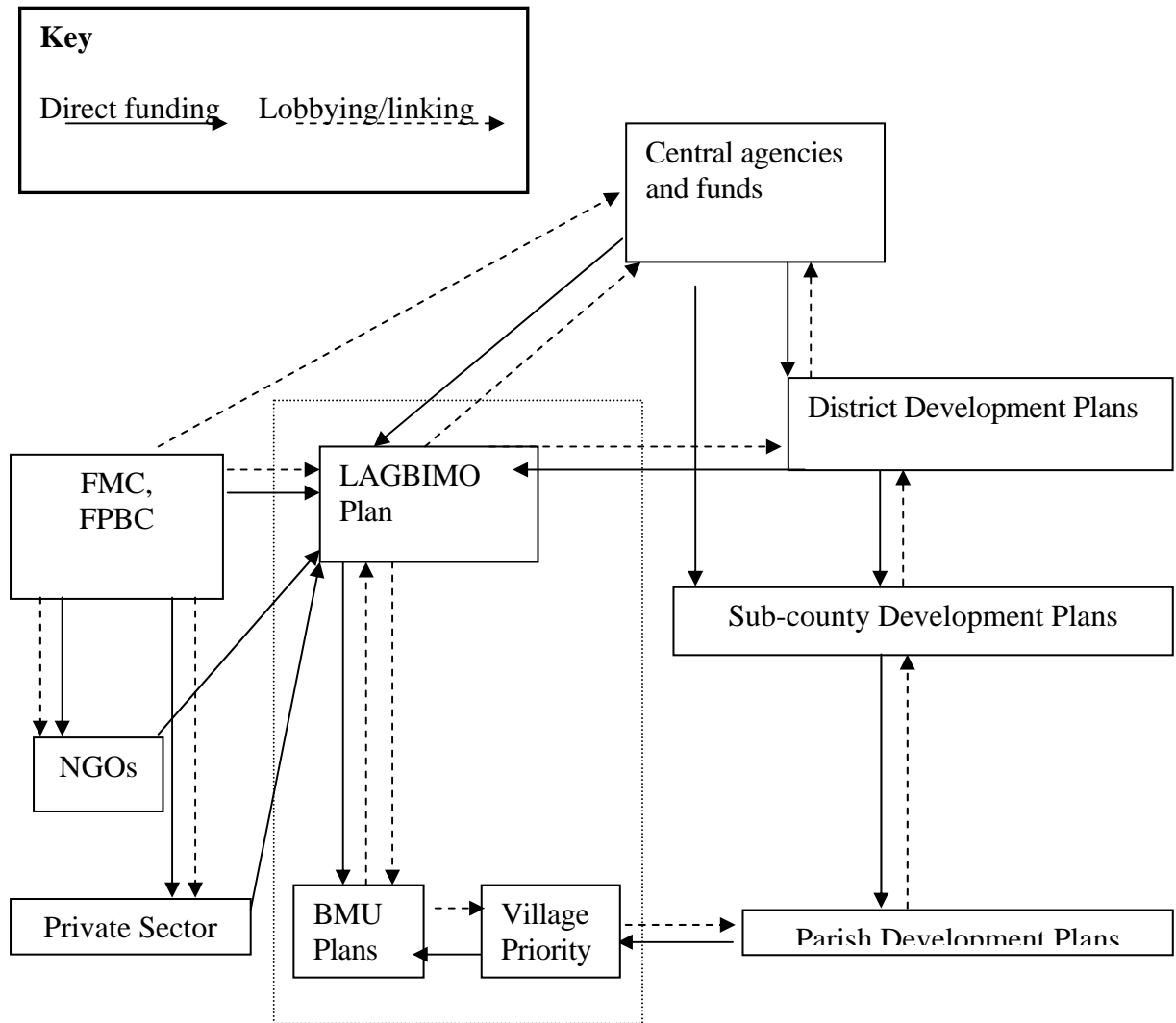
8.3 BMUs in development planning

BMUs are responsible for developing and implementing local and lake wide fisheries management plans and more holistic beach development plans within their area of jurisdiction that can cover the entire shoreline of a given parish. They will advocate for the integration of lake wide plans, where relevant, and local plans into parish development plans using village plans as a entry point (Figure 4). They will also collaborate with local government partners in the collection, use and dissemination of not only fisheries but other types of information, especially environmental information for the improved management of resources. In LAGBIMO, this is achieved through the Finance, Planning and Budgeting Committee (FPBC) working closely with the FMC under the supervision of the Executive Committee.

BMUs will have strategic importance as organised groups within the community and will be in an advantageous position to influence events in their communities. Because they are legally empowered they will have an advantage over other groups in accessing government support. As an organised fisheries group they are eligible for NAADS technical support. They can also access funding from PMA. It is important to emphasise that BMUs will not only plan for natural resource management, they will also plan in a more holistic manner taking into account service delivery issues that affect their livelihoods, such as water supply, sanitation, health care and roads.

BMUs will provide entry points into community based planning for the integration of environmental and natural resources concerns into local government development planning systems. These planning initiatives are being spearheaded on Lake George as a model for other parts of the country.

Figure 4 Planning systems within LAGBIMO



9. BMU ROLES IN CONTROLLING FISHERIES ACCESS

9.1 Decentralised fisheries licensing

One of the most radical changes to take place on Lakes George and Edward in the last fifty years occurred December 2001 when the centre delegated responsibility for fisheries licensing to district governments. This follows years of discontent and grumbling within landing site communities about the lack of access to fishing licences. It is radical because, for the first time since 1952, new boats have been licensed to fish on the lakes. Secondly, with ILM support, the exercise was done in a participatory, transparent and accountable manner, involving communities, local leaders, local government and DFR in the selection of new licensees. Thirdly, for the first time, poor marginalized groups such as barias and women were allotted a licence quota.

This change was made through an amendment to laws concerning national fisheries licensing procedures produced by DFR in line with the revised national fisheries policy. Under the new Statutory Instrument, licensing powers are now delegated from central to district governments. New procedures developed on these two lakes and agreed at district, sub-county and parish levels, comply with national guidelines and incorporate a clear focus on equitable licence distribution, taking into account livelihoods dependency and gender balance. This change in licensing procedure is designed to serve as a model for other lakes.

9.2 BMUs and fisheries licensing

With the establishment of BMUs on lakes George and Kyoga, BMU Committee members are currently involved as part of village level Verification Committees that scrutinise annual licence applications and make recommendations on each applicant to a District Selection Board. Thus, BMUs are already playing a key role in controlling access to fisheries resources of these two lakes.

10. SUSTAINABLE FINANCING OF CO-MANAGEMENT

10.1 Financing BMUs

The fisheries sector generates significant revenue. Not only is fish a big export earner for Uganda, it generates even more revenue for local communities and local government. Some of these resources will be ploughed back into the management of

lake resources through both BMUs and local government. Money from fish movement permits, profits from fish landing site tenders and collection of fish or money per boat landing (as determined through bylaws) will generate revenue to enable BMUs to meet, collect valuable information, plan and implement decisions and monitor fisheries activities. The BMU legislation has three provisions for financial reform (i) retention of 25% of the money generated from issuing fish movement permits at the fish landing site; (ii) profit generated from tender holding for those BMUs who may win district fish landing site tenders; and, (iii) collection of a number of fish or a set value per boat landing as established through by-laws vetted by local councils.

None of these methods is entirely satisfactory. The first is an added tax introduced by the centre to enable it to track the origin of fish and its movement after landing. This is a traceability requirement imposed on the export fishery by the EU in relation to Nile perch, but is now applied in law to all species of fish throughout Uganda. The second accepts the tendering system and makes no attempt at reform of this exploitative and inequitable system. The third involves another addition to the tax burden of producers only, and will not be popular whilst the tender holder remains alongside collecting the same type of tax.

There is clear evidence that fisheries tendering is a highly profitable business and consequently, there is much competition to acquire tenders. It has been estimated that the annual profit from tendering is about \$150,000 on Lake Kyoga and it may be as much as \$1.5 million on Lake Victoria. These profits are never re-invested in fisheries management and development. Furthermore, they result in the over-charging resources users, especially the poorest users and undermine efforts to promote sustainable resource management. Fisheries tendering is one of the key areas in need of radical fiscal reform.

An alternative approach to financial reform, which is currently under discussion between ILM stakeholders, is the removal of fisheries tendering and replacing it with a Fisheries User Fee paid to district government by BMUs. Financial analyses reveal that this system, if employed, will increase the funds to local government, decrease the charges to resource users and leave a substantial amount for fisheries management and development. This system also offers the opportunity to simplify a complex local fisheries taxation system and take into account its differential impacts on different stakeholder groups with regard to poverty reduction.

10.2 Financing lake wide management organisations

At the district level, direct revenue from fisheries is in form of tender revenue collected by private tenders at landing sites and markets and various taxes/fees on access (vessel licence, fishing permit), processing and trading. Central government has recently substantially increased existing licence fees. These include fishing vessel licences and fishmonger licences of Ugandan nationals and foreigners. This has resulted in considerable increases in locally generated fisheries revenue remitted to local governments.

At present, funds generated by fisheries taxes are used for general local government activities, with no or little reinvestment into the management of the fisheries that generated them in the first place. Specific efforts are needed to ensure that fisheries revenue (at least a proportion of it) is ploughed back for resource management. This is a reform taking place on Lake George where LAGBIMO has been allocated US\$ 13,000 from 3 riparian districts and 4 sub-county governments towards supporting its management operations. This represents the first major step in improving reinvestment of fisheries funds into the fisheries sector by local governments. If the same pro-rata government allocations were made by ten districts and 50 sub-counties on Lake Kyoga, this would generate an annual income to LAKIMO of \$145,000. This amount would cover the annual operating costs of the organisation, including its permanent Secretariat which are estimated at about \$150,000.

11. BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF BMUS

In order to establish a functional BMU network as quickly as possible on lakes George, Kyoga and Edward, a series of three initial training courses are being developed with ILM support. The three modules cover a) orientation of BMUs with regard to their functions, b) book keeping and financial management and c) fisheries management. It is planned to offer the three training courses to up to 193 BMUs from the three lakes. The courses will be implemented between November 2003 and March 2004.

The approximate costs of these training courses per BMU are a) orientation of BMUs with regard to their functions -\$900, b) book keeping and financial management - \$300 c) fisheries management -\$1000.

12. MONITORING THE PERFORMANCE OF BMUS

BMU activities will be routinely monitored by the Parish or Village Executive Committee whilst the DFR will undertake less frequent supplementary monitoring. The monitoring process requires standardisation. This will be achieved by the issue by DFR of a detailed set of BMU performance criteria and a guide for the application of these criteria to evaluate the effectiveness of BMU operations. Financial audits will be undertaken locally since BMUs will receive and use revenue from local taxation.

13. OPPORTUNITIES FOR LVFO

1. Creation of a Ugandan BMU network on Lake Victoria in 2003

The need to support the establishment of a BMU network on Lake Victoria in Uganda should be treated with the utmost urgency. This requires an extensive awareness raising programme at all levels followed by further support for BMU registration of members and election of BMU Committees in accordance with Government Guidelines. If this is not done soon, there is a danger that the process may be "high-jacked" by the more influential community members at landing sites and that "business as usual" is resumed with no improvement in local fisheries management. LVFO should consider Uganda as a special case for use of start-up funds given that there now exists a BMU statute.

2. Building the capacity of BMUs in Uganda in 2004

There is an opportunity to collaborate with an on-going BMU training programme by extending similar training to Lake Victoria in early 2004. The modules cover orientation, financial management and fisheries management. Additional capacity support is needed to establish information collection systems by BMUs. The support needed covers both training and field equipment for each BMU. The community information collection system of Lake George may serve as a model to be considered by the riparian countries of Lake Victoria.

3. *Forming BMUs associations and linking to LVFO*

The model of BMU association used on Lake Kyoga may be useful for lake Victoria in Uganda. It offers the opportunity to forge closer institutional links between civil society BMUs, local governments and LVFO itself.

4. *Financing BMUs*

The Uganda model offers options for sustainable funding of BMUs that may be considered by Kenya and Tanzania.

4. *Fisheries licensing*

New decentralised fisheries licensing procedures established on Lakes George and Edward in Uganda offer a potential model for other Ugandan lakes and neighbouring countries.