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The Role of Privatisation of State Enterprises in the Socio-economic Development of Urban Centres: A Case Study of Kira Town Council, Wakiso District

This study was about the role of privatisation of state enterprises in the socio-economic development of urban centres. Specifically, the study focused on the role of privatisation in the development of education, health and security services in Kira Town Council. The research design that was adopted in this study was a case study research design. Case studies emphasise detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their relationships. The researcher employed both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. The study was conducted in Kira Town Council in Wakiso district because of the high level of privatisation of facilities in the town. The study revealed that due to privatisation, the number of private schools were said to be more than government aided schools. The secondary section was entirely privately managed and the government involvement was only in provision of Universal Secondary Education. There was also competition among schools that led to improvement in performance. However, as pointed out by the Local Council III secretary for education, the competition among private schools partly contributed to examination malpractices in order to be able to attract many students. This, therefore, implies that while privatisation had led to increase in the number of schools, it compromised the quality of education. The lack of adequate teaching materials in government aided schools was attributed to limited budget allocations to the education sector. For example, the Universal Primary Education funds were so inadequate and irregular to enable head teachers to procure the necessary scholastic materials. With the exception of schools like Uganda Martyrs Secondary School Namugongo and Nalya secondary school, the secretary for education indicated the general situation was unsatisfactory. Regarding health, privatisation of health services is promoted because of the perceived weaknesses of public ownership and a poor track record when it comes to enterprise reform. The results indicated that many private clinics were being operated by people who were not qualified medical personnel and provided health services without adequate knowledge of health care. In addition, there was lack of hospital facilities such as beds, drugs and laboratory equipment which is a sign of low quality services both in private and public health centres. Looking at the development of security firms, some of the private firms in Kira Town Council were Askar security services, Securicor Alert guards and Saracen guards. The results showed that due to the emergency of security firms in Kira Town Council, people are sure of the safety of their businesses and their lives. Nevertheless, the security firms were committed despite a few cases of robbery and theft. Basing on the results of the study, the researcher recommended that: There is need for continuous support of private services providers due to the fact that private organisations are development partners. This can be done through subsidisation of private enterprises by the government and donor agencies. The activities of private firms should be monitored by government to ensure that the public is not exploited. This can be done with the help of organisations like the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, National Drug Authority, etc.

Keywords: Socio-economic Development, Privatisation of State Enterprises, Wakiso district