further exploration. In Uganda one level of poverty is defined in terms of "going hungry" (Goetz et al., 1994 p77) and other important features include inability to pay school fees.

It is important to identify, at national and local levels, which factors are viewed as important, and how they are defined and understood. This will help policymakers to prioritise in accordance with indigenous values. In a study conducted by Funna in Mbale in 1994 (not yet in press) the local definition of poverty (obutambi) included lack of education, selling one’s limited property, and being ill. Wealth (omutinya) included being a good farmer, getting one’s daughter married, and dressing well.

_Relative deprivation:_ People may be defined as poor in relation to externally-imposed criteria, or in terms of whether they see themselves as poor in relation to the community they use as a reference group (relative deprivation). Many middle class people in Uganda consider themselves as poor since they cannot maintain a standard of living which they see as appropriate for middle classes. A respondent reported that such people would consider themselves as poor if they could not buy a television set - the reference group was a Western one. Another example is the university graduates who cannot find employment or who have low salaries and for these reasons are unable to marry.

### 4.4 Measuring poverty

As we saw above quantitative measures of poverty in Africa have been focused on consumption and income, and related to education, health and nutrition. Occasionally measures of assets are used to assess poverty. Discussions of the broader aspects of deprivation, and of the ways deprivations interact, have been restricted to case studies involving qualitative approaches. In our discussion of vulnerable groups we use case study evidence to explore the different dimensions of deprivation afflicting different categories of poor and vulnerable people (See Appendix 1), but we do not have sufficient data to map the numbers or location of these people.

Most analyses concerned with establishing short to medium-term poverty strategies measure and explain poverty chiefly at the household level. Here we propose that poverty and its causes be explored at a number of levels, and over a longer time-frame than that to which policy-advising economists have become accustomed. This will increase understanding and judgment about what and what is not likely to happen in the short-, medium-, and long- runs, and what might be the consequences (intended and unintended) of different kinds of policy actions. Short-run policies have medium and long-term consequences and the problem of path dependence cannot be ignored. This kind of approach increases the points of attack and the range of policy options, many of which are not mutually exclusive, and also provides a framework for considering questions of sequencing.

#### 4.4.1 Units of measurement: what are we measuring and why?

The choice of unit to study when measuring poverty has implications for the analysis of the causes of poverty. Deprivation, or more restrictively, economic poverty can be measured in relation to the following units of incidence:

- Uganda in relation to the rest of the world
- The Regions (North, East, Central, Western)
- The 39 Districts (6 established within past 4 years - Kalangala, Kibale, Kiboga, Kisoro, Ntungamo, Pallisa)
- The towns
- Neighbourhoods within towns
- Counties RC4/subcounties RC3/parishes RC2/villages RC1
Households
Individuals

The economists rather exclusive focus on households in data gathering about poverty has more
to do with methodology than concern to establish the real dimensions of poverty in Uganda. It has
implications for the analysis of causes of poverty which are considered further Section 4.5 below.

4.4.2 Defining levels of economic poverty:

In the recent Uganda study using the 1992/3 household survey the economists categorised households
in Uganda into poverty quartiles. This allowed some regional comparisons and rural-urban
comparisons, and some investigation of what the poor bought and sold, and their health and education
experience and expenditures. This information is useful for assessing in a broad way the possible
effects of macro-economic policies which have been carried out. For example findings from the IHS
suggest that the poorest quartile in Uganda derive quite a large proportion of their income from the
sale of coffee (larger than any of the other quartiles) suggesting that the recently imposed coffee tax
may be regressive.

However, differences between quartiles were not very large, and it was difficult to attach a
meaning, in terms of economic and social structure, to the categories. This means that they do not
provide the basis for a genuine poverty reduction strategy. A sociological approach would start the
other way round. At the bottom of the income/consumption distribution there will be a group of
destitute people with no means of producing even enough to subsist. It is important to estimate the
numbers of these and to identify them in terms of social variables such as geographical (and ethnic)
location, gender, and age, and to explore how they came to arrive at their situation and how they are
surviving at the moment. A second level includes people whose consumption falls below some
minimum nutritional standard (see Chapter 1); the social attributes etc of this group need to be
identified. A third group has enough to eat but cannot afford certain things which the community
regards as important (a house with a roof that doesn’t leak, certain kinds of clothes, school fees).
Above this level most people in Uganda are poor in comparison with many in the rest of the world
but, within their localities, they are comfortable and sometimes wealthy.

4.4.3 Categorising the poor:

While sociologists are interested in distributions of advantage/deprivation, they like to relate these to
the structures and relationships which produced them; they like to identify meaningful groups and
their different experiences of poverty. This provides a basis for analysing possible social action arising
out of shared interests and experiences. for public debate, and for possible policy action at macro and
local levels. For example, what are the structures and processes which have led these particular rural
people into poverty? To what extent are they economic, or to do with status, power, or just bad luck.
We need to establish roughly how many destitute and poor people fall into each category in order to
establish the size of the policy problem. This kind of analysis should, in future, be done using
economic household surveys, supplemented by qualitative research, including rapid assessment
techniques. Here we offer an initial possible categorisation which suggests a variety of policy handles,

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*This use of quartiles is not representative of the practice of the economics discipline. It was done because it seemed
likely that the Integrated Household Survey under-estimated consumption so that comparing consumption with a
meaningful poverty line would tend to over-estimate poverty (Appleton, personal communication).*
many of which are not economic. On the basis of secondary analysis of a range of sources (see Appendix 2) Figure 10 identifies major poor and vulnerable groups in Uganda. It is clear that individuals may fall into more than one of the categories, and categories may contain people who are not poor along some dimensions (eg wealthy people with AIDS).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Contingent</th>
<th>Policyrelated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resource-poor farmers</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Widows</td>
<td>Retrenched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>landless</td>
<td>Children</td>
<td>Orphans</td>
<td>Demobilized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>landpoor</td>
<td>Old</td>
<td>PWAs</td>
<td>soldiers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>squatters</td>
<td></td>
<td>People with</td>
<td>Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>new settlers</td>
<td></td>
<td>disabilities</td>
<td>War-affected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pastoralists</td>
<td></td>
<td>Disaster victims</td>
<td>Displaced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hunter-gatherers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>labour-scarce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource-poor urban dwellers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>slum dwellers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.4 Introducing a time element:

The snapshot household survey identifies certain people as poor at a particular point in time. However, households and people move in and out of economic poverty throughout their lives. This raises issues of vulnerability and variability, rural differentiation, the inter-generational transmission of deprivations/advantages, and the correlation and convertibility of poverty dimensions (for more examples from Uganda see Appendix 2).

Vulnerability may result from living in a risky environment, or from living on the edge of destitution, where one piece of bad luck can start a downward spiral. Disaster may strike individuals (and their households) or whole communities or regions. Recently parts of Uganda have suffered from famine, earthquakes, evictions, physical insecurity, cattle-raiding and other forms of banditry, water hyacinth etc.

Variability: People tend to be poorer at certain times in the life-cycle, and during the year. Most farming systems have a "hungry season" which often coincides with the time that school fees are due and life might be made much easier for many if the school year, or the fee-paying time were changed. Poorer people tend to borrow to buy food (at high prices). Then they are forced to sell their harvest when prices are low in order to repay the debt.

Rural differentiation: As the above example shows one man’s poverty may be another one’s wealth. The rich can become richer by selling their harvest when prices are high, and by charging interest on loans made to the poor. Some recent case studies (cited in Appleton et al, 1995) argue that rural differentiation is increasing, and that one aspect involves distressed sale of land and labour by the poor to the rich.

Inter-generational transmission of deprivations/advantage: Another question for investigation is the extent to which, and the processes by which, advantages and deprivations are transmitted inter-
generationally. From this analysis points of intervention should be considered (eg an inheritance tax, scholarships for poor able children, basic health education for all).

4.4.5 Expanding on the spatial element

The chances of living in poverty in Uganda depend very much where you were born (see Appendix 3 and the Map at the front). The different farming systems provide different opportunities and constraints, and are affected differently by shocks and policies. AIDS, malaria, tsetse flies, proneness to drought and physical insecurity, access to roads, schools, health services, markets, towns, electricity, water, and fuel depend on physical location.

Climatic and natural resources are unevenly distributed between the fertile and rain-sufficient lake crescent, through the drier surrounding agro-pastoralist zone, to the arid north-east. Five important farming systems can be isolated: the Central and Western banana and coffee system; the Nile farming system; the Northern farming system; mountain farming systems; and pastoralism. The three main geographic regions of Uganda traditionally contained quite different societies - wealth was concentrated in the densely populated centre; in the western agro-pastoralist zone pastoralist elites generally dominated the agriculturalist majority. In the arid north pastoralism prevails. In addition there are several small specialized ecosystems: the islands in Lake Victoria and the remote mountainous or wetland areas. The recent discovery by the North Koreans of large deposits of minerals (gold, diamonds, marble and titanium) in the North may help to redress the regional balance in the future. At times regional disparity is politically motivated as it is with Kiboga district and the East Samya rural area or due to over-concentration of resources in certain districts as in the Buganda area and, today, the Western region.

Historically social relations and distributions have varied between ethnic groups. Some societies were more unequal than others. Colonialism produced a peasant farmer commodity economy which suppressed the growth of an indigenous economy and created conditions for wealth, poverty, exploitation, and regional inequality. The fertile area became the central producing area while the north and Rwanda became labour-supplying areas and the isolated areas were further excluded from development. The centre became rich with pockets of poverty, the north became poor with pockets of wealth, while the north east remained in poverty (ActionAid Uganda, 1994).

Broad soil classifications by district show that the Central region is most favoured, while the Northern is least favoured:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>I (best)</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>IV (worst)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: calculated from Table 1: Rural Land Population and Land Availability by District (World Bank, Agriculture, 1993 px)
The availability of agricultural land, while not limiting growth for the country as a whole, is a constraint in certain high-potential, high-population regions in the Southwest and Northeast. Landlessness and outmigration can be found in Kisoro, Kabale, Mbane, Pallisa and Tarrier. "The low carrying capacity of the land in areas like Kabale, Rukungiri, Masaka, Mbane, and Nebbi and Busoga districts has led to a growing number of unemployed young people in the countryside." (ActionAid Uganda L, 1994 p5). Historically there has been migration out of Kigezi (Kisoro and Kabale), West Nile (Arua and Nebbi) Bukedi (Tarrier), and Bugisu (Mbane).

By all the most crucial development parameters which include education, health, utilities, employment, and industrial development, the North compares less favourably with the south. Medical personnel in Gulu and Kitgum estimated malnutrition to be at least 60% and acute malnutrition in Gulu, Kitgum and Karamoja to be 30%. General deterioration in past decades, including the war that started in 1986, have had a more devastating effect there.

While regional poverty depends in part on physical location, environment and history, it also has political causes and consequences which will be discussed in greater detail in section 5.4. Some areas have been particularly affected by war, particularly Mutukula in Rakai district, Arua, Gulu, Luwero, Apac, Kitgum, Soroti, Kumi and Pallisa. In these districts cotton ginneries, store houses, co-operative buildings, schools and health centres were damaged and looted in the wars from 1979 to 1990. Institutional infrastructure was also damaged including supply lines for agriculture inputs, markets, extension services, and bank credit facilities. People died and migrated eg people from Soroti to Kamuli. Arua experienced active war from 1979 to 1981 affecting 300,000 people. In Gulu, war broke out in 1986 and reached its climax between 1987 and 8; the most affected counties were Aswa and Nwuya (ActionAid, 1994). In 1982 approx 95% of population of Moyo district had fled to nearby countries (UNICEF, 1994, p9).

There is still insecurity in some parts of the country disrupting the productivity cycle, affecting schooling and causing malnutrition. The worst hit parts have been affected by cattle raiding and the Kony rebellion which has been receiving support from Southern Sudan. There are also constant rumours of undisciplined behaviour by NRA soldiers in the north. One unpleasant aspect of rebel activity involves mutilation and the rape of girls. People have fled to military camps to escape the Karamajong cattle rustlers who are involved in looting and violence. Displaced families are living in dire poverty in Lira. The main conflicts are between two groups the Bokora and the Matheniko. There are refugees in Kumi, Soroti and Karamoja.

Regional poverty is also affected by the differential distribution of HIV/ AIDS with the effects of the epidemic most clearly visible in areas such as Rakai and Masaka which have been afflicted by the epidemic since the early 1980s. "AIDS is a district problem - because we are losing our future learned sons and daughters who would be the leaders of tomorrow" (Masindi interview - UNICEF Situation Analysis p66). Most people who fall sick with AIDS in Kampala are sent back to the rural areas. In urban areas with a higher seroprevalence there has been a noticeable loss of educated and skilled workers. In South West Uganda patterns of agriculture are already being affected. Families who have lost 1 or more to AIDS may shift from labour intensive cash crops (eg rice, millet, tomatoes) to less labour intensive, often less nutritious crops such as cassava and maize (Barnet and Blaikie) some fields in Rakai and Masaka are lying fallow after the deaths of those who tended them (UAC1993).

Appendix 3 contains a more detailed spatial description of the economy. Here it is important to point out the extent to which economic resources and capacity are unequally distributed; large areas are suffering from high and increasing marginalisation (Brett, 1992). Spatial location is critical. Modern development is concentrated in the Kampala-Jinja complex. Rural enterprise depends on local demand for cheap products protected by poor access and narrow markets, or services related to agriculture. Modern economic activities are highly concentrated in urban centres in the south (Kampala, Jinja, Masaka, and Mbane). Only a few district centres have genuinely "urban" characteristics (Mbarara, Kabale, Fort Portal, Gulu, Arua, Lira, Soroti, Tarrier); the rest are hardly more than trading centres plus administration. Only a few urban centres provide professional services.
or a differentiated retail sector. There are a few telephones, a district hospital, hotel, a branch each of the Co-operative bank, and the Uganda Commercial Bank. Supplies of water, electricity, and fuel are unreliable and there is no access to libraries or technical information.

Even those district capitals with "urban" characteristics may not be very well-endowed. For example, Fort Portal, the capital of Kabarole, "bears the scars of a rural centre teetering on bankruptcy, civil strife and prolonged government neglect. Ranked among the country's least developed towns, Fort Portal's entire infrastructure was devastated during the two liberation wars of 1979 and 1985. The recent killer earthquake caused yet more misery." (New Vision, August 31, 1994, supplement on Fort Portal's centenary).

4.5 The causes of poverty

Figure 12 provides a start for causal analysis and suggests that the range of policy possibilities is vast. Many of these are discussed elsewhere in the paper; in this section we only raise two questions: why is Uganda so poor? and how poverty relates to social stratification.

4.5.1 Uganda's poverty

Uganda's poverty may be viewed along the five dimensions of deprivation described above. Physical features include the facts that it is land-locked and has some areas with poor soil and low rainfall; it has low GDP per head and is in debt; nutrition, health, literacy and education are also low. Uganda suffers from political, cultural and social deprivation in the international sphere and is vulnerable to shocks, dependency and exploitation. Many of the population have been emotionally-affected by the recent horrors of war and AIDS. Children born since 1979 in Uganda constitute nearly half of the country's population by 1994. They have grown up in a country experiencing one misfortune after another; many have personally experienced violence or lost a relative to HIV/AIDS (UNICEF, 1994, P11).

With regard to external features the prices of Uganda's traditional export crops - coffee, cotton and tea - are much lower in real terms than they were in the early 1970s (World Bank, Agriculture, 1993, pxi) although there is a current exceptional boom in coffee prices. Uganda has suffered two recent major adverse external shocks: periodic droughts in 1991 which raised food prices appreciably and a massive decline in the international price of coffee from US$2.8 per kg clean unit value in 1986 to US$0.90 in 1992. The west has also been affected by the events in Rwanda.

The debt burden has an impact on Uganda's capacity to invest in its own development. Uganda has an extremely well-articulated debt strategy which the Bank supports and has successfully eliminated commercial debt using the IDA Debt Reduction facility. The debt-service to export ratio is planned to fall from 125% in 1992 to 35% by 1993. However, some argue that more needs to be done and claim that the debt crisis is a direct cause of poverty, draining the country of resources needed for investment in health/education and undermining prospects for future and current economic recovery. "The 1993 PER estimated that 13.6% of total expenditure (including that part financed externally) would be required to cover interest payments and about as much again on amortisation of principal. This total is more than three times the wage and salary bill, and about seven times the Government's contribution to the development budget (which is admittedly heavily dependent on donor funding)." (Goetz et al, 1994, p30).