I. Project Context

Country Context

Uganda sustained a decade of economic growth; despite challenges in macroeconomic instability in recent years, its growth remains positive. The last decade saw strong growth in Uganda’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP), averaging 7.5 percent per annum. Successive shocks, both internal and external, including a global economic crisis, drought and corruption cases, have affected Uganda’s macroeconomic stability in recent years. However, real GDP growth improved again in FY2013, bouncing back to 5.8 percent from 3.4 percent in FY2012. Inflation rates fluctuated from 6.5 percent in FY2011, spiking up to 23.5 percent in FY2012, but ebbed to 5.6 percent in 2013. In the medium term, Uganda’s growth prospects remain positive at around 6-7 percent per annum with moderate inflation averaging around 5 percent.

With sustained and high macroeconomic growth Uganda has reduced poverty substantially over the
last two decades; however there are significant rural-urban and regional differences. The share of population living below the poverty line has come down from 56.4 percent in 1992 to 24.5 percent in 2009. The decline in poverty can be attributed to higher crop prices, agricultural diversification, growth of non-wage non-farm employment (primarily household enterprises) and the urban job growths, particularly in Kampala. Despite this impressive reduction in poverty, the incidence of poverty remains far higher in rural areas than urban ones. The rural areas, where about 85 percent of the population resides, contribute 94 percent to national poverty. Further, all regions (Central, Northern, Eastern) except the Western one saw a decline in poverty - the Western region registered a slight, though statistically insignificant increase in the headcount (from 1.44 million in FY2006 to 1.6 million in FY2010).

Uganda continues to experience high population growth which will put pressure on the provision of adequate education/skills training, employment and services. Uganda’s population has increased rapidly, from 24.2 million in 2002 to around 35 million in 2013. Its high population growth rate averaging 3.3 percent per year in the last two decades, makes it one of fastest growing countries in Africa. It has a young age structure with the median age just above 15 years. While efforts in universal primary education has achieved substantial results - a 132 percent increase in gross enrollment from 3 million children in 1996 to 7.5 million in 2006 - the low quality of education and high pupil dropouts have led to a major skills gap as the economy transforms. Many economically active people are trapped in low productivity, low income activities due to both a poorly educated and the rapidly growing labor force. Agriculture and non-wage smaller enterprises employ the bulk of new entrants into the labor market.

With the recent discovery of oil in the Albertine Graben region (Albertine Region), this emerging sector will feature prominently in Uganda’s development in the decades to come, bringing both benefits and challenges. The first oil discovery was made at Mputa in the Albertine Region in 2006. It was the first in a string of recent East Africa oil finds that placed the region on the global oil map, with additional findings made in Kenya, Tanzania and Mozambique and much exploration interest in Somalia. Uganda will soon turn into East Africa’s second oil producer after South Sudan, with a potential of more than 2 billion barrels of oil. Peak production is likely to be about 150,000 to 200,000 barrels per day for 10-20 years. An estimated 10,000 jobs could be created at peak times with indirect jobs perhaps at 3 to 5 times as high. Government revenue at peak production could be in the order of US$2.0 billion to over $3.0 billion annually, possibly more than double Uganda’s current budget. However, global experience demonstrates that natural resource wealth in the context of poverty and weak institutions increases the probability of corruption, patronage, instability, and conflict. Whether Uganda’s oil is a blessing or curse depends largely on the establishment of an institutional framework that ensures fair and equitable distribution of resource rents and appropriate consideration of economic, social, and environmental issues.

The Government of Uganda’s strategic vision focuses on an accelerated socio-economic transformation with a goal of transforming the country to what the National Development Plan (NDP) 2010/2011 to 2014/2015 terms a modern society within 30 years. With that goal in mind, the NDP prioritizes a massive increase in skilled labor to contribute to the production of value added export oriented goods and services. Also high among Uganda’s development priorities for sustained economic growth are improving infrastructure networks, adding value to agricultural products, reintegrating Northern areas that were until recently involved in armed conflict and addressing service delivery and employment needs of a growing and urbanizing population.
In addition, the government is preparing the institutional environment for oil production and revenue management, but much remains to be done. The 2008 National Oil and Gas Policy (NOGP) stressed the need to use hydrocarbons revenues in a way that will contribute to eradicating poverty and creating value for society. The Policy explicitly says that oil and gas revenues should be safeguarded and managed “in a manner that will create lasting benefits for society.” To achieve that objective, the Policy calls for using petroleum revenues to develop strategic areas of the economy such as education and research and the development of infrastructure. This could help increase productivity in other sectors and offset the “Dutch Disease” effect. In March 2013, the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development (MEMD) and the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) have also developed a final draft of the Strategic Environmental Assessment on the oil and gas activities in the Albertine Region. The goal of the assessment is to recommend appropriate policies, plans and programs which addresses environment and socio-economic concerns and ensures a balanced and sustainable development.

**Sectoral and institutional Context**

The main economic activity in the Albertine Region currently is agriculture, with fishing and tourism contributing significantly as well. Both agriculture and fishing are major sources of employment in Uganda, providing jobs to about 66 percent of the country’s working population. In the Albertine Region located in Western Uganda, agriculture is the main source of livelihood with 90 percent of the population engaged in it. Majority of the region’s farmers are smallholders (average farm size ranges between 0.5 and 2 acres) with limited capital and knowledge. The dominant cash crops grown on small scale farms include tobacco and cotton especially in Buliisa, as well as tea plantations. The dominant food crops include beans, maize and bananas although these crops are often sold for cash income too. In terms of fishing, over 90 percent of fish catch in Uganda is harvested from lakes, and Lake Albert comes second (37.8 percent) after Lake Victoria (45.9 percent). In 2010, fish catches from Lake Albert were estimated at 56,500 million tons and valued at UGX 351 million.

The Albertine Region is of high ecological and biodiversity significance and holds valuable tourism assets. It is home to the Murchison Falls National Park, several forest and wildlife reserves and a number of heritage sites. The number of visitors to Uganda’s national parks saw a marked increase of 33 percent between 2008 and 2012 and the park is one of the most visited national parks in Uganda, with approximately 35,000 visitors per year. The national parks offer a wide range of tourism products including gorilla tracking, nature guided hikes, village walks, butterfly and bird watching, in addition to the rare fauna and flora species. The Albertine Region is widely recognized for its ecological and biodiversity importance, and is part of the larger East Africa Rift System which stretches from the northern end of Lake Albert to the southern end of Lake Tanganyika and traverses the countries Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Tanzania.

The Albertine Region is of relatively low density and served by several urban growth centers. Lake Albert is surrounded immediately by nine districts: Nebbi, Nwoya, Buliisa, Masindi, Hoima, Kibaale, Kyenjojo, Kabarole, and Ntoroko; of which the oil exploration activities are located within Hoima, Buliisa and Nwoya. The total population for the nine districts is estimated at 2.85 million in 2013 (2.05 million from the 2002 census) with a young population profile - around 50 percent of the population is aged between 0-20 years. It is also relatively sparsely populated with a low density at about 100 persons per sq. km. Approximately 10 percent of the population resides in urban areas.
However, the oil and gas development in the region has triggered population growth and will accelerate the urbanization process in the region. Already, there is an expansion of the growth centers, especially along the Hoima-Kaiso-Tonya Road. The influx of people from other regions seeking profits, jobs and market opportunities related to the oil industry is expected to accelerate. This will put increasing demand and pressure on infrastructure and services and an urgent need for planned development.

Local government capacity in the region is generally weak. Current constraints include limited revenue, low development expenditure, uneven human resource capacity, inadequate longer-term strategic planning capacity (with some exceptions) and central policy and fiscal imperatives which affect the ability of local governments to function optimally. Local government budgets are fairly typical of the conditions in Uganda: own source revenues constitute a very low proportion of total revenues while intergovernmental transfers are highly dominated by conditional transfers; and development expenditures are low relative to recurrent expenditures with funds retained for discretionary development expenditure are low. In terms of human resources, staff positions are waiting to be filled in many of the local governments (although in Hoima and Masindi districts, most senior positions are filled). It also appears that local government staff appointments require central approval as a result of a centralization of the local government payroll. This hampers the ability of local governments to employ the necessary staff even where they have the resources to do so.

The potential of oil driven economic development has generated high expectations and the Government of Uganda wants to ensure that the Albertine Region benefits from that development. The major oil reserves are found in the areas immediately adjacent to Lake Albert, within the Nwoya, Buliisa and Hoima Districts. The significant scale of oil discoveries has driven expectations of the resources to contribute to poverty reduction, job and revenue creation. Some benefits have already been realized, mainly from oil-related infrastructure improvements: the GoU is upgrading roads linking the Lake Albert Shore to the towns of Hoima and Masindi as part of a national road network improvement program; local villages are benefitting from improved connections for greater market access; and sub-county governments are reporting improved revenues generated from taxes to the fishing trade. However, more can be done to promote sustainable and balanced development of the region by investing regionally, locally and in the people.

Full-scale oil production in the Albertine Region is not expected to begin until end before 2017 although significant exploration and appraisal activities are ongoing. Since the early 2000s, the Albertine Region has been subdivided into ten Exploration Areas. Currently, only four out of these ten Exploration Areas have been licensed to oil companies for exploration, development and production. All discoveries made so far have been within the Lake Albert petroleum system while the Rhino Camp (further North) and Lake Edward (further South) petroleum systems have not yet been proven. According to current planning, production will likely occur in 2016/2017 at the earliest (most project later) and various issues have to be resolved in the meantime. These include, amongst others, agreement and approval of field development plans, infrastructure and facilities, Environmental Impact Assessment process, capacity and efficiency build-up in various governmental institutions at various levels to manage the sector properly.

At this opportune time before full-scale oil production begin, the GoU has requested World Bank support to prepare for and facilitate a more orderly, sustainable and inclusive transformation of the Albertine Region. Of particular concern to the Government is ensuring the development of: (i)
regional transport infrastructure that will improve connectivity and access within and to the Albertine Region and facilitate an economy centered not only on oil, but also agriculture, fishing and tourism; (ii) local area development for orderly and planned growth and improvements in the infrastructure and services of rapidly urbanizing centers in the region and improved access for rural communities; and (iii) a more skilled workforce that could respond to the demands and leverage the employment opportunities that are emerging in the region.

Regional Access and Connectivity

Road transport is the dominant mode of transport in Uganda and serves over 90 percent of the passenger and freight traffic in the country. The country’s road network comprises 21,000 km of national roads (of which about 3,500 km are paved), 32,000 km of district roads, 14,000 km of urban roads, and approximately 85,000 km of community access roads. National Roads are under the management of the Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA). They connect districts with one another and are also integral to the regional network connecting the land-locked Uganda with its neighbors, such as Rwanda, Burundi, South Sudan and parts of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and further to the ports of Mombasa and Dar es Salaam. District roads are the responsibility of District governments and provide access from rural areas to markets, health centers and other services. Urban roads are located within the boundaries of urban councils and are under the management of the urban governments. Complementing the road network are nine ferry crossings on the river Nile, Lake Kyoga and Lake Victoria.

The GoU’s transport policy aims to promote the provision of cost effective, efficient, reliable, safe and environmentally sensitive transport services so as to support increased agricultural and industrial trade, tourism, social and administrative services. The strategy emphasizes on technically sound, economically justified and financially viable transport infrastructure. This will play critical roles in the development of an integrated and self-sustaining economy, poverty eradication and the economic integration of the country as a whole.

The Albertine Region is in urgent need of improved connectivity. Currently, there lacks direct and efficient connection within the Albertine Region, between the Region and the rest of the country, as well as with the neighboring countries. The major north-south link in Western Uganda, from Kyenjojo to Kigumba (towards Gulu), is currently in urgent need to be upgraded from the gravel surface to higher standards. This north-south link is a critical part of the national road network and overall GoU program which will greatly enhance connectivity within the Albertine Region, linking major urban growth centers such as Kyengjojo, Kagadi, Kabwoya, Hoima, Masindi and Kigumba and the outlying towns of Kaiso Tonya, Butiaba and Bulisa close to the oil fields. Lastly, it provides Western Uganda a more direct linkage to neighboring countries - Rwanda and Burundi to the south and Juba in South Sudan and northeastern DRC to the north.

Providing regional connectivity to the Albertine Region is critical to its development, especially for the oil, agriculture, fishing and tourism sectors. The development of transport infrastructure has been shown to boost economic growth from enhanced market access. With lowered transport costs and reduced travel time, this contributes to increased productivity, competition and business activity for the Albertine Region as a whole. Important economic benefits which result from the improved regional road connectivity will include an increase in agricultural production from the farm holdings within the road's zone of influence, potential rise in tourist numbers, better regional integration, increased cross border trade and enhanced oil exploration and extractive activities.
Local Access, Planning and Development

Multiple government agencies are involved in urban planning and development and local government administration. Foremost, the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development (MoLHUD) is responsible for physical planning of all urban areas in the country. The Ministry of Local Government (MoLG) oversees activities of local authorities and administration of related national policies. The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED), while being in charge of the management of the national economy and national development, is also responsible for the provision of fiscal transfers to districts and urban governments. In addition, the Local Government and Finance Commission provides guidance on the transfer of revenues to local authorities. Lastly, the Ministry of Public Service is responsible for developing policies that attract, retain and motivate the public workforce for the effective implementation of decentralization and services delivery of local governments, providing the national framework for human resource development and backstopping the District Service Commission.

The Albertine Region is one of two special planning areas in the country. This underscores the importance the government has placed on planning the region for growth. The MoLHUD has embarked on a regional physical development plan, supported with financing from the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (DFID) and administered by the World Bank. This regional level plan will provide guidance and an overall framework on the spatial development options, land use functions, infrastructure network, socio-economic services provision and environmental strategies. It also helps to lay the foundation to develop detailed local plans especially for centers that are experiencing rapid growth as more people are attracted to the region in search of opportunities. The regional plan is expected to be completed in 2014.

With the anticipated population increase and changing context in the Albertine Region, well planned and managed growth centers providing adequate infrastructure and services will be essential to its successful transformation. The GoU hopes to avoid the potential negative externalities associated with insufficiently planned and ill-managed growth that is characteristic of many urban areas in the country. Proper urban planning and management, especially to guide services and infrastructure provision, will be essential to make informed choices for the development of local areas. This is particularly important for the smaller urban centers in the Albertine Region as they are facing immediate development pressures, have lagging services and infrastructure provision while still needing to balance environmental considerations. If done well, effective planning and execution could further compound the value of existing assets and foster a more closely-knit community. While all local governments have some form of development plans in place, it is not clear that these plans are up-to-date, are driving strategic decisions about future development and infrastructure investment or if they are aligned with local budgets.

With majority of the Albertine Region livelihoods centered on agriculture, one critical aspect of local development is rural-urban connectivity. The relative low density, pastoral and agro-pastoral communities mean that feeder network which connects the areas of production to local urban nodes and onwards to the larger regional markets is essential. In addition, the local communities will be better served with the journey time savings and improved access to social and health services and employment opportunities.

Skills Access and Upgrading
The Government of Uganda through the Ministry of Education and Sports has embarked on an ambitious strategy to reform and guide increased investment in the Business, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (BTVET) sub-sector of the education sector. Uganda’s Vision 2025 and the National Development Plan accords high importance to skills development as a means to raise productivity and incomes and enhance the competitiveness of the economy. It recognizes a national skills gap and that improving BTVET will be a central element in the strategy to reducing the gap. Improving the quality of education and training with a focus on setting and raising standards and improving overall sector governance is a central element of the Government of Uganda’s strategy.

At the moment the BTVET system still does not produce the appropriately skilled workforce that Uganda needs to increase incomes and employment and to compete in the East African and international markets. Less than 40% of large and medium firms regard courses offered by the BTVET institutions as relevant. Among the priority investment areas to improve the BTVET system, the Government of Uganda’s recently approved strategy on Skilling Uganda (2012) articulates a paradigm shift towards developing demand-responsive, employable skills and competencies rather than simply providing education certificates that may or may not be relevant to the labor market needs. A key aspect of this paradigm shift is the active engagement of private sector employers in the entire process of skills development from the identification of trades and occupations where there are skills gaps; development of curricula; delivery of competency-based and enterprise level training, and as potential employers of learners with the requisite skills. Creating centers of excellence within specific sectors is a core element of the Government of Uganda’s Skilling Uganda strategy.

The strategy outlined the need to establish a unified body for skills development that answers the broadened mandate of the BTVET and the implied need for broader partnerships. A Reform Task Force (RTF), with over half of the members represented by the private sector, was established as an interim management unit for four years to coordinate the implementation of the plan until a permanent body, the Skills Development Authority (SDA), and its governing structure is established. The RTF works under the technical guidance of MoES and reports to the Permanent Secretary of the MoES. Other reforms within the Skilling Uganda strategy have by and large been stalled due to a lack of funding.

At the national level, skills development and training are gearing towards the emerging needs. The Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development has worked with the Ministry of Education and Sport to introduce training programs in petroleum-related fields to build national skills and expertise. These programs would help the country to build a team of trained scientists to manage and monitor oil production. In 2009, Makerere University started to offer a Bachelor of Science in Petroleum Geosciences degree; and in March 2010, the Uganda Petroleum Institute at Kigumba began offering diploma and certificate courses. The ministry of Energy and Mineral Development has also sent students abroad for degrees in petroleum-related fields (Mugyenyi and Twesigye, 2010).

At the local level, there is an urgent need to upgrade skills of the working population to capture emerging employment opportunities. Uganda’s National Oil and Gas Policy stress that Ugandans will benefit most from the oil and gas industry if local individuals and firms can actively participate in the sector. However, a recently report (to be published) commissioned by the main petroleum contractors in Uganda, indicates that only 15 percent of the total number of people employed in the
oil and gas sector will be specialists, with 65 percent artisans/technicians and the remainder unskilled labor. While skilled jobs will be limited and not likely to be all filled immediately by people from the region, there is opportunity for employment and business development that will serve the oil sector as well as the region’s traditional economic sectors in construction, agriculture, fishing, tourism and services. For example, various companies are already operating in the region as sub-contractors to the oil companies for providing food catering, security, transportation and road construction services, among others. The challenge is to train people in the region to provide immediate support for the development phase of the oil and gas sector by focusing on construction, agriculture, and other service sectors by elevating training standards to internationally accredited levels. It is also important to build the capacity of the Petroleum Institute to deliver internationally recognized specialized training for petroleum operations and maintenance in the near future.

The GoU hopes to jump start the implementation of some aspects of the Skilling Uganda strategy in the Albertine Region by focusing on: (i) establishing a governance mechanism to coordinate skills development for the Region; (ii) supporting the development of two BTETV institutes – one focused on the petroleum sector and the other on skills that will be required in related sectors of the regional economy; and (iii) providing bursaries for learners from the region to acquire skills that are relevant for the development of the Region.

II. Proposed Development Objectives
To improve regional and local access to public infrastructure, markets and skills development in the Albertine Region of Uganda.

III. Project Description
Component Name
Regional Access and Connectivity
Comments (optional)

Component Name
Local Access, Planning and Development
Comments (optional)

Component Name
Skills Access and Upgrading
Comments (optional)

IV. Financing (in USD Million)

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V. Implementation

The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED) is the government agency for the Project and will be responsible for overall oversight of the entire project. A Project Steering Committee (PSC) will be established with all key Ministries which will be responsible for providing policy direction to the project technical committee. It will be chaired by MoFPED and will include representatives of Ministry of Bunyoro Affairs, MoLHUD, MOES, MoLG, UNRA. The PSC will meet annually to appraise key stakeholders of critical policy decision affecting the Albertine Region.

A Project Technical Committee (PTC) will also be established comprised of the Project Coordinators of each of the three components and the MoLG. The PTC will meet on a quarterly basis to review implementation progress between all components, address any technical and implementation issues and provide overall monitoring of the project’s development objective. The PTC will be chaired by the Ministry of Bunyoro Affairs who will provide overall coordination support for the Committee.

Component 1 will be implemented by the Uganda National Roads Authority. (UNRA). UNRA is the Recipient’s legal authority responsible for the national road network, established as an entity on its own legislation and operating under the supervision of the Ministry of Works and Transport (MoWT). Proceeds of the credit will be availed by MoFPED to UNRA as a grant. The Executive Director of UNRA will be the “Accounting Officer” for the component. The Executive Director of UNRA will delegate the function of the day-to-day management of the component to a Project Coordinator within UNRA. UNRA will implement the project fully “mainstreamed” which means that it will work through its existing systems which have been developed with support from previous and ongoing IDA Credits.

The Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development (MoLHUD) will be responsible for the overall management and coordination of Component 2. It will manage centrally the procurement, design and implementation of Component 2 activities in close collaboration with the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG) and the participating Local Councils. A Project Support Team (PST), with six full-time staff, has already been established and functioning under MoLHUD as part of another World Bank Project, USMID, and will now also provide support for this Project, so as not to duplicate resources unnecessarily. The PST will assist the participating councils in the final definition and preparation of Component 2 sub-projects. The PST will also provide advice and assistance to the local councils on contract management, construction supervision, safeguards requirements and financial management, amongst others. The MoLG will play a key supporting role for component 2, with respect to the overall accountability of local governments pertaining to the Local Government Act and other relevant policies. During appraisal, consideration will be given to decentralizing the procurement and contract management of the economic infrastructure. By mid-term review these arrangements will be reviewed with the possibility of transferring all implementation responsibility to the local governments.

The participating local councils will receive direct technical support throughout the project. This means that consultant engineers/project managers will assist LGs with project design, management, oversight and reporting. Staff of the participating local councils will support consultants engaged in
planning, design and contract management activities and contractors engaged for works and goods contracts together with the PST staff. The local governments will ensure that the planned sub-projects are captured in their Physical development plans, their five year development plans and reflected in their annual budgets. Further they will be required to monitor that project resources are utilized for the purpose of the project activities and accounted for in line with the LGs Financial and Accounting Regulations.

Project implementation for Component 3 will be mainstreamed in the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) using existing institutional establishments. The overall responsibility for project implementation lies with the Permanent Secretary, with coordination under the purview of the Department of Planning. The RTF will be responsible for the implementation of sub-component 3.1.1.

The Department of BTVET will be responsible for the implementation of sub-component 3.1.2 which aims to improve the quality and relevance of at least two institutions in the Region. The BTVET unit, with support from the MoES’s procurement and financial management team, will be responsible for the procurement of goods, works, and consulting services on behalf of the target institutes.

The administration of the bursaries (sub-component 3.2) for learners in the Region will be delegated to a firm with experience in this area. The firm will report to the Department of BTVET and train at least two people from BTVET on the administration of the bursaries in order to create capacity within the Ministry to administer such programs within the MoES in the future.

The RTF’s O&G sectoral committee will provide oversight for this component and it is expected that the implementing units will report back to the O&G sectoral committee on a quarterly basis.

VI. Safeguard Policies (including public consultation)

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Comments (optional)

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