INTERPRETING ICT POLICY PROCESSES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: A CASE STUDY OF UGANDA

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ABSTRACT

Several studies suggest that the diffusion of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in developing countries (DCs) can help such countries achieve national development goals – especially if accompanied by appropriate government policies designed to regulate and promote the use and the diffusion of ICTs in the national context.

Over the past few years ‘ICT policy’ has thus become something worthy of academic attention, in particular in the ambit of ICT-for-development (ICT4D) literature. Scholarly studies on the subject have so far focused however primarily on policy content, and have often been prescriptive and/or evaluative in nature. Relatively less attention has been paid instead to the processes by which ICT policy is made in DCs – a lacuna reflected also in the relative scarcity, in the realm of ICT4D literature, of detailed theoretical frameworks with which to study ICT policymaking practice in DCs.

This study intends to help fill this lacuna, by proposing an innovative framework for the analysis of ICT policy processes in DCs, and subjecting such a framework to a first ‘proof of concept’, through its application to a particular case (ICT policymaking in Uganda).

In recognition of the importance of the cognitive aspects of policy practice, the framework proposed is interpretive in nature, and is organised around three ‘movements’, or steps: an analysis of the linguistic and non-linguistic constructs employed by policy actors to articulate discourse on ICT policymaking; an analysis of the key discourses around ICT policy constructed by policy actors in specific settings; and an analysis of the composition and the strength of the ‘alliances’, or coalitions, of actors that construct and propagate specific discourses in such settings. The ultimate purpose of this type of analysis is to understand how specific discourses on, or ‘versions’ of the ICT policy process gain particular purchase and acceptance in given national settings, thereby providing ICT policy actors with elements for reflection on the practices they are involved in. The framework proposed is particularly innovative in that integrates elements derived from mainstream political science and policy analysis literature - thus going some way in solidifying theorization in the ambit of ICT4D research.

The study draws conclusions at two levels: at case level, findings indicate that Ugandan discourse around ICT policymaking appears to be constrained by the existence of a powerful, overall political discourse that defines ICT policy as necessarily ‘participative’; at the level of theory and method, findings suggest that the framework proposed appears to be a viable and useful one for research on ICT policymaking practice in DCs.
DECLARATION

I declare that no portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADA: argumentative discourse analysis
AISI: Africa Information Society Initiative
APC: Association for Progressive Communications
ART: anti-retroviral therapies
BPO: Business Process Outsourcing
CEEWA-U: Council for Economic Empowerment for Women of Africa – Uganda
CIPESA: Collaboration on International ICT Policy for East and Southern Africa
CIT (Faculty of): Communication and Information Technology
COMESA: Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CR: critical realism/critical realist
CS: case study
CS: civil society
CSO: civil society organisation
DA: discourse analysis
DC: developing country
DfID: Department for International Development
DICTS: Directorate of ICT Support
DoI: Directorate of Information
DRC: Democratic Republic of Congo
EAC: East African Community
GDP: Gross Domestic Product
GKD: Global Knowledge for Development
HDI: Human Development Index
IANA: Internet Assigned Numbers Authority
ICANN: Internet Corporation for Assigned Numbers and Addresses
ICT: information and communication technologies
ICT: information and communication technology
ICT4D: information and communication technologies for development
IDRC: International Development Research Centre
IICD: International Institute for Communication and Development
IMF: International Monetary Fund
INGO: International Non-Governmental Organisation
IT: information technology
ITU: International Telecommunication Union
LDC: Least Developed Countries
LP: linear process
MoES: Ministry of Education and Sports
MoFA: Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoFPED: Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development
MoH: Ministry of Health
MoICT: Ministry of Information and Communication Technology
MoWHC: Ministry of Works, Housing and Communications
MP: Member of Parliament
MTN: Mobile Telecommunication Networks
MTTI: Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Industry
NGO: non-governmental organisation
NICI: National Information and Communication Infrastructure
NICTPF: National ICT Policy Framework
NPA: National Planning Authority
NRM: National Resistance Movement
OECD: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OPM: Office of the President
PEAP: Poverty Eradication Action Plan
PIRT: Presidential Investors’ Round Table
PN: policy network
PRSP: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
QAD: Quality Assurance Directorate
RCDF: Rural Communications Development Fund
RCDP: Rural Communications Development Policy
RCT: rational choice theory
RICTSP: Regional ICT Support Programme
RT: Round Table
RTW: Round Table Workshop
TF: task force
TPR: Telecommunication Policy Review
UCC: Uganda Communications Commission
UCS: Uganda Computer Society
UIA: Uganda Investment Authority
UN: United Nations
UNCST: Uganda National Council of Science and Technology
UNDP: United Nations Development Programme
UNECA: United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UPTC: Uganda Posts and Telecommunications Corporation
USAID: United States Agency for International Development
UTL: Uganda Telecom Limited
UWCI: Uganda Women’s Caucus for ICTs
WG: working group
WIPO: World Intellectual Property Organization
WOUGNET: Women of Uganda Network
WSIS: World Summit on the Information Society
WTO: World Trade Organisation
1. INTRODUCTION

This thesis focuses on the processes and practices by which national information and communication technology (ICT) policies and strategies are formulated in developing countries (DCs). More precisely, the key objective of the thesis is that of proposing a comprehensive and innovative analytical framework with which to research and understand ICT policy practice in DCs.


The present study represents an attempt to address this particular lacuna. In particular, the study is aimed at integrating insights from policy analysis literature, and political sciences literature more generally, into the study of ICT policy in DCs,
with the objective of proposing a viable, solid framework with which to analyse ICT policymaking in DCs. I pursued this particular objective firstly through an extensive review of contemporary policy analysis/political sciences literature, in search for heuristic elements and concepts that could be fruitfully applied to the analysis of ICT policymaking in the particular context of DCs. On the basis of this review, I then developed a tentative framework for the analysis of the policy processes in question, aimed in particular at capturing and understanding the key characteristics of such processes, as identified in current ICT4D research. Finally, I subjected such a tentative analytical framework to a ‘proof of concept’, in the form of a detailed case study of ICT policy processes and practices in a particular country (Uganda). This study thus not only proposes and ‘tests’ a tentative framework for the analysis of ICT policy processes in DCs, but also presents a number of interesting findings regarding the nature of ICT policy processes and practices in the Ugandan context, which may inspire further research also in this particular respect, and more generally in respect of ICT policymaking in similar contexts.

In the next sections of this chapter I illustrate the background and context of this research in more detail, and outline the particularities of the research agenda at the absis of this study in full. I then proceed, in Chapter Two, to an account of the outcomes of my review of policy analysis/political sciences literature, and to a delineation of the analytical framework I developed on this basis – followed in Chapter Three by a discussion regarding method. I then provide, in Chapter Four, some basic, orientative information on the context in which I subjected the framework to a first ‘proof of concept’ (Uganda). In Chapter Five I summarise and discuss key findings from the case study undertaken as part of this research, and finally in Chapter Six I draw a number of overall conclusions both on the particular case under analysis and on the viability and usefulness of the framework proposed.
1.1 ICTs and Development

Catalysed by the diffusion of the World Wide Web in the mid 1990s, over the last decade information and communication technologies (ICTs) have developed at an exponential rate, pervading many, if not all aspects of our lives, at least in the Western world (Moyo 1996, Mansell 1999, Heeks 2002b, UNECA 2003a, van Doodewaard and de Jager 2008, UNCTAD 2009).

The societal and economic impacts of ICTs have arguably been most dramatic in the context of rich or ‘advanced’ societies and economies. Over the past few years several studies have suggested however that ICTs can be fruitfully employed also to promote socio-economic development in poorer areas of the world, due to the ‘enabling’ effects these technologies can have in key areas of human activity such as agriculture, healthcare, education, trade, micro-entrepreneurship and public sector management – to name but a few (Adam 1996, Moyo 1996, Talero 1997, Mansell 1999, Qureshi 1999, Davison et al. 2000, Heeks 2001a, 2002a, Mbarika 2002, Schech 2002, UNECA 2003a, Duncombe 2006, Heeks 2006, Tilya 2008, Akpan-Obong et al. 2009, Joseph and Andrew 2009, Hosman 2010).

The positive value attributed in this sense to ICTs is reflected also by their entrance, between the late 1990s and the beginning of this century, into the agenda of a variety of actors in the international development sector, from governments to donor agencies and development NGOs (World Bank 1998, G8 Summit 2000, IBRD/World Bank 2002, OECD 2003), and by their eventual integration into mainstream development discourse (Thompson 2004, Akpan-Obong et al. 2009).

Scholarly research on the ICT-for-development (ICT4D) nexus has however also demonstrated already from quite early on that the successful introduction and diffusion of ICTs in developing countries (DCs), and the effective employment of these technologies in support of socio-economic development, depend on a number of contextual factors - the presence or articulation of which can be particularly problematic in DC contexts.
These include for example:

- **Skills, capacity and expertise**: the successful introduction of ICTs in a given context depends on the presence of a receptive environment in terms of both the willingness and the ability to use such technologies; according to several scholars, these have often been lacking in DCs, so the introduction of ICTs in DC contexts should be accompanied by dedicated investments in training and awareness-raising activities (Mansell 1999, Davison et al. 2000, Nulens 2000, MacLean et al. 2002, UNECA 2003a, Tilya 2008); specialist expertise should also be developed locally so as to allow for technologies that are often modelled on the needs and requirements of Western societies and economies to be adapted to the often different needs of individuals and organisations in DCs (Moyo 1996, Talero 1997, Van Der Velden 2002, Heeks 2002b, Braa et al. 2007, Romijn and Caniëls 2011).

- **Accessibility and affordability**: access to ICTs can be particularly costly in resource-poor environments such as DCs, and this can hamper the diffusion of these technologies in DC contexts; in this respect it has been suggested that regulatory measures aimed at promoting competition in the ICT sector in the context of a liberalised market may be particularly helpful, as increased competition may result in a reduction of the prices and costs associated with the use of these technologies, which would allow wider sections of the population to access ICTs (Wallsten 2002, Mann 2003, Mwesigwa 2003, Nxele and Arun 2005, Rangaswamy and Nair 2010).

The above are just a few examples, which generally suggest that the successful application of ICTs to promote socio-economic development in DCs can’t in fact be

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This argument pre-dates ICTs in that it has also been made in relation to other Technologies, and in particular to pre-internet information technology (see for example Murphy 1986, Foster et al. 1990, Wilson 1990), but with the idea that ICTs are interactive, user-centred tools, it has gained more urgency.
assumed *a priori*, but is in a sense ‘subject to conditions’ (see also Averou and Walsham 2000, Heeks 2001b, Van Der Velden 2002, Walsham *et al.* 2007).

This suggests in turn that a certain level of *planning*, or intervention, seems to be required when it comes to introducing and developing ICTs in DC contexts, in order to ensure that favourable conditions for ICT development, whatever they may be, are either in place or created/facilitated.

In other words, the introduction of ICTs in DCs would seem to be best accompanied by *policy* - as illustrated in more detail in the next section.

### 1.2 ICT Policy and Development

The conviction that the introduction and development of ICTs should be accompanied and supported by relevant government policies is not exclusive to DCs, of course.

It was in fact in the context of ‘advanced’ economies such as the US and the EU that commentators, experts and policymakers first started developing, from the mid-1990s onwards, the idea that a new “global information society” could be built around the revolutionary potential of ICTs, and – importantly - that innovative policies and strategies were necessary for this to happen (Melody 1996, Kahin and Wilson 1997).

Such new strategies were supposed in particular to bring about the legal, cultural and technical changes necessary for the development of what former US Vice-President Al Gore defined in 1994 as *National Information Infrastructures* (NII) - and according to Kahin and Wilson they would typically involve:

> “Formulating a vision. This may include a shorthand concept, such as ‘information superhighway’ or ‘information society’, that gives the public an easy way to conjure and reference the changes.”
Marshaling appropriate policies or policy frameworks. This may mean recasting or redirecting existing policies to account for changes in technology (...)

Strategies for implementation. This means the specific programs or activities that advance or carry out the policies. (…)" (Kahin and Wilson 1997: x)

In more analytical and/or critical terms, NII strategies were characterised by:

- the construction of underlying ambitious, highly optimistic visions, often based on unsupported overall claims regarding the benefit of ICTs on society (Melody 1996, Kahin and Wilson 1997).
- the conviction that ICT policies and strategies are an absolute necessity, brought about by the development of technology (Sarikakis 2004).
- an international dimension: although many NII policy initiatives were conceived primarily as national initiatives, their aim was to contribute to the construction of a global information society, meaning that policy coordination and uniformity at international level would be required (Melody 1996).

Melody notes in particular that the latter aspect (the ‘global’ character of ICT policy) denotes a paradox, in that while NII strategies were aimed at building a new society that valued and promoted diversity and provided unprecedented scope for personal development and freedom of expression through ICTs, there also appeared to be only a single, abstract model of such a society, and only one direction in which all policymakers should go, regardless of the differences between countries and societies, and of their capacities and needs (Melody 1996).

Such a uniformity of policy direction is certainly reflected in the fact that many policy initiatives aimed at supporting the diffusion of ICTs in the specific context of DCs were very similar in character to the NII strategies developed in more affluent contexts.
The African Information Society Initiative (AISI), led by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), is a case in point.

The policy initiative was the product of the 21st UNECA Conference of Ministers responsible for economic and social development and planning held in 1995, which adopted a Resolution entitled “Building Africa’s Information Highway”, and requested the constitution of a high-level working group tasked with developing a plan designed to promote the adoption of ICTs as a development tool throughout the continent (UNECA 1999a, Hafkin 2001, UNECA 2003a). On the basis of this mandate, the working group developed an “action framework” structured around the three main elements identified by Kahin and Wilson as characteristic of other NII policy initiatives that predated it (see above) – namely:

- the formulation of a vision and the use of a “shorthand concept” to define it (“to realize a sustainable information society in Africa” by 2010);
- the identification of a number of policy objectives (”Strategic Objectives” in the document) to achieve this vision2;
- the elaboration of a number of strategies (“Related Goals” in the document) that governments should implement at the national level, which include regulation, fiscal relief, HR investment, and raising awareness (UNECA 2003a: 3-4)3

which was eventually adopted with Resolution 812 (XXXI) in 1996, at the 22nd Meeting of the Conference (UNECA 2003a).

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2 These include: “Ensure the continuous flow of information within the society by supporting initiatives to improve and create new information and communication services in different sectors (...). Create a continent-wide information and telecommunication network (...). Foster a new generation of men and women in Africa who are able to use information and communication technologies to leverage the development of their nations. Link Africa with the rest of the world by improving the flow of technologies in both directions (...))” (UNECA 2003b: 3)

3 The fact that the AISI seems to replicate quite closely the ideal policy model described earlier in this section is perhaps not surprising if we consider that one of the associates of the UNECA working group that worked on the AISI was Ernest J. Wilson III, a prominent academic specialising in ICT policy studies, who with Kahin provided us precisely with such an ideal model (Kahin and Wilson 1997, UNECA 2003a: 23-24).
More importantly, the AISI appears to be founded like other NII initiatives on the philosophical principles described earlier as the basis of the concept of “global information society” (Melody 1996, Sarikakis 2004), i.e.:

- an ambitious vision: the AISI aims to create, by 2010, a society in which “every man and woman, school child, village, government office and business can access information and knowledge resources through computers and telecommunication”, and where “access is available to international, regional and national ‘information highways’ providing ‘off-ramps’ in the villages and in the information area catering specifically to grass-roots society” (UNECA 2003a: 3)
- the conviction that ICT policy is necessary and inevitable, both because technological advances generally required new policies to be formulated and because the experience of the Asian Tigers seemed to demonstrate in particular that by adopting proactive policies in the ICT sector, developing economies could “leap forward” industrially and economically, to the benefit of their societies (UNECA 2003b)
- the need for international uniformity and coordination: the AISI explicitly recommends that all member states adopt it as the framework for their policy work in this field, along with “the ITU, UNESCO, UNCTAD, the World Bank, and international and bilateral partners” (UNECA 2003a: vi, 3-4)

The AISI recommended in particular the development of National Information and Communication Infrastructure (NICI) plans, intended as “integrated set[s] of decisions, guidelines, laws, regulations and other mechanisms which are geared to directing and shaping the production, acquisition and use of ICTs” (Marcelle 1998, cited in UNECA 1999a), and “reflect overall development priorities, redefine sectoral policies and support the introduction of new regulatory frameworks so as to improve the efficiency and to mobilise resources for building national information and communication infrastructure” (UNECA 1999b).

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4 “The global movement to an information age and the worldwide technological innovations of recent years (...) [present] a clear window of opportunity for appropriate ‘leapfrog’ strategies (...). The creation of an African information infrastructure is both a necessity and an opportunity (...)” (UNECA 2003a: 1).
NICI plans constitute in fact the foundation of the AISI’s “approach to policymaking” (UNECA 2003b): the onus for the realisation of a new information society in Africa was thus put very clearly and explicitly on national governments, who should collaborate and consult with relevant stakeholders in the formulation and implementation of ICT policy.

The emergence of the AISI coincided also with (and was most probably also partially caused by) the entrance of ICT policy into the agenda of donors, which provided additional pressure on DC governments to formulate new ICT policies (Nulens and Van Audenhove 1999). A 2003 OECD report on attitudes to ICT in bilateral and multilateral donors reveals for example that at the time several donor agencies recognised the importance of an “enabling environment” in order for ICTs to have an impact on development. Some donors also recommended explicitly that ICT policy be included in national Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) (OECD 2003).

And between the late 1990s and the first part of this century, several African nations obliged, and started formulating, and in some cases implementing, specific national ICT strategies and policies, with varying degrees of success (UNECA 2003b, Adam and Gillwald 2007). This was made possible at least in part also by the availability of fresh funding put forward by international institutions, as in the meantime ICT policy, like ICTs tout court, had entered the programme agenda of international donors (Nulens and Van Audenhove 1999, OECD 2003)5.

As with the relation between ICT and development6, also in this case academic analysis and practitioner experience have fortunately provided us with a much needed reality check, highlighting the existence of a number of problems in relation to the bold, all-encompassing and optimistic views that characterised policy initiatives such as the AISI (Melody 1996, Van Audenhove 2000, Wilson 2006a).

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5 The 2003 OECD report cited here highlights for example that ICT policy was at the time explicitly mentioned as an area of interest by the international development agencies of Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK and the USA, and by over 10 multilateral agencies (OECD 2003).

6 See previous section.
One such problem is for example the tension between the ambitiousness and the all-encompassing nature of initiatives such as the AISI and the need to prioritise objectives and goals in conditions of resource scarcity such as those experienced by DCs (Melody 1996).

More generally, several authors have pointed out that, as is the case with the relation between ICTs and development, positive correlations between ICT policy and development are also ‘subject to conditions’, which range from the relation between the type of policy and the context in which it is supposed to be implemented, to the environment and the way in which policy is conceived and eventually formulated. Opoku-Mensah observes for example that the lack of awareness observed amongst DC policymakers “regarding the relationship between economic liberalisation, information base economies and the advent of new technologies stifies the formulation of effective and coherent national policies” (Opoku-Mensah 2001: 271). Others adopt a more institutionalist view on the matter, maintaining that the production and implementation of policies that are supposed to affect change in broad areas such as education or regulatory practice require the existence of a solid but at the same time flexible and receptive institutional environment (Van Audenhove 2000, Jensen 2001, Duncan-Howell and Kar-Tin 2008). Regulatory success in DCs in particular has been widely demonstrated to be dependent on contextual pressures from business and risks of regulatory capture on the part of private sector actors (incumbent telecom operators in particular), and on other factors such as corruption (Van Audenhove 2000, Wallsten 2002, Cook et al. 2004). Mann has also argued, more generally, that policy effects appear to “kick in” only when a minimum level of infrastructure has been attained (Mann 2003).

Certainly it could be argued that the contextual factors highlighted above can condition the relation between any policy and its impact on development in general

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7 AISI documents often list for example a large number of sectors in which ICTs can have an impact (employment, health, education, research, culture, trade, tourism, agriculture, gender, public administration, environment, democracy to name but a few), and a correspondingly large number of areas in which governments should take action (infrastructure, regulation, capacity building, ICT production, and more), without any explicit prioritization (UNECA 1999a, 2003a).
terms – i.e. they do not apply just to ICT policy. There are however a number of issues that seem to be specific to ICT policymaking in particular, and others that characterise more specifically ICT policymaking practice in DCs: I will review these issues, or factors, in the next section, so as to delineate the problems at the centre of this study more clearly, and derive on this basis a fully formed, detailed research agenda.

Before I proceed, however, I wish to specify in more detail what ‘ICT policy’ means in the context of this study: in the discussion below, and more generally throughout the study, the term ‘ICT policy’ should be understood to comprise the ensemble of “decisions, guidelines, laws, regulations and other mechanisms” initiated by governments specifically with the aim of promoting development and growth in the ICT sector (Marcelle 2000: 39). By ‘ICT sector’ I mean in turn, again drawing from Marcelle, the ensemble of governmental, civil society and private sector institutions and activities broadly concerned with the “production, acquisition and use of ICTs” in a national context (ibidem) 8.

1.3 ICT Policymaking in Developing Countries

“The tasks laid out are formidable.”
– AISI Action Framework (UNECA 2003a)

The quote above, taken from Paragraph 97 of the key framework document of the AISI, summarises succinctly the content of this section: ICT policy is a complex matter, and ICT policymaking in DCs is characterised by additional issues and difficulties, which make it a significantly complex task.

8 The reasons why this study focuses in particular on national ICT policy processes are two-fold: firstly, if in the eyes of key institutions like the UNECA it is national plans like NICI strategies that are essential to the success of initiatives like the AISI (UNECA 2003a, 2003b, 2003c), then national plans, and the processes by which they are formulated, become worthy of particular academic attention; secondly, it is notable, when reviewing ICT-policy-and-development literature, that much has been written on international ICT policymaking, whereas the analysis of national ICT policymaking processes has remained relatively unexplored: focusing on national ICT policymaking should instead prove to be interesting and useful, as some authors note that it is precisely at national level that problems seem to arise (Wilson 1997, 2005, MacLean et al. 2002, MacLean 2004). For further discussion of the research agenda at the basis of this study see also section 1.4.1.
In this section I will review some of the factors that make ICT policy formulation a particularly complex matter, and then focus more specifically on why ICT policy formulation seems to be even more difficult in DCs.

1.3.1 Key Features of ICT Policymaking

Several sources suggest that ICT policy formulation is a rather unique and difficult endeavour, characterised as it is by different factors of complexity that are specific to this activity and this sector. These levels of complexity can be catalogued as: complexity linked to the novelty of the area; complexity due to the scope of ICT policy; complexity linked to the different fora and modes in which ICT policy is formulated; and complexity due to the technical features of ICTs.

The Novelty of ICT Policy

Like ICTs, ICT policy is still relatively young, with only just over a decade of history and experimentation behind its shoulders\(^9\).

The relatively recent introduction and diffusion of ICTs across the globe means in particular that, although much research has been undertaken on the impacts of these technologies, reliable longitudinal information on such impacts is still lacking, and this can render decision-making on the part of policymakers particularly difficult\(^10\).

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\(^9\) I distinguish here between ‘modern’ ICT policy and more general, ‘pre-internet’ information technology (IT) policy. The latter has a longer history in fact, dating back to the invention and diffusion of computers (cf. for example Murphy 1986, Wilson 1990, Foster et al. 1990); the quite unique technical features of the internet as a medium mean however that post-internet ICT policy is arguably an altogether ‘different beast’, aimed at addressing different and arguably more complex issues than those at the centre of ‘traditional’ IT policy, such as phenomena of convergence between telecom and IT infrastructure or services, or the pervasiveness and rapid development of the internet as a medium (see also further below in this section). It would therefore seem legitimate, and I think also appropriate, to consider ‘modern’ ICT policy as a relatively new and unique sector of activity, compared to ‘traditional’ policy on IT.

\(^10\) As Kahin put it not very long ago, there is not enough info about the present, let alone the future (Kahin 2001).
Up until recently policymakers in the ICT sector have therefore traditionally had to rely quite heavily on comparative policy analysis and benchmarking to contexts that are similar to the ones they operate in, which also had the effect of increasing the likelihood of policy transfer as the dominant policymaking mode (Moyo 1996, Mann 2003, Wilson 2006a). Contextual variation between countries has also meant however that “best practices” have been quite hard or actually impossible to draft (Mansell 1999): ICT policymakers have thus often relied on stories instead, possibly good “war stories” (Wilson 2006a), i.e. they have often used narratives (as opposed to hard data, for example) to mobilise resources and push forward policy work.

The novelty of the area, combined with the perceived urgency of producing relevant policy\textsuperscript{11}, has also led to “policy sprawl”, intended as the multiplication of different, sometimes conflicting policies, whose multiple ramifications have made things even more complex (Kahin 2001).

\textit{Complexity in Scope}

In its ‘ideal’ or ‘standard’ form, ICT policy potentially cuts across many different sectors of human activity, and is therefore tightly interconnected with activities in many other policy sectors, such as education, health, trade and science policy, to name but a few (Valantin 1996, Moyo 1996, APC 2003, UNECA 2003b). Indeed, according to the normative literature produced by key institutions in this area, effective ICT policy should \textit{integrate}, and impact on, other sectoral policies, and should in turn be \textit{integrated} into overall national policy, and be inspired/guided by the more general development goals of a nation as defined by government (APC 2003, UNECA 2003b, Adam and Gillwald 2007). This means that the factors and variables on which successful ICT policymaking depends are potentially quite numerous, and that ICT policymakers should in theory be capable of establishing effective connections and links with a large number of stakeholders, both internally and externally to government.

\footnote{\textsuperscript{11} See previous section.}
At the *internal* level, this requires a high level of coordination between different policy agencies (Moyo 1996, MacLean *et al.* 2002, APC/CRIS 2003, UNECA 2003a, Baqir *et al.* 2009) – hence the suggestion found in much prescriptive ICT-policy-and-development literature that substantial backing and championing of ICT policy initiatives on the part of political leaders is essential, as is the creation of a lead national agency with responsibility for the formulation and implementation of policy (UNECA 2003a, 2003b, Duncan-Howell and Kar-Tin 2008). Kendall *et al.* note in this respect that successful ICT policy formulation potentially requires extensive government reform (Kendall *et al.* 2006).

At the *external* level, the pervasiveness of ICTs (and the ambitiousness of many a policy declaration) means that policymakers should be able to understand, take into account and hopefully satisfy a very wide set of potentially conflicting expectations and interests: ICTs are used, or could be used, by many different sectors of society, from business/private organisations to state institutions, civil society organisations and private individuals, and all actors in these sectors have (or may develop, if stimulated) specific interests in the way such technologies are developed, regulated, and made accessible, and different ways of entering into, and managing, their relationships with government (Adam *et al.* 2007, Primo 2010). Actors whose economic welfare depends more directly on the use of these technologies, such as large players in the ICT industry, or providers of ICT services, are likely for example to have particularly strong interests; due to the pervasiveness of the internet and its ancillary applications, however, even non-users are likely to experience (positively or negatively) the impact of ICT policy (Mansell 1999, Sarikakis 2004)\(^\text{12}\).

Successful ICT policy formulation is therefore often said to depend on a government’s ability to consult with the largest possible number of relevant stakeholders (Valantin 1996, Moyo 1996, Talero 1997, MacLean *et al.* 2002, APC 2003, UNECA 2003a, 2003c, 2003b, Cogburn 2005, Kendall *et al.* 2006), or as

\(^{12}\) In particular, Sarikakis reported for example in 2004 that in Greece tax self-assessment could apparently only be submitted online, creating enormous difficulties for non-users of ICTs (Sarikakis 2004: note 4).
mentioned in normative documents such as the AISI framework, with “all” stakeholders.\(^{13}\)

It is easy to see however how the complete ownership and shaping of policy on the part of all ICT users is simply impossible in reality (Mansell 1999). And even when wide participation to ICT policymaking is assured, it is important to note that there can be significant power differentials between specific non-governmental actors involved in policy consultations: when the stakes are high, market actors may exert substantial pressure compared to other actors, for example, leading to policy or regulation that favours them over all others, and exposing very clearly the difficulty of producing policy that effectively addresses what can be, after all, conflicting goals, e.g. meeting business needs by liberalising markets and addressing needs that are not addressed efficiently by market mechanisms, such as universal access to ICTs (Mansell 1999, APC/CRIS 2003, Adam and Gillwald 2007, Baqir et al. 2009). Specific elites and communities of interest (e.g. citizens from urban contexts) may also come to have the upper hand in the consultation process due to their proximity to, and familiarity with, government and its workings (Mansell 1999, Cogburn 2005, Adam and Gillwald 2007).

ICT policymakers are therefore faced with difficult decisions on who should take part in policymaking processes - i.e. with a problem of definition and delimitation of groups and individuals of relevance to ICT policy\(^{14}\) - and with consequent and no less difficult decisions on how to balance the different priorities expressed by rather diverse types of stakeholder in relation to policy. This contributes to making ICT policy formulation an inherently complex and difficult task.

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\(^{13}\) “It is recommended that all stakeholders be involved in the preparation of NICI plans and policies from the beginning. (...) In countries where the process has been very successful (...) [key stakeholders] include governments (agencies/departments/ministries); civil society groups; private sector; independent regulatory bodies; academia, and labour unions etc. (...) This is to ensure buy-in from all societal actors from the start” (UNECA 2003c: 4, emphasis mine)

\(^{14}\) Witness the very interesting point made by Dutton on “what comprises civil society?” (Dutton 2006)
Complexity of Fora and Modes

ICT policymaking is complex also because up until recently the different technical elements that compose ICT systems have traditionally been governed through different international fora and in different ways, or policy modes.

Part of the decisions regarding the technical infrastructure and regulation of the ICT sector at national level have for example traditionally been dependent on decision-making processes at international level in the context of institutions such as the ITU and the WTO (Simpson and Wilkinson 2001, MacLean 2003, Adam and Gillwald 2007). The role of a national government in this respect is to ensure that the interests of the nation and of its stakeholders in the ICT sector are appropriately represented in such fora, and that international policy and agreements in the ICT sector lead to desirable outcomes for such stakeholders. This implies not only the ability to participate in such fora, but also that of influencing decisions within them, through lobbying and the creation of alliances with other national representatives and institutions. With the multiplication of formal international decision-making fora that have an impact on the governance of ICTs, this task is becoming more and more complex, requiring advanced negotiation skills and technical knowledge, combined with the political nous necessary to network and lobby successfully at the international level (Melody 1996, Simpson and Wilkinson 2001, MacLean et al. 2002, MacLean 2003, 2004, APC/CRIS 2003, Maitland and van Gorp 2009). This is especially so if, as some observe, national sovereignty in international decision making fora such as the ITU and the WTO has been progressively eroded in the face of the liberalisation of various economic sectors and the increase of the influence of business actors on public policy making at international level (Grewlich 2000, Simpson and Wilkinson 2001, Sarikakis 2004).

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15 See for example the increasing importance in the international ICT policy arena of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), caused by a general shift of attention from technical infrastructure issues to digital content distribution and consequent copyright issues (Melody 1996; MacLean 2003).
Specific components of ICT have then also been traditionally governed in different governance or policy modes, characterised in particular by different levels of involvement on the part of various actors, governmental and non-governmental.

Telephony has for example traditionally been governed mainly through the ITU, a body in which as noted above national governments exercise a certain (albeit declining) level of influence and national sovereignty (MacLean 2003, 2004). Other components of the global ICT system (such as IP addresses, domain names and country code top level domains) have instead normally been regulated on the basis of a ‘self-governance’ paradigm that has characterised the development of the internet since its early development in the 1960s, whereby decisions regarding technical standards and protocols are often taken primarily by groups of engineers and technicians involved at various levels in the development of the new technology (Dutton 2006). The latter ‘self-governance’ is at the basis for example of the work of non-governmental, non-profit organisations such as IANA (Internet Assigned Numbers Authority) and ICANN (Internet Corporation for Assigned Numbers and Addresses), which formally exclude the possibility of representation and full membership on the part of governments, who are limited to an advisory role only (MacLean et al. 2002, Collins 2006, Dutton 2006).

The multiplicity of fora and modes in/by which ICTs are governed arguably renders ICT policymaking a particularly difficult endeavour for national governments.

**Technical and Social Features**

ICTs are also technically complex per se, so the task of formulating policy in this area presupposes at the very least some level of familiarity with some of their key technical ins and outs. In addition to the negotiation and networking/political skills mentioned above, ICT policymakers are therefore ideally required to also have at least some basic knowledge about the technology at the basis of ICTs, and while this may appear obvious, it is not, and we will see how this factor is of particular importance when it comes to ICT policymaking in DCs (see 1.3.2).

In particular, development and innovation in the ICT sector have traditionally advanced and still advance at a very rapid pace, meaning that the subject matter
on which ICT policymakers need to take decisions is relatively volatile, so not only do policymakers need to be au fait with relevant technology, but they must also keep abreast of rapid technical developments and of the challenges they create, and react to these challenges effectively (Kahin 2001, Maitland and van Gorp 2009). Such challenges are all the more complex if we also consider the phenomena of ‘convergence’ and interrelationship between different media and different technological platforms that have uniquely characterised the development of ICTs since the early 1990s (Henten et al. 2002, Barendse 2003, Khalil and Kenny 2008)\(^1\).

On the other hand, policymakers also have to deal with the permanence of some technical features and rules that are specific to ICTs. Like all technologies, ICTs are not only composed of material artefacts, but also of sets of decisions about how they ought to work (Street 1992), and they are socially moulded in relatively durable ways by a variety of forces, including government regulation, market forces, user adaptation, and discourse (Gustafson 2001). As such, ICTs are also carriers of norms and prescriptions (Heeks 2002b, 2004), and these may include policy prescriptions. For example, the fact that the internet, and email in particular, are still predominantly text-based applications (as opposed to, say, applications based purely on audio and video signals such as radio or television) presupposes that users are alphabetically literate: their introduction into a specific context therefore contains a correspondent policy prescription regarding the need for alphabetical literacy, and ICT policymakers need to take this into consideration when producing policy, especially in DCs, where alphabetical literacy is in no way universal (Ouma and Ssempebwa 2009, Krauss 2009).

\(^{16}\) Cf. for example the rapid emergence at the turn of the century of voice over IP (VoIP) protocols, which by enabling users to talk to each other directly via the internet, offer the opportunity to bypass existing telephony systems and therefore dramatically abate the cost of calls (international in particular): from the very outset, VoIP posed a substantial challenge to traditional phone operators, as it potentially led to rapid, negative impacts on their revenue – leading in turn to the inability on the part of operators to develop additional services and/or invest in universal access due to lack of funds. The ‘surprise’ effect of VoIP was such that in many DCs the first measure taken in policy terms was in fact to ban the protocol, so as to protect the income of national operators (and indirectly, also protect revenues from tax) (Ayogu 2002).
The various technical and social features\textsuperscript{17} of ICTs thus represent relatively unique additional factors of complexity that all ICT policymakers need to confront themselves with, and master.

\subsection*{1.3.2 Key Features of ICT Policymaking in Developing Countries}

A number of factors then make ICT policymaking \textit{in DCs} an even more challenging endeavour. These factors could be roughly catalogued as follows: problems linked to \textit{lack of awareness/capacity}; \textit{process-related issues}; and \textit{issues around participation}.

\textit{Lack of Awareness/Capacity}

In section 1.1 we saw how one of the key factors said to have hindered the development and diffusion of ICTs in DCs is a widespread lack of awareness around these new technologies and their perceived potential for socioeconomic development, accompanied by a low level of ICT skills among the general population (Jensen 2001, MacLean \textit{et al.} 2002, UNECA 2003a).

In this respect, a number of authors suggest that in DCs low levels of ICT skills and awareness are found also more specifically amongst policymakers, and policy actors at large. While this may have been justifiable in the early years of ICT policy practice (cf. reports in Adam 1996, Moyo 1996, Talero 1997, UNECA 1999a), more recent reports suggest that problems relating to lack of skills and low awareness amongst DC policymakers do not seem to have decreased significantly with the passing of time, or at least not as much as they ideally should have (UNECA 2003a, MacLean 2004, Tilya 2008, Maitland and van Gorp 2009).

ICT policy activity in DCs is thus characterised by a potential paradox: for policymaking processes to get underway and develop there needs to be a minimum level of awareness amongst policymakers of ICTs and their benefits; but at the same time it is ICT policy’s role to increase such awareness, by creating the

\textsuperscript{17} Or what Bijker \textit{et al.} define, with a comprehensive term, ‘sociotechnical’ features (Bijker and Law 1992).
conditions that facilitate wider access to, and use of, ICTs – both for policymakers and the general population. The relative persistence of problems related to low awareness and capacity in relation to ICTs amongst policymakers is in fact a testimony to the significance of this paradox, and of the impasse it can create, and gives an idea of the extent of the additional, quite peculiar difficulties that characterise ICT policymaking in DCs.

This problem is compounded according to some also by an alleged lack, amongst DC policy officials, of policy skills in general, meaning the capability to obtain relevant information, assess it, take decisions and implement them. This is said to have historically applied to policymaking across different sectors (cf. Grindle 1980, Grindle and Thomas 1991, Grindle 2007), but due to the relatively novelty of ICTs and ICT policy (cf. previous section), the problem seems to be even more marked in this particular sector (MacLean et al. 2002, Nulens 2000), and has led according to some to negative consequences in relation to policy formulation and regulatory work (Opoku-Mensah 2001, Jensen 2001, Ayogu 2002, Goulden and Msimang 2005, Adam and Gillwald 2007, Baqir et al. 2009, Primo 2010).

ICT policymaking in DCs is in other words characterised according to many by particular cognitive difficulties. This suggests that research on ICT policymaking in DCs would benefit from a focus on the cognitive aspects of policy formulation activity, i.e. on the different perceptions and understandings of ICT policymaking and the ICT policy process that circulate in specific DC contexts.

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18 This type of observation should be put into context, however. Firstly, lack of capacity doesn’t mean lack of potential: MacLean observes in fact that the addition of views from the South is likely to increase the richness of the discourse in the field of international ICT policymaking, and widen the range of suggestions for possible solutions to problems that are common to many countries (MacLean et al. 2002). Secondly, these alleged “lacks” (of skills, of awareness, etc.) are predominantly measured on the basis of an unrealistic, “optimal” level of skills and capacity, which corresponds – unsurprisingly – to the level observed in ‘developed’ countries (for want of a better word). And in this respect some authors interestingly note that lack of policy skills and HR issues more generally also characterise the work of policymakers in ‘developed’ contexts, in particular in relation to the work of regulatory authorities (Goulden and Msimang 2005).
Design-Reality Gaps in Relation to ICT Policymaking

Policy initiatives such as the AISI make specific recommendations not only with regard to the contents of ICT policy, but also in relation to how national ICT policymaking processes should unravel, or be made to unravel, in DCs.

Thee recommendations, or prescriptions, are characterised in particular by a strikingly linear view of the ICT policy process as constituted by stages, or phases\(^{19}\), from the elaboration of a vision and subsequent strategic framework, to the development of a policy document that highlights overall policy priorities and goals (i.e. “what needs to be done”), to the elaboration of plans designed to achieve such goals (cf. for example UNECA 2003c)\(^{20}\). The progress of different countries towards the establishment of NICI plans is then measured accordingly, with countries divided in groups primarily depending on how far they have progressed along such a linear model (UNECA 2003b, Trigrammic 2005, Adam and Gillwald 2007).

It has been observed however that deploying ‘linear’ models of the policy process such as those recommended by the AISI can be particularly difficult in DCs.

A first problematic locus in this respect is for example that of the initiation of the policy process, and in particular the identification of priorities and the formulation of policy goals.

Low levels of awareness regarding the potential of ICTs may for example lead policymakers to consider the development of ICTs a lower developmental priority compared to investment in other sectors, such as agriculture, or manufacturing, and more generally poverty reduction (MacLean et al. 2002) - in a policy version of the “Why should I?” motivational question to which Heeks maintains an answer is too often assumed in relation to ICT-and-development projects (Heeks 2002b).

\(^{19}\) See Chapter 2 for a critical discussion of the concept of linearity of policy processes.
\(^{20}\) Detailed ‘guideline’ documents produced by the UNECA actually specify for example as many as 18 successive steps that governments need to undertake in order to formulate effective ICT (e.g. UNECA 1999a, 2003a).
And even if ICTs are recognised as a policy and investment priority, the identification and prioritisation of specific policy goals may then turn out to be problematic. As noted previously, some policy goals may for example be potentially in conflict with others: prioritising the liberalisation of the telecom sector and at the same time considering universal access/service as a key priority (as is often the case in DCs) undoubtedly puts policy under tension, for example, and it has been demonstrated to make the job of regulators and telecom operators particularly difficult (Ayogu 2002, Nxele and Arun 2005, Kendall et al. 2006, CTO 2008, Madanda et al. 2009). The relatively strong negotiating power of multinational telecom corporations has also led according to some to the ‘capture’ of prioritisation processes and principles by powerful, corporate elites (Mansell 1999, Ayogu 2002, Wakabi 2009). This points in turn to fundamental problems with participation, which I will address further in this study, but which in general have also been observed as a key feature of policymaking in DCs tout court (Grindle 1980, Cooke and Kothari 2001b, Hickey and Mohan 2004, Brock et al. 2004).

In this respect it doesn’t help that policy initiatives such as the AISI seem to have several things in common with what Quick defined as “ideological” policy programmes, witnessed also in the past in DCs and characterised by the following features:

- they are expected to realise a multitude of goals at the same time, leading to a “new society”
- the goals they refer to are usually not prioritised or subject to a hierarchy
- achievements are relatively immeasurable
- they are led politically in terms of implementation, through the establishment of special agencies
- they, and the government officials who work on them, are immune from criticism

(Quick 1980)

Quick maintains that policy programmes of this kind are inherently difficult to manage on the basis of ‘rational’ criteria, so political criteria are used instead, also
because of the pressure on policymakers to act quickly and very visibly (Quick 1980).²¹

Another problematic locus associated with ‘one-size-fits-all’ policy initiatives such as the AISI is that of contextual and historic variation. Specific institutional arrangements and organisational traditions may for example be more or less conducive to effective reform in the ICT sector, and such arrangements and traditions can vary quite significantly across countries, as Michelsen noted for example in relation to countries with post-colonial links to France as opposed to Great Britain (Nulens and Van Audenhove 1999, Nulens 2000, Adam and Gillwald 2007, Michelsen 2002). The historical moment in which specific policies are developed and implemented is also important (Cleaves 1980). Political upheavals and wars in particular have been demonstrated to have had peculiar effects on the pace and effectiveness of ICT policymaking in Africa: Nxele and Arun note for instance how countries emerging from major political unrest and its dramatic economic consequences, such as Uganda, Tanzania, Angola, Mozambique and the Democratic Republic of Congo, have tended to commit to telecom reform more significantly than countries like Kenya, which, up until the 2007 election debacle, had enjoyed relative peace for a long period (Nxele and Arun 2005); the same could be said for post-apartheid South Africa (Barendse 2003, Adam and Gillwald 2007); and even an AISI report suggests that Rwanda’s dramatic progress in the field of ICT policy may also be due to particular preoccupations with reconstruction following the disastrous genocide of the 1990s (UNECA 2003b).

‘Context’ thus seems to be particularly important when it comes to policymaking in DCs: this is ultimately in contrast with ‘one-size-fits-all’ initiatives such as the AISI, however, potentially leading to the emergence of a ‘policy version’ of the design-reality gaps observed by Heeks in relation to the implementation of e-government projects in DCs (Heeks 2002a, 2004, 2006) - whereby policy processes are designed in specific ways, but such a design may not be fully compatible or implementable in specific national contexts (Duncan-Howell and Kar-Tin 2008, 21 Quick also adds that - contrary to the recommendations found in much ICT policy literature that top-level political support for ICT policy is essential - public championing at the highest level may sometimes actually turn out to be counterproductive, as demonstrated by his case study of cooperative policy in Zambia (Quick 1980).

Issues Around Participation

As noted in section 1.3.1, much of the normative literature on ICT policy insists on the need for policy processes relating to ICT to be as open and participative as possible.

This is said to be particularly the case in DCs, as wide participation can according to many help overcome some of the challenges typically associated with ICT policy formulation in DC contexts.

As noted previously, DCs face for example the dilemma of balancing the need to create a conducive environment for private business actors to operate in (and thereby contribute, for example, to the development of ICT infrastructure) with the additional but nevertheless crucial goal of granting universal access to ICTs and to the benefits they bring: such a dilemma can according to many be addressed precisely through the integration of the widest possible set of perspectives and points of view on ICT development and use, so as to ensure that the needs of ‘all’ relevant stakeholders are taken into account (Talero 1997, Mansell 1999, Adeya and Cogburn 2001, Ben Soltane 2001, Jensen 2001, MacLean et al. 2002, APC/CRIS 2003, UNECA 2003a, MacLean 2004, Cogburn 2005, Kendall et al. 2006, Dutton 2006, van Dooodewaard and de Jager 2008, Baqir et al. 2009). In addition to this, the participation in ICT policy processes of particular types of actors, e.g. communities of experts, may also contribute to reducing problems linked to ‘lack of awareness’ amongst policymakers, and in general provide much needed technical guidance in relation to the many complex technical features of these technologies (Moyo 1996, Talero 1997, Adam et al. 2007, Maitland and van Gorp 2009).

Research has also demonstrated however that achieving ‘optimum’ level of participation in ICT policy processes can be quite problematic in DCs.
Participative approaches to ICT policymaking presuppose for example the existence of a healthily wide number of actors in the private sector who are willing and able to take part in policy formulation work. But in DCs, the national private sector (and the ICT sector in particular) may be dramatically underdeveloped (a problem that is in fact one of the objects of ICT policy), and if present, it may be weak and disorganised (i.e. not organised in relevant trade associations, for instance, or other relevant interest groups) (MacLean 2003, APC 2003, Drake 2004, Madanda et al. 2009). This can lead to the potential capture of the representation of the point of view of business on the part of a few, some of whom could actually be acting in representation of large international corporations rather than genuine national business actors (Grindle 1980, APC 2003).

The same applies to the participation in policy formulation work by national civil society organisations (CSOs): in some cases the CSO sector may be atomised rather than organised in formal associations, and the selection of representatives from such organisations can sometimes depend more on the proactiveness of specific individuals in the sector rather than on clear and objective selection criteria, again leaving the process at risk of capture by specific actors (Grindle 1980, APC 2003, Chekwoti et al. 2003, Brock et al. 2004, Primo 2010).

The quality of participation can also be problematic: participation does not necessarily equate to influence, especially in the international arena (Drake 2004, Cogburn 2005, Cogburn et al. 2008), and a commitment to ensuring participation does not necessarily engender ‘real’ participation (UNECA 2003b, Adam et al. 2007).

Research on ICT policymaking in DCs would therefore benefit from focusing also on how participation is administered and perceived in specific DC contexts, and on how actors are included or excluded from policy formulation work.

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22 A 1997 document reporting the outcomes of a UNECA-sponsored ministerial workshop to discuss the initiation of NICIs in West African Anglophone countries mentions for example that the twenty non-governmental institutions present at the event included eight international non-profit institutions such as universities or UN bodies, and six were businesses based either in the EU or the US (UNECA 1997).
1.4 Research Agenda

1.4.1 The Importance of Researching ICT Policymaking in DCs

Based on what we have seen so far, ICT policymaking in DCs is arguably a rather complex and difficult endeavour, characterised as it is by multiple layers - or factors - of complexity, some of which appear to be unique to this sector and context.

The question that has animated much ICT-policy-and-development literature is therefore: how can this complexity be addressed, and the problematicity of ICT policymaking reduced?

Answers to this question often identify capacity building and the sharing of information as possible solutions.

Several authors suggest for example that, although advanced levels of technical and political capacity are usually the result of years of experience and cannot be artificially developed in the short term (MacLean et al. 2002, Maitland and van Gorp 2009), helping develop the skills of different policy actors (e.g. government officials, business actors and CSO staff) through investment in training and the facilitation of wider exposure to discussions regarding ICTs and ICT policy may be beneficial, as would additional financial investments aimed at increasing staff numbers in policy and regulatory institutions (MacLean et al. 2002, APC/CRIS 2003, MacLean 2004, Eldridge and Goulden 2005, Goulden and Msimang 2005, Krauss 2009, Primo 2010).

More generally, it has been suggested that many of the problematic issues that characterise ICT policymaking in DCs could be addressed through wider, more targeted sharing and exchange of information - hence the ideal, ‘best practice’ models of the ICT policy process proposed and disseminated by the UNECA as part of the AISI, the production and distribution of online resources such as “toolkits”, FAQs and knowledge databases, and the creation of opportunities for additional interaction between policymakers, experts and other types of stakeholders both in person and via e-mail distribution lists, online fora, and so on.

At the basis of most if not all the activities mentioned above lies the availability of relevant knowledge - and knowledge can be produced, amongst other things, through research (Cleaves 1980, and see Wilson 2006a, Gillwald 2010, Mansell 2010 specifically in relation to research on and in support of ICT policy processes).


This is somewhat surprising, considering that – as we have seen – some of the problems associated with ICT policymaking in DCs are said to stem precisely from practice- or process-related factors (e.g. the alleged lack of policy practice skills amongst policymakers, problems with participation, or problems linked to ‘inappropriate’ process design). In these respects, investigating ICT policymaking practice more closely – as opposed to policy content – would probably help. Detailed research on ICT policymaking practice seems quite hard to come by, however – meaning in turn that theory building and the elaboration of analytical
frameworks in relation to the subject have also remained relatively underdeveloped\(^\text{23}\).

With this dissertation I wish to make a contribution towards the filling of this gap, firstly by analysing the complexities of ICT policymaking in a specific DC context, and secondly – and perhaps more importantly – by contributing in the process also to theory building and development regarding \textit{how to research} ICT policymaking processes in DCs.

In the next section I summarise the foundations of this research agenda in more detail, based on the findings of the review of ICT-policy-and-development literature undertaken so far.

\subsection*{1.4.2 Requirements of an Analytical Framework}

The different levels or factors of complexity associated with ICT policymaking in DCs described in section 1.3 could be categorised as follows:

1) complexities linked to the \textit{multiplicity of actors} potentially involved in ICT policy (complexity in scope)
2) complexities due to the \textit{multiplicity of fora} and \textit{modes} in/by which ICT policy is or can potentially be made and the \textit{extranational dimension} of ICT policymaking
3) \textit{technological complexity} (novelty of the area, socio-technical features of ICTs)
4) complexity linked to the level of \textit{skills and awareness} required to manage, participate in, influence, and/or benefit from ICT policy processes
5) complexities generated by discrepancies between the intended or ‘ideal’ \textit{design} of ICT policy processes and the \textit{reality} of ICT policymaking in DCs

\(^{23}\) There are exceptions to this, of course (cf. for example Wilson 2005, 2006a, Wilson 2006b, Cogburn 2004, 2005, Cogburn \textit{et al}. 2008, Dutton and Peltu 2005, Dutton 2005a, 2006): I will discuss some of these in Chapter 2 as part of a more detailed review of the analytical frameworks available for the study of ICT policy practice in DCs, outlining however also the limitations connected with many of the approaches proposed so far.
6) complexities linked to the need to and the difficulty of facilitate(ing) effective *participation and access* in/to the policymaking process in DCs.

In more analytical terms, these different factors of complexity can be grouped into two overall categories:

- **Relational Factors** – such as the multiplicity of actors actually or potentially involved in ICT policymaking, the multiplicity of fora and modes in/by which ICT policy is made, and problems of access to and participation in the policy process; the existence of these factors suggests that research on ICT policymaking in DCs should focus in particular on the *relations between the different actors involved in policymaking*, i.e. on how such relations are formed, developed, and maintained, who is included in or excluded from the policy process, and the way power and influence are exerted by different actors through such relations.

- **Cognitive Factors** - including issues relating to the technical complexity of ICTs, the relatively widespread ‘lack’ of technical and policy skills and awareness required to take part in policy formulation work, and the existence of ‘gaps’ between what DC policy actors may perceive as ‘ideal’ models of the ICT policy process, and their perceptions/experiences of the ‘reality’ of ICT policymaking practice in given contexts; these factors suggest that in addition to focusing on relational factors, research on the ICT policy process should focus also on the *cognitive* aspects of ICT policy activity in DCs, i.e. on the ways in which *knowledge, ideas, beliefs and meanings* regarding ICTs and ICT policy are diffused and circulated by/through actors in the policy process, and on how the interplay of such ideas and meanings can form specific shared understandings\(^{24}\) of how ICT policy activity takes place and how ICT policy processes unfold.

An alternative, schematic representation of these two distinct groups of factors and analytical dimensions is provided in Table 1.1, with examples.

\(^{24}\) Or ‘discourses’ – see Chapter 3.
Table 1.1 - Relational and Cognitive Factors/Dimensions of Complexity of ICT Policymaking in DCs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relational Factors / Dimensions</th>
<th>Cognitive Factors / Dimensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multiplicity of actors</td>
<td>Technical complexity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- necessity of coordination between many governmental agencies</td>
<td>- novelty of the area, rapid technological development and technological convergence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- multiplicity of non-governmental actors potentially affected by ICT policy</td>
<td>- technology as a carrier of preset ideas/concepts relating to use and thus also of policy prescriptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiplicity of fora and modes</td>
<td>Level of technical and policy skills/awareness required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- different policy venues for national decisions on telecommunications, trade, education, and other aspects relating to ICTs</td>
<td>- variable levels of ICT proficiency amongst policymakers and population at large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- different modes for the governance of specific technical aspects of ICTs</td>
<td>- variable understanding and perception of issues at stake and of ‘requirements’ of the policy process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues around participation</td>
<td>Design-reality gaps in relation to the policy process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- limited existence/cohesion of potential non-state policy participants at national level</td>
<td>- problems relating to ‘ideal’ prioritisation of policy goals vs. reality of prioritisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- possible ‘capture’ of representation by a few powerful actors</td>
<td>- lack of consideration of historical and political context in ‘ideal’ models of the policy process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It thus follows that research on ICT policymaking practices and processes in DCs would probably benefit from integrating effectively two key analytical dimensions or perspectives: the relational dimension, and the cognitive dimension of policy activity and work.

With this study I intend to make a contribution precisely in this sense, by investigating potentially useful analytical frameworks derived from political science literature that address either or both the relational and the cognitive dimensions of policymaking, and by developing on this basis a tentative, comprehensive heuristic framework for the analysis of ICT policy processes in DCs. I illustrate this research agenda in more detail in the next section.

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25 It’s important to note that the dichotomy operated here between relational and cognitive factors is intended merely as a heuristic and narrative device, designed to help illustrate
1.4.3 Key Research Questions and Dissertation Outline

Considering the relative scarcity of solid theoretical and analytical frameworks for research on ICT policy practice in DCs, at a general level this study intends to address the following fundamental or ‘primary’ research question:

‘How to research ICT policymaking in DCs?’

The study is primarily aimed in other words at developing an analytical framework for research on ICT policymaking in DCs.

Pursuing this objective implies in particular seeking answers to the following sub-questions:

- What does a framework for analyzing ICT policy in DCs require? What does it need to focus on?
- What frameworks and theories are currently available?
- What are their advantages and shortcomings?
- How can a theoretical framework for the analysis of ICT policymaking in DCs be of use in the realms of academia and policy practice?

In order to answer these questions, I firstly review existing analytical frameworks derived from the discipline of political science, and identify elements for the construction of a tentative, innovative theoretical framework with which to approach research on ICT policymaking in DCs (Chapter 2). I then discuss the methodological implications of adopting such a theoretical framework (Chapter 3),

and guide analytical work. In reality, the cognitive and relational aspects of ICT policy activity in DCs are inevitably intertwined: for example, the complexity of the relationships that can develop between a large numbers of policy actors could be seen to both result in, and be due to, the interplay between different cognitive perspectives on policy and the policy process put forward by different actors at the ‘policy table’. Along the same lines, problems around participation are certainly problems linked to the nature of the relationships between specific actors (and in particular the power differentials that characterise such relationships), but at the same time effective participation also appears to depend on the level of technical and policy skills and knowledge possessed by different actors, and – perhaps more importantly – also on the perceptions that actors have of the actual meaning of ‘participation’, or of its purpose – i.e. on cognitive factors.

Cf. section 1.4.1, and again see Chapter 2 for a more detailed discussion of this issue.
and on this basis proceed to subject the framework to a ‘proof of concept’, through its application in the context of a particular case study (Chapters 4 and 5). Finally in Chapter 6 I draw overall conclusions, both in relation to the case under analysis and in relation to the more fundamental research question outlined above.

Before I proceed with the above, in the next sections I explain the reasons why I have chosen to ‘test’ the framework with a case study centred specifically around an African nation, and illustrate the expected outcomes of my research on this subject.

**1.4.4 African LDCs as a Testbed for Theory Development**

The reasons why I have chosen to undertake a detailed case study of ICT policymaking in a specific African nation as part of this research are twofold.

Firstly, as seen in section 1.2, Africa has been the subject of conscious, ambitious, and relatively well delineated and well documented efforts to effect change in the area of ICT by way of policy, as attested by initiatives like the AISI. Research on this subject has focused in particular on the AISI as a whole and/or on the international dimension of ICT policymaking in the African context, however (cf. Nulens and Van Audenhove 1999, Van Audenhove 2000, Nulens 2000, Nulens et al. 2001, Ben Soltane 2001, Jensen 2001, Opoku-Mensah 2001, Hafkin 2001, Adeya and Cogburn 2001, Ayogu 2002, MacLean 2003, 2004, Cogburn 2004, Adam and Gillwald 2007, Gillwald 2010), while relatively less academic attention has been paid to the articulation of ICT policymaking efforts in specific African national contexts. Examining ICT policymaking activities in a specific African nation in some detail will hopefully go some way towards addressing this lacuna, and contribute more generally to advancing research on ICT policymaking in DCs.

Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, African countries, and in particular those defined by the UN as the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) on the continent,

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27 For the reasons why *national* ICT policymaking processes are worthy of academic attention in general see also n.8 in this chapter.

28 For the definition of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) specified by the United Nations see for example (UNCTAD 2005): in general, LDCs are countries characterized by low
have traditionally suffered from extremely low levels of IT and telecommunication infrastructure compared to other areas of the world: suffice to say that in 1999 teledensity (the number of telephone lines per person) totalled an average of 2 lines per 100 persons (2%) in African countries generally, decreasing to 1 line per 100 persons (1%) in the subset of African LDCs, compared to 7% in Asia, 10% in Latin America and the Caribbean, 37% in Europe and 66% in the US (Mbarika 2002). Certainly the explosion of mobile telephony in DCs has contributed to significant increases in overall teledensity in the past few years: but ICTs do not comprise just telephony, and the progress of African LDCs in relation to other ICT indicators, such as ownership of PCs and internet penetration (the percentage of internet users amongst the population) has been definitely less dramatic (Mann 2003, UNCTAD 2009).

The particularly low ‘baseline’ that characterises African LDCs as far as ICTs and connectivity are concerned means that these countries represent in a sense particularly ‘difficult’ cases for ICT policy in comparison to other countries: African LDCs therefore constitute an ideal ‘testbed’ for theory development in relation to research on ICT policymaking in DCs.

The reasons why I opted for a single case study approach (as opposed for example to undertaking a comparative study), and the reasons why I chose to focus such a case study specifically on Uganda are illustrated in detail respectively in Chapters 3 and 4.

Here, I wish to note that for the reasons above, and also for reasons of brevity, from this point onwards when I refer to ‘DCs’ I therefore mean in particular African LDCs, as this study has been developed with a particular focus on ICT policymaking in these contexts.

income per capita; low scores in indicators relating to nutrition, health, school enrolment, and adult literacy; and economic vulnerability. For a broader discussion of definitions of “developing country” and of the concept of LDC in relation to ICT indicators see also Mbarika (2002), Mann (2003), and http://www.itu.int/osg/spu/ni/ipdc/links/ldc.html (Accessed 28 February 2008).

29 For more information on ICT-related indicators in LDCs see http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ldc/publications.html (Accessed 30 June 2010).
1.4.5 Expected Outcomes

As noted previously\(^{30}\), a number of authors suggest that further research on ICT policy and policymaking in DCs may ultimately help improve policy actors’ understanding of the complexity of ICT policy practice in these contexts, and thus reduce the problematicity of this particular endeavour (Valantin 1996, Qureshi 1999, Grewlich 2000, MacLean et al. 2002, UNECA 2003a, Cogburn 2005, Cogburn et al. 2008, Wilson 2006a, Adam and Gillwald 2007).

Previously we also noted however that research on the nature of the ICT policy process in DCs (as opposed to research on policy content) seems in fact to be somewhat scarce, and that the few examples of it found in current literature are more often than not based on relatively simplistic and/or heavily normative theoretical frameworks (if any) (see for example APC 2003, Adam 2004, Selian 2004, APC/IICD 2007b, Adam et al. 2007, Evoh 2007b, 2007a). The existence and persistence of this particular heuristic lacuna are arguably attested on one hand by the parallel persistence over time of repeated calls for further, more detailed research on ICT policy practice in DC contexts (cf. Thompson and Walsham 2010, Mansell 2010 for recent examples), and on the other hand, in more practical terms, also by what some allege has been scarce ‘real world’ progress in relation to the promotion of ICT4D projects and agendas by way of policy (Adam and Gillwald 2007, Gillwald 2010).

As suggested previously, this piece of research is intended to go some way in filling this gap, by contributing to theory development on the subject of ICT policymaking in DCs, and more generally by providing useful additional insights into ICT policy practice in these particular contexts as part of the process.

In this respect, one of the expected outcomes of this study is in particular the proposition of a tentative and provisional but nevertheless comprehensive theoretical and analytical framework for the analysis of ICT policymaking practice in DCs.

\(^{30}\) Cf. section 1.4.1.
Such a heuristic framework should in particular not only be capable of telling us something useful and new regarding what particular factors of complexity characterise ICT policy practice in given contexts, but also be capable of yielding insights into the *relative importance* of specific complexity factors compared to others as they are experienced by policy actors in the context under analysis, so as to inform the prioritisation of particular issues when it comes to searching for solutions.

An additional expected outcome of this study is then also, as mentioned, the provision of innovative, additional insights into ICT policy practice in DCs more generally – as a sort of ‘by product’ of the application of the analytical framework mentioned above in the context of a particular case study.

Importantly, the heuristic framework developed as part of this study should also be capable of yielding results of some utility to ICT policy practitioners, aiding reflection on the complexities that characterise their work, and facilitating their search for possible solutions to the problems they experience. I discuss in more detail what this means in practice in section 2.4.3 of this dissertation, and in section 6.3, as part of my conclusions.

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In the next chapter I begin to pursue this particular research agenda by reviewing contemporary approaches to the study of the policy process, and by identifying, on the basis of such a review, analytical constructs and tools that may be of use in the construction of an effective framework for research on ICT policy practice in DCs.
2. ELEMENTS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, I review a selection of analytical approaches derived from the ambit of political science that address the two key analytical dimensions that research on ICT policy processes should ideally integrate: the *relational* dimension, and the *cognitive* dimension of policymaking and policy work\(^{31}\) (sections 2.1 to 2.3).

I then develop, on the basis of such a review, a tentative, integrated theoretical framework with which to analyse ICT policymaking in DCs (2.4).

2.1 Policy and Policymaking: An Overview

2.1.1 Contemporary Trends in Policy Analysis

Recent policy studies textbooks argue that the discipline has been marked by a progressive shift along its history from the dominance of positivist, ‘scientific’ approaches based on rationalist, stage-based models of decision-making, to more ‘political’ approaches, which consider policymaking as an eminently political, ‘messy’ and unlinear activity, in which individuals and groups discuss and bargain within specific political and historical contexts, and in which institutions, ideas, and socio-economic conditions play an important role (Parsons 1995, Hill 1998, John 1998)\(^{32}\).

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\(^{31}\) Cf. section 1.4.2.

\(^{32}\) Expanding on Marcelle’s definition of ‘ICT policy’ (Marcelle 2000 - cf. section 1.2), *policy* [and by extension *policymaking*] should be intended here as [the engagement by individuals and organisations in the collective discussion and formulation of] *sets of principles, laws, guidelines and/or rules* set by government with the aim of regulating and promoting public and private activities in a given social or economic sector. Although derived from the specific ambit of ICT policy analysis, such a definition is broadly consistent with those found in contemporary, mainstream policy analysis literature, including in relation to DCs (e.g. Hill 1998, Turner and Hulme 1997). Importantly, it should also be taken only as a temporary, ‘working’ definition: as Keeley and Scoones note, the concept of ‘policy’ has been traditionally difficult to define (Keeley and Scoones 1999) - and this study will demonstrate also how policy actors’ perceptions of what constitutes policy and policymaking can actually vary, even within the same political context.
In historical terms, such a shift was initially characterised by the following developments:

- the progression from a classical, scientific conception of public administration as a rational activity undertaken by formal, monocentric and hierarchy-based organisations (governments), to neo-organisational approaches based on the idea that governments, while still conceived as unitary entities, are nevertheless in the business of collective and cooperative action - i.e. rather than rely exclusively on formal command structures, they have to cooperate with other actors and organisations in order to achieve political goals (Bogason and Toonen 1998, Rhodes 2011). In this new perspective, policymaking and the policy process were still seen as eminently rational and ‘linear’ activities, but the range of actors considered to be involved in them was extended beyond governments, to include an increasingly wide range of external, private (usually organisational) actors.

- the ‘discovery’ of policy as a research subject, i.e. a shift in the focus of public administration analysis from the more formal, structural aspects of government and of its work, to an analysis of the actual goals of public administration activity, and the various means by which such goals are pursued/attained by governmental organisations (Kenis and Schneider 1991, Bogason and Toonen 1998).

Further research in the specific ambit of policy analysis eventually brought several scholars also to the conclusion that politics matter, however, and that policy and policymaking are hardly characterised by the features of rationality on which both classical and neo-organisational approaches to the study of public administration had been based (Minogue 1983, Bogason and Toonen 1998, Hill 1998). In the words of Bogason and Toonen, “politics was discovered to be not very ‘rational’ and was a clear disturbance to an orderly policy process, by issuing vague, often unclear, and almost conflicting wishes (...) [and] policy analysis often had to discover that politicians didn’t even know clearly what their goals were” (Bogason and Toonen 1998: 215).
This had two significant consequences on the study of public policy making.

On one hand, in this perspective the conception of policymaking as a linear process that happens in chronologically and functionally separate, consequent stages (from problem identification to policy formulation, through to implementation and evaluation), was found to be fundamentally inadequate as a tool to inform public policy analysis. The reality of policy processes was in other words found to be far from that of neat, step-by-step processes made up of distinct, sequential stages or ‘phases’ (Bish 1978, Carlsson 2000, Keeley 2001, Perkin and Court 2005): there can be for example significant interdependencies and feedbacks between policy formulation and implementation activities, especially if the same actors take part in both these activities (Grindle 1980, Kenis and Schneider 1991), and in some cases policy decisions may be taken also outside the official enactment of what are considered the ‘customary’ phases of the policy process (Keeley 2001). In addition to this, comparative policy analysis has also outlined the existence of substantial variations in policy processes across different geographic and/or sectoral contexts, rendering explanations based on a single model somewhat unconvincing (Atkinson and Coleman 1992).

This doesn’t mean that we should do away entirely with the concepts on which linear models are based, such as policy formulation and policy implementation: it may however prove more appropriate to think of these different aspects of policy activity as possible components of the policy process (Perkin and Court 2005), and employ the distinctions between them as heuristic and narrative tools in the course of one’s analysis.

The second main consequence brought about by deeper and more extensive analyses of policy practice was the conclusion that governments were not necessarily central to policymaking processes by definition, and that policy and governance (the latter being a neologism that accompanied this conceptual shift) were in fact the result of the decentred interactions of a multiplicity of actors with specific interests, enacted across a multiplicity of decision-making venues and practices (Kenis and Schneider 1991, Hanf 1978, Bevir and Richards 2009). This
led to the development of additional new approaches that put the nature of such interactions at the centre of the analysis, and focused on specific aspects of these interactions, such as the interplay of interests or ideas held by these actors, or the ways in which different structural aspects of the institutions involved contribute to setting the context for, and thereby shape, such interactions (rational choice theory, constructivist and interpretive approaches, new institutionalism) (John 1998, Stoker and Marsh 2002).

The progressive multiplication of analytical factors and the decreasing usefulness of rigid, ‘one-size-fits-all’ models of the policy process in the context of public policy research have been due according to some to a coeval, real-world transformation and complexification of political and governmental activity in the face of the increased fragmentation, sectorialisation and transnationalisation of societal activities brought about by globalisation (Kenis and Schneider 1991, Coleman and Perl 1999, Forrest 2003, Börzel 2011).

Whatever the cause of these theoretical developments may have been, it is safe to say – by way of conclusion - that recent research on policy and on the policy process has strived to go beyond the application of univocal and simplistic analytical frameworks, in an attempt to account more fully and realistically for the many complexities of policymaking, and the failures of governments (in particular DC governments - cf. Brinkerhoff 1999, Booth 2010) to ‘master’ policy and policy processes effectively in line with so-called ‘rational’ models of decision making in what is a progressively globalised and interdependent political and economic environment.

The present piece of research is situated in this context, and is intended as a contribution to the refinement of analytical frameworks in this particular tradition, with specific reference to the study of ICT policy processes in DCs.

In the next section I highlight a number of approaches developed in this tradition that are particular relevance to the objective of my research.
2.1.2 The Role of Relations and Ideas in the Policy Process

The growing complexity of policymaking, and the ‘discovery’ in recent decades of the multiplicity of actors that can potentially be involved in policy processes, have led to the development of a variety of new approaches to the study of policymaking that focus on different aspects of policy practice, and attribute different weight to specific and relatively diverse factors in the explanation of policy process dynamics.

Amongst these are also approaches that focus specifically on the two analytical dimensions we have identified as key when it comes to researching ICT policymaking in DCs: the relational dimension, and the cognitive dimension of policymaking and policy work.

With regard to the first (relations), one of the most notable developments in recent policy analysis work has in fact been the elaboration of what could be defined as “relational” approaches to the study of the policy process, which identify the tenor and nature of the relations and negotiations between different stakeholders and participants in the policy process as a key factor in the explanation of policy variation, stability and change (as opposed to – say – institutional factors, or socio-economic conditions) (John 1998).

Particularly representative of this theoretical orientation are policy networks (PN) approaches, which conceptualise policy and policy activity as the result of the formation of identifiable networks of relationships between different individuals or groups of actors concerned at various levels with specific policy issues. The key contention of most PN approaches is that the different ways in which PNs develop can have a significant effect on the way specific policy processes unfold, and – especially in the case of positivist or critical realist approaches to PN analysis (cf. section 2.2.2) - that the structural characteristics of PNs can have a role in determining policy outcomes (Marsh and Rhodes 1992b, Marsh 1998b, John 1998). Considering that the way in which relations between different policy actors unfold seems to be particularly important when it comes to analysing ICT
policymaking in DCs, PN approaches appear promising, so I chose to investigate them further in order to orient my research.

With regard to the cognitive dimension of policymaking, on the other hand, John again notes that another way in which public administration scholars have attempted to tackle the contemporary complexity of policymaking has been that of attributing particular importance to the role of ideas in shaping policy and policy activity (John 1998). Ideas-based approaches are concerned with how participants in the policy process construct and exchange ideas and meanings around specific policy issues, and how such sense-making activities can ultimately influence policy variation and change. Interpretive approaches in particular focus specifically on the ways in which different discourses on policy, policy issues and the policy process flow within and between communities of policy actors (Yanow 1993, Bevir and Rhodes 2005). Considering the importance of what we have defined as the cognitive aspects of ICT policymaking in DCs, it seemed to make sense, for the purpose of this study, to also investigate ideas- and discourse-based approaches to the study of the policy process, focusing for example on negotiations in language and meanings as the basis of policy practice (Yanow 2000, Bevir and Rhodes 2003).

In the next sections I take these preliminary heuristic considerations further, firstly by reviewing contemporary literature on PN analysis (section 2.2), and secondly by reviewing some key elements of ideas-based approaches to the study of policymaking (section 2.3) - looking in particular for ways in which the latter intersect with the former, in an attempt to derive elements that combined together can be used to form a solid and effective analytical framework for the investigation of ICT policy processes in DCs.

2.2 Policy Network Approaches

Policy network (PN) approaches represent a relatively recent development of earlier approaches focusing on the analysis of the interactions between the state and various types of non-state actors around specific policy issues, developed in recognition that government doesn’t act alone in the formulation and

Early research in this sense focused almost exclusively on relationships between the state and organised interest groups: most representative in this respect is the work of Freeman, who on the basis of his analysis of US foreign economic policy suggested that policymaking is the prerogative of relatively impermeable and stable ‘iron triangles’, composed of representatives of interest groups, government officials and civil servants operating in a given policy sector (Freeman 1955, Crotty 1966, Bressers et al. 1994).

Further research on the subject has suggested however that the reality of policymaking is significantly more complex and fragmented than had been assumed by scholars like Freeman, and that policy and policymaking are probably best conceived as the result of multiple, multilateral and dynamic interactions between several different types of policy actor in a given context (Marsh and Rhodes 1992b, Thatcher 1998, Klijn 1999). This led to the identification, with time, of more comprehensive and complex units of analysis for the study of state-society interactions around policy issues, such as policy communities (relatively closed groups composed of governmental actors and members of civil society, who share interests, objectives and communication practices), or issue networks (looser groups composed of a variety of “policy activists” in a given area, including not only representatives of interest groups but also other types of non-governmental participants, such as experts or academics) (Heclo 1978, Atkinson and Coleman 1992, Thatcher 1998, Börzel 1998, Marsh 1998b, Thatcher 2001, Börzel 2011).

Over time these and other ‘relational’ approaches to the study of the policy process have eventually come to be generally defined as policy network approaches, mainly due to the critical fortune that the concept of ‘policy network’ enjoyed in the context of public policy analysis following its introduction and use in several studies of the policy process from the 1980s onwards, in particular within European academia (see for example Rhodes 1986, Wilks and Wright 1987, Laumann and Knoke 1987, Rhodes 1988, and Thatcher 1998, Börzel 1998, 2011 for an overall review of what have come to be defined as ‘PN approaches’).
Thatcher and Börzel point out in fact that there is no such thing as a single, identifiable PN approach in political science, as since the 1980s the concept of PN has been used in many different and in fact rather diverse ways in the study of public administration, and definitions of what a PN is and/or theories on how PNs affect specific aspects of the policy process have abounded, and still abound (Thatcher 1998, Börzel 1998, Coleman 2001, Börzel 2011).

Börzel (1998, 2011) identifies in particular the existence of two different ‘schools’ in PN theory:

• an interest intermediation school, which sees PNs as sets of “power dependent relationships between the government and interest groups”, and considers policy networks as constitutive of all policymaking processes (Börzel 1998: 256); research developed within this tradition generally aims at understanding how the particular nature and configuration of different sets of relationships around specific policy issues can influence the nature of policy processes and their outcomes, leading in some cases to the elaboration of typologies of PN and to the identification of causal links between different, discrete types of PN and different policy processes or policy outcomes (Börzel 1998: 256-258)(Börzel 2011).

• a governance school, which on the other hand considers PNs as characteristic of an altogether new form of governance, to be distinguished from traditional ‘hierarchical’ or ‘market-based’ governance modes; studies developed in this perspective differ from those of scholars belonging to the interest intermediation school in that they are aimed at understanding what distinguishes such a specific, new type of governance from other governance modes, focusing in particular on how the emergence of PNs around specific policy issues or in specific policy sectors can lead to policy outcomes that are different from those that may or could have been produced through the use of other, more traditional governance modes (Börzel 1998: 258-262)(Börzel 2011).
Thatcher (1998) proposes on his part a distinction between PN approaches that consider networks as *independent variables* in the determination of policy processes and outcomes, and approaches that on the other hand consider networks as *dependent variables*, through which it is possible to detect and measure the effect of other, independent variables, be the latter located at the ‘macro’ level of historical or political context, and/or at the more local, ‘micro’ level of individual agency, or personal motivation (Thatcher 1998: 410-411).

Both these characterisations and categorisations of the different ways in which PNs can be theorised are heuristically useful, and I will make reference to them where relevant in the context of the present literature review.

In the next section I discuss in more detail how different approaches to the study of PNs theorise and address specific aspects or dimensions of the policy process.

### 2.2.1 The Role(s) of Networks in the Policy Process


Discussions in this sense have centred in particular around whether and how the nature and the characteristics of PNs can affect the workings of specific policy processes and in particular the *outcomes* of specific processes, or other aspects of policymaking, such as *policy variation* and *policy change*.

Proponents of networks as independent variables identify for example direct causal links between the structural characteristics of PNs and the nature and outcomes of the policy processes in which network actors are engaged (Thatcher 1998).
The structural characteristics in question may range from the degree of openness/closure of networks, to the degree of integration and interaction between members, to the density of networks, to name but a few - and they can be measured/understood with either quantitative and qualitative methods (e.g. surveys and content analysis, or interviews and participant observation), or with a combination of both. Some scholars (in particular those operating in an ‘interest intermediation’ perspective)\textsuperscript{33}, have elaborated typologies and classifications of networks on the basis of these structural characteristics (cf. for example Marsh and Rhodes 1992b, and see Thatcher 1998 for a review of different typologies developed within the approach), and have linked specific types of PN to specific policy outcomes. Bressers and O'Toole hypothesise for example that different degrees of cohesion and interconnectedness between policy actors in a network will lead to the implementation of specific policy instruments (e.g. a network with weak cohesion and connectedness will choose regulatory instruments, one with strong cohesion and weak interconnectedness will choose investments, subsidies and price measures, etc.) (Bressers and O'Toole 1998).

Other scholars focus less on predefined typologies and undertake instead formal, quantitative analyses of the relations between actors, which combined with analytical constructs derived from rational choice or game theory enable the authors to go as far as producing mathematical models that predict policy outcomes (see for example Pappi and Henning 1998).

The underlying assumption of studies of this type is that specific configurations of PN affect outcomes in particular ways by setting the context for and constraining the behaviour of actors (Marsh 1998c, Klijn and Koppenjan 2000, Marsh and Smith 2001), and/or by structuring the distribution and mobilisation of specific resources (e.g. knowledge, power) along predetermined trajectories (Kenis and Schneider 1991, Pappi and Henning 1998, van Bueren \textit{et al.} 2003).

\textsuperscript{33} See previous section.
Proponents of PNs as dependent variables identify instead the ultimate causal origin of specific configurations of PNs and specific policy outcomes in macro-level, independent variables such as historical, political and macro-economic factors, which may for example affect the distribution of power amongst actors, or (as is particularly the case of some scholars operating within a ‘governance’ perspective) in micro-level phenomena such as the interests and motivations of specific actors to participate, or aspects linked to the personality and behaviour of single actors (Kenis and Schneider 1991, Schneider and Werle 1991, Dowding 1995, 2001, Raab 2002, Damgaard 2006). In this perspective, PNs mediate, or reflect, the effect of macro and/or micro variables – and also in this case the methods used include quantitative and qualitative methods, either separately or mixed (Raab 2002, Schaap and Van Twist 1999, Damgaard 2006).

The acid test for different hypotheses regarding the possible relationships between networks and outcomes has traditionally been the capacity of PN approaches to explain policy change, intended as the shift from existing policies or policy positions to new ones: several critiques to PN approaches have in fact revolved around the affirmation that while such approaches may be effective in the explanation of the stability and the persistence of specific policies over time (by generally connecting policy continuity to the stability and persistence of particular process-related decision-making arrangements), they do not do as well when it comes to explaining changes in government policy, in particular where networks are considered as independent variables (John 1998, Pemberton 2000, Thatcher 1998, Richardson 2000).

Attempts at explaining policy change in a PN perspective have in fact variously focused again either on exogenous factors (intended as external to networks), such as the historical, political and economic context in which policy formulation or reform takes place (Schneider and Werle 1991, Pemberton 2000, Forrest 2000, 2003), or on endogenous factors, such as the behaviour and interests of actors within a network (Dowding 1995, 2001)\textsuperscript{34}.

\textsuperscript{34} Dowding actually pushes the latter perspective particularly far, in fact, coming to the conclusion that the concept of PN, as it is intended in most network approaches, amounts to little more than a metaphor, used to describe dynamics whose cause lies instead in the
Marsh and others have on the other hand attempted to overcome the dualism between exogenous and endogenous factors of change and to recuperate a causal role for PNs by theorising PNs as *meso-level* structures through which a link is created between macro and micro levels of political life (Marsh 1998b, 1998c, 2008, 2011). In this perspective - which borrows significantly from Giddensian structuration theory - causality is circular, i.e. exogenous factors shape networks, and these in turn shape individual agency, but at the same time individual agency also affects networks, and changes in networks can contribute, in turn, to changes at the macro level (Marsh 1998c, Marsh and Smith 2000, Toke and Marsh 2003)\(^{35}\).

Authors operating in a constructivist or interpretive tradition\(^{36}\) have come to similar conclusions, seeing policy change as originating from changes in actors’ perceptions of things - i.e. from endogenous factors (cf. for example Rhodes 2002) - but also acknowledging that such cognitive changes may take place in reaction to contextual events, and to the “dilemmas” these pose to actors (Toke 2000, Bevir and Rhodes 2003, Bevir *et al.* 2003, Bevir and Rhodes 2005, Bevir and Richards 2009).

Imputing policy change also, if not exclusively, to exogenous factors obviously implies the ability to distinguish between what lies ‘inside’ a policy network and what lies ‘outside’ it, i.e. between network and context: *boundary definition* has however been another key problematic aspect of PN approaches, that has attracted significant critique (Kassim 1994, Thatcher 1998).

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\(^{35}\) Toke and Marsh provide an example of this type of dynamic in a study of the PN constituted around matters relating to genetically modified (GM) crops during the 1990s: the individual behaviour of specific agents in the network is said by the authors to have contributed to changes to the way in which issues are discussed (in this case a moratorium on GM crops trials), and to subsequent changes in policy content, which in turn had the effect of reducing dramatically what had previously been significant media attention to the GM issue, leading to changes at the macro-level of public opinion (Toke and Marsh 2003).

\(^{36}\) See also section 2.2.2.
In some cases, boundaries have in fact been defined rather axiomatically: a number of German ‘interest intermediation’ scholars initially defined PNs for example as necessarily “small” groups of people who participate directly in policy formulation and implementation - but the definition of concepts such as “small” and “participate” has remained relatively undeveloped (Marin and Mayntz 1991, Kenis and Schneider 1991). In other cases, PN analysts have employed more articulate, actor-focused methods for boundary identification, such as reputational snowballing (Farquharson 2005), or semi-structured interviews and questionnaires, combined with the consultation of relevant documents and/or with content analysis (see for example Laumann et al. 1991) – suggesting that the best way to trace network boundaries and understand who/what lies inside or outside a PN is in fact to ask actors about it, and to cross-check responses between them and with relevant documents, in order to arrive at consistent conclusions.

Right from the prolegomena of PN theory it has nevertheless also been pointed out that in some cases it may be “almost impossible to say where a network leaves off and its environment begins” (Heclo 1978: 102, cited in Kenis and Schneider 1991: 30). Van Bueren et al. (2003) suggest this is particularly the case in policy processes aimed at addressing significantly complex policy issues, where uncertainties brought about by the large number of actors involved and by the co-existence of multiple, different arenas and venues in which policy decisions can be taken can blur the perceived boundaries of PNs quite significantly (van Bueren et al. 2003: 193-194): interestingly, as seen in Chapter 1 ICT policymaking in DCs could be said to be one such case. On his part, Pemberton (2000) also stresses that the boundaries of PNs can significantly change with time, and that boundary changes can have a significant role in determining policy change.

Based on this preliminary review, it is not surprising that Börzel should characterise the ensemble of the variety of PN approaches found in political science literature as particularly multivocal and chaotic (or in her words, 37 Pemberton demonstrates this in a study on UK economic policy in the 1960s, when according to him the temporary enlargement of what had traditionally been a rather closed and tight policy network to include instead also the media and other general issue networks (e.g. groups of academics) led the UK government to revise its position and return to a Keynesian approach to macro-economic policy (Pemberton 2000).
“Babylonian”, cf. Börzel 1998): are networks dependent or independent variables? Is change endogenous or exogenous? And where do the boundaries of networks lie?

An alternative, perhaps heuristically more conducive way of navigating and making sense of the maze constituted by different existing PN approaches is to look at them under an *epistemological lens* – as we will do in the next section.

### 2.2.2 Epistemological Considerations

In response to some of the critiques levelled at their particular brand of PN approach, Marsh and Smith note that “there is more than one way to do political science” (Marsh and Smith 2001: 1), and suggest in particular that the explanatory capacity or role variously attributed to the concept of PN in the context of policy analysis also depends on one’s overall ontological and epistemological stance in relation to social and political science, as this will undoubtedly affect both how PNs are theorised, and, at a more general level, also what one means by the word ‘explanation’.

In this section, I review three possible overall epistemological ‘takes’ on PN analysis.

*Positivist Approaches*

*Positivist*\(^{38}\) approaches to social science are based on the assumption that social phenomena can be captured and explained in full through the observation and investigation of what are considered as ‘directly observable’ instances of social activity, and through the deduction from such observations of formal models. Formal models are intended in this perspective as representations of cause-effect relationships considered to be characteristic, and in fact constitutive, of specific

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\(^{38}\) I derive the distinctions between the three main epistemological approaches presented here from Marsh and Furlong (2001), comforted however by the fact that similar distinctions are espoused also in the work of other contemporary political scientists operating within epistemological perspectives different from those of Marsh and of his colleagues (see for example Yanow 2003, 2004, Rhodes 2002, Bevir and Rhodes 2005, 2006b).
social phenomena, which can – in the eyes of positivist scholars - not only explain, but also help predict particular social or political phenomena and/or their outcomes (Marsh and Smith 2001, Marsh and Furlong 2002, Yanow 2004, 2005b).

PN scholars operating within a positivist perspective thus generally tend to focus on instances of individual agency or behaviour by policy actors within PNs, and/or on the personal or organisational rationales that appear to underlie them, as their primary units of analysis – considering these instances of individual behaviour, and the relative positioning of policy actors that results from their interplay, as the only directly observable and/or quantifiable aspects of PN activity (Marsh and Smith 2001). From a positivist point of view, PNs are thus intended primarily as configurations, or “arrangements” (Bressers et al. 1994: 5) of relationships and interdependencies between instances of individual behaviour and/or individual or organisational motivational factors within a specific policy context – and the explicit aim of positivist PN analysis is in most cases that of testing specific hypotheses regarding the relationship between specific types of ‘arrangement’ and specific aspects of policy activity, such as policy outcomes or policy change, with a view to elaborating, on this basis, explanatory and/or predictive cause-effect models that may be safely said to apply either to policy activity as a whole, or – less ambitiously - to policymaking in specific contexts or sectors (see for example Laumann et al. 1991, Marin and Mayntz 1991, Bressers et al. 1994, Bressers and O’Toole 1998, Pappi and Henning 1998).

It should be noted however that adopting a particularly ‘hard’ positivist stance in relation to political science can also lead to the actual negation of the heuristic value of the concept of PN - as is the case with Dowding, who as we have seen dismisses the concept of PN as a mere metaphor, preferring to construct his analysis of the policy process solely on the basis of elements derived from rational choice theory (Dowding 1994, 1995, 2001).

Positivist PN approaches are often heavily reliant on the use of quantitative methods, in particular when it comes to data analysis, and are found across both

39 Cf. n. 34 in this chapter.
the ‘governance’ and the ‘interest intermediation’ schools of PN theory (Börzel 1998).

**Critical Realist Approaches**

Scholars operating in a *critical realist* (CR) perspective argue that focusing only on aspects of social reality that are directly observable, as positivists do, means neglecting fundamental aspects of social reality and activity, like the existence of underlying social phenomena or structures (e.g. class, or gender) that may not be directly observable, but which in the eyes of critical realists undoubtedly shape individual action and society as a whole. From a methodological point of view, the existence and characteristics of these social phenomena or structures can, according to critical realists, be *inferred* from the direct observation of their effects on individual agency (Marsh and Smith 2001, Marsh and Furlong 2002).

In this perspective, PNs are conceived primarily as a type of *structure*, the characteristics of which can affect the agency of individual policy actors, and by consequence, contribute to determining policy outcomes. Critical realist PN theorists thus tend to combine empirical observation and theoretical inferences to construct explanations of the policy process that focus specifically on how PNs, as structures, condition the individual agency of policy actors, and – in cases such as Marsh and Smith’s ‘dialectical’ approach to PN analysis - also on how individual agency can determine, in turn, the configuration of specific PNs (McInnes 1991, Blom-Hansen 1997, Pemberton 2000, Marsh and Smith 2000, 2001, McAnulla 2006, Marsh 2008).

Particularly notable in this theoretical tradition is the development of *typologies* of PNs on the basis of specific network ‘dimensions’ (e.g. openness/closure, or network density), and the theoretical linkage between different types of PN and specific types of policy process and policy outcome (Rhodes 1988, Peterson 1992, Marsh and Rhodes 1992b, 1992a, Marsh 1998a). In this respect, CR approaches to PN analysis have similar aims to approaches developed in a positivist perspective, as the ultimate aim of both types of approach is to identify the causal
relationships between specific types or configurations of PN and specific policy outcomes.

CR approaches to PN analysis are also found, like their positivist counterparts, across both the ‘governance’ and the ‘interest intermediation’ schools of PN theory, and generally rely on the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods of data generation and analysis (Kenis and Schneider 1991, Börzel 1998, Marsh and Smith 2000, 2001, Toke and Marsh 2003).

Interpretive Approaches

Interpretive approaches to social science are based on the assumption that our knowledge and understanding of reality is socially constructed through the use of language and discourse. In other words, in an interpretive perspective there is no social reality ‘out there’ that ‘objectively’ structures or conditions individual action as theorised in positivist and CR approaches: interpretive approaches contend instead that our actions are informed primarily if not exclusively by our perceptions, ideas and beliefs regarding the existence and the nature of specific social phenomena in given contexts (Marsh and Furlong 2002, Bevir and Rhodes 2002, 2006b, 2008b, Bevir 2011).

It follows that research aiming to explore social (and political) activity should focus primarily on how individuals make sense of the social phenomena in which they are engaged, and on how specific ideas and beliefs about these phenomena inform individual action in specific contexts (Marsh and Furlong 2002, Hay 2003, 2004b, Haas 2004, Hay 2011).

In the more specific ambit of policy research, this means focusing primarily on how policy issues, but also the policy process, are cognitively “framed” by policy actors through discourse, and on how ideas and meanings about policy and policymaking are constructed and exchanged in specific contexts – in the conviction that ideas and beliefs about policy and policymaking have a significant role in shaping experiences and choices in the context of the policy process, ultimately affecting

In this perspective, like all social phenomena PNs are not assumed to exist per se, independently from our knowledge and experience of them: rather, it is posited that policy actors operating in a given context may interpret the nature of the networks of relationships in which they are involved in different ways. In an interpretive perspective there can be in other words different PNs, or conceptions/experiences of PNs, in the same context - and the role of the researcher is to analyse the different and potentially competing narratives and discourses employed by actors to subjectively describe the nature and the workings of the PNs in which they are involved (Rhodes 2002, Hay 2004b, 2004a, Haas 2004, Bevir et al. 2003, Bevir and Rhodes 2003).

The concept of ‘explanation’ is also different in interpretive research, if compared to that espoused by positivist and CR approaches to political science. In most cases, interpretive explanations of policy activity amount in fact to descriptions, or interpretations, of the ideas and beliefs considered to inform policy action in a given context: interpretive explanations of policymaking are thus inherently local and partial, as they are contingent on actors’ perceptions in a specific context, and on the interpretation the researcher makes of them as part of his/her work. No attempts are thus usually made to generalise findings to other contexts, and/or to discover ‘objective’ truths regarding the reality of policymaking as a whole (Yanow 1995, 1996, 2003, Bevir and Rhodes 2004b, 2005, 2006b, Bevir 2011, Hay 2011).

Interpretive studies of PNs have been developed mainly within the ‘governance’ tradition of PN theory – compatibly with the conviction that PNs may or may not exist, depending on actors’ perceptions (cf. Schaap and Van Twist 1999, Bevir et al. 2003, Bevir and Rhodes 2003, van Bueren et al. 2003, Hay 1998, Damgaard 2006). From a methodological point of view, due to their focus on ideas and beliefs, interpretive approaches to PNs are often heavily reliant on qualitative
methods of data analysis – but do not exclude the use of quantitative data
generation techniques (Bevir and Rhodes 2003).\footnote{For a more exhaustive discussion of the methodological choices that characterise
different epistemological ‘schools’ of PN theory, and also of the importance of
distinguishing in this respect between methods used for data analysis as opposed to data
generation, see section 3.1.}

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In the next section, I complete my survey of PN approaches by reviewing some examples of their application in contexts of particular relevance to this study.

I then proceed, in the section that follows, to draw conclusions from this brief survey, with particular reference to the proposed intention of this study to develop a suitable heuristic framework with which to analyse ICT policymaking in DCs.

2.2.3 Applications in Relevant Contexts

Policy Networks and ICT/Telecoms Policy


This is relatively surprising, considering that technology policy, and ICT policy in particular, are fields where a large number of economic, technical and political interests can be at stake, providing analysts with a potentially fertile ground for the application and the refinement of PN frameworks (Schneider and Werle 1991) – and also considering that some proponents of the ‘governance’ school of PN theory have suggested that in situations of technological complexity (as is the case with ICT policy), hierarchical governance arrangements are less likely to be effective, meaning that network governance is bound to develop more easily (Bogason and Toonen 1998).
The few studies of ICT or telecom policy I have come across as part of my survey of PN approaches have been developed within positivist or CR perspectives.

Examples of the first category are Schneider et al.’s studies of telecom policymaking in Germany and in the EU (Schneider and Werle 1991, Dang-Nguyen et al. 1993), which make use of surveys, quantitative analysis and visual network mapping to plot relations between actors based on factors like perceptions of influence, reputation, and the level of cooperation and information exchange between them (all measured through surveys), and find amongst other things that specific actors appear to be more “central” to PNs than others, and that telecom policymaking in Germany and the EU is characterised by the existence of different and overlapping networks.

In their study of German telecom policymaking, Schneider and Werle (1991) find in particular that the nature and the breadth of the policy issues at the centre of particular policy processes led to the formation of different PNs, dominated by different types of interests (economic and technical in the case of ‘narrow’ issues such as videotext, mainly “political” in the case of broader issues such as telecom liberalisation). They also find, again through visual plotting techniques, that specific groups of key actors seem to take part in policy formulation across several policy subdomains and related PNs at once, and hypothesise (but do not test) that such actors may act as “translators” of technical or economic issues into political ones, and vice versa (Schneider and Werle 1991: 110, 133).

Dang-Nguyen and Schneider’s study of telecom policymaking in the EU (1993) comes to similar conclusions with similar methods (enriched however by documentary and content analysis) - highlighting in particular that telecom policymaking at EU level has over time been characterised by the formation of multiple, issue-specific PNs involving an increasing number of interest groups, and
by the increasing centrality of EU institutional actors within such networks (Dang-Nguyen et al. 1993).

More recently, Dutton (2005) has proposed a theoretical framework aimed specifically at analysing internet governance that by its nature could also be classified as a positivist PN approach. Dutton proposes in fact to look at internet governance as an “ecology of games”, whereby policy actors participate in different but interdependent policy ‘games’ (intended as decision-making processes) played at different levels: in order to understand how internet governance is managed, he proposes therefore to analyse the “objectives, rules and strategies of specific games that drive particular players, while also recognizing that (...) the play and outcomes of any one game can reshape the play, and thereby the outcomes, of other separate interdependent games” (Dutton 2005a: 10, 2005b, 2006). It is easy to see how this approach is based on the assumption, typical of most positivist approaches to the study of PNs, that the behaviour of actors in the policy process is unambiguous and based on univocally identifiable, rational strategies and rules. Dutton’s choice of terminology (‘games’) arguably attests this further, as it suggests that his particular approach is significantly informed by principles derived from rational choice theory and game theory. The author doesn’t however provide detailed methodological indications regarding how to “unpack” (Dutton 2005b: 10) the ecology of games at the centre of his analysis: as such, his analytical model has remained relatively undeveloped, and somewhat rudimentary in comparison with other, more complex PN approaches, especially of the positivist kind.

Wilson’s “Quad” model for the analysis of factors that affect ICT policy diffusion, developed with particular attention to DCs (Wilson 2005), is on the other hand a good example of a critical realist approach to the analysis of ICT policy processes based on principles derived from PN theory.

41 Interestingly, McGregor draws similar conclusions (increasing complexification of PNs around ICT-related issues over time) with very similar methods (quantitative content analysis) in a study of the evolution of a policy network around electronic bank transfer systems in Canada (McGregor 2004).
42 Cf. ‘Positivist Approaches’, section 2.2.2.
Wilson defines “Quads” as “persistent four-sided networked interactions of small groups of individuals [also defined as “nodes”] across four sectors of the political economy – government, private sector, research centres and NGOs” (Wilson 2005: 36), and attributes to Quads a significant ‘intermediary’ role in shaping ICT policy and ICT diffusion. The key contention of Wilson’s approach is that the more “robust” the social architecture of Quads (as measured by performance on dimensions such as the regularity and diversity of interactions between actors, or the level of coherence and cooperation within ‘nodes’), the better the performance and diffusion of ICT in a country, through the effect this robustness has on the “intervening variable” of governance (Wilson 2005: 37, 40-41). The ‘intermediary’ or ‘modulatory’ role attributed to Quads, between individual agency on one hand and macro-level governance and/or policy outcomes on the other, denotes a clear similarity between Wilson’s approach and those those developed by CR scholars operating within the ‘interest intermediation’ school of PN theory, in which specific hypotheses are formulated regarding the relationship between the structural characteristics of PNs and policy outcomes.43

Wilson remains however relatively silent on possible methods for measuring scores on the five dimensions of Quads, and the nature of causal mechanisms between Quads as a structure and governance outcomes remain relatively unspecified. In addition to this, his contention that the complex nature of actors’ interests and relationships can be analysed by making reference to four main interest “nodes” bears some resemblance to the “iron triangles” of early PN literature, a model since superseded by empirical work.44 For these reasons, his Quad model is unlikely to be particularly useful in the context of this study, especially if compared to more complex and fully-developed PN approaches.

Policy Networks and Developing Countries

PN approaches have historically been developed and refined mainly, if not exclusively, for and through the analysis of contemporary, complex policymaking

43 Cf. ‘Critical Realist Approaches’, section 2.2.2.
44 Although Wilson doesn’t seem to refer explicitly to PN-related literature in his work on Quads, earlier elaborations on the subject do in fact make direct reference to iron triangles, and more generally to the role of social network relations in policymaking in the ICT sector (Wilson 2004: 29, 78, 87).
systems in Western, industrialised economies (Wake Carroll and Carroll 1999, Forrest 2003, Bevir et al. 2003, Rhodes 2007). Recently, however, PN approaches have in some (admittedly rare) cases been fruitfully applied also to the study of policymaking in DCs\(^4\).

Goldin’s study on the development of local water management policy networks in post-apartheid South Africa (2003) is a case in point: based on the extensive use of interviews and documentary analysis, the study finds that although the creation of water management public “fora” opened to black communities signalled a shift towards more open networks in this policy area (compared to previous arrangements in which only whites could have a say in local water policy), this didn’t necessarily lead to significant improvements in the participation of black citizens in water management decision-making, both because of the existence of traditional, alternative and informal networks for the management of water, and because of subjective perceptions of “shame” experienced by black citizens in relation to participation in decision making activities: shame with regard to (perceived) low levels of education and knowledge, considered to make participation difficult; and shame caused by the fact that only those who had no outstanding debts in relation to water fees express views in the public fora, thus excluding the poorest (Goldin 2003).

In his study on drought management networks in Namibia, based on interviews and participant observation, Forrest (2000) finds instead a story of success, and identifies the causes of such a success in the effective decentralisation and sharing of power along a newly-created, relatively informal PN, assembled in response to what at the time was perceived as a ‘crisis’ in relation to water provision (Forrest 2000).

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45 I exclude from this part of my review studies focusing primarily on transnational or global policy networks and their relationship to DCs (cf. for example Reinicke 1999, Nölke 2003, Stone and Maxwell 2005, and see Perkin and Court 2005 for a review), as the key object of this study is policymaking at national level; and studies inspired by a looser or different conception of “network” than that practised in PN approaches (Keeley and Scoones 2000a, 2000b, Rap 2006) or employing the concept of PN in a purely descriptive sense (e.g. Evoh 2007b, 2007a).
Tantivess and Walt (2008) recount a similar success story in relation to policymaking on the provision of anti-retroviral therapies (ART) for the treatment of HIV/AIDS in Thailand. The two authors argue in particular that the advent of a new political regime in Thailand in 2001 led to the progressive enlargement of the country’s national ART policy network to include an increasing number of non-state actors, and that such a development led in turn to positive policy changes on the subject of ART provision. The study is based on qualitative methods including interviews, observation and document analysis (Tantivess and Walt 2008).46

Freidberg and Horowitz similarly employ qualitative methods in a study on competing discourses around biotechnology in South Africa (Freidberg and Horowitz 2004). The study adopts a relatively narrow conception of PN (considered to include only government officials involved in policy formulation and implementation), but also reviews perceptions and discourses within parallel, wider ‘issue networks’ composed respectively of academics, manufacturers, farmers and advocacy activists involved in policy consultation activities on the subject, finding that perceptions both of the issues at stake and of the characteristics of the policy process are fundamentally discordant across the various networks analysed (Freidberg and Horowitz 2004).

Aerni proposes on the other hand a different, positivist take on the same subject, through a number of studies focusing on perceptions and attitudes regarding GM crops in different developing countries: similarly to what Schneider and Werle do in relation to German telecom policy, the Swiss author employs quantitative techniques to map “blocks” of different interest groups, and analyses the differences between different configurations of these blocks across different national contexts (Aerni and Rieder 2000, Aerni 2001).

Wake Carroll and Carroll (1999) also undertake a comparative study, but across different sectoral PNs (in the environmental, economic and education policy sector) in the same country (Mauritius): based on a combination of surveys and

46 Kaboyakgosi and Mpule (Kaboyakgosi and Mpule 2008) come to similar findings in relation to HIV/AIDS policy more generally in Botswana.
interviews amongst civil servants, the study finds that different networks offer different opportunities for participation, depending on factors such as the level of skills required in order to participate in the discussion (perceived to be higher in the education network than in others), and on differences in the perceived transparency and fairness of the processes adopted by government to select participants for policy consultation activities (Wake Carroll and Carroll 1999).

One key conclusion that can be drawn from this selective and brief review of PN studies focusing specifically on DCs is that most of them appear to privilege qualitative techniques of data generation and analysis. This may be because, as some of these studies also conclude, PNs may turn out to be particularly informal and also relatively small in DC contexts (see in particular Forrest 2000, 2003), meaning that formal analyses and mappings of network relationships and exchanges such as Aerni’s may prove difficult to undertake, dependent as they are on agreed ‘formal’ conceptions of notions such as network density or resource exchange, and on the existence of a large enough sample of actors to allow the safe application of quantitative techniques. In cases like these, it may thus be more effective to focus more on the contents of the relationships that take place between policy actors, and on actors’ perceptions of policy and policymaking: something to keep in mind when it comes to the development of an analytical framework for research on ICT policymaking in DC contexts, as the present study has set out to do.

2.2.4 Conclusions

PN approaches to the study of the policy process are of particular relevance to this research because of their specific focus on the relational aspect, or dimension, of policy activity.

As discussed previously, however, a framework for the analysis of ICT policymaking in DCs should ideally focus not only on the relational aspects of policy activity but also on the cognitive dimension of policymaking.

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47 Sections 1.4.2 and 2.12.
In this respect, PN approaches developed within a *positivist* perspective may not prove particularly helpful, as they tend to neglect, or simplify rather crudely, the cognitive aspects of policy practice.

Most positivist approaches to the study of PNs are in fact based on the assumption, derived from rational choice theory (RCT), that policy actors always act rationally and consistently on the basis of pre-existing, unequivocal ‘interests’, the nature of which can be unambiguously determined through an analysis of actors’ positioning within a network (if not simply deduced from the organisational context from which actors hail)\textsuperscript{48}.

In light of the purpose of this research, such an assumption is rather problematic, as it does not do justice to the complexity of the cognitive aspects of political action.

In their critiques to positivist approaches, a number of authors suggest for example that policy actors may indeed act strategically and rationally according to specific interests, or they may not - and that conclusions in either sense can only be reached through empirical observation: in other words, rational behaviour cannot be assumed to exist a priori in every situation (Raab 2001: 555, see also Dryzek 1993, Callon 1998).

Secondly, when analysed more closely, the actual use of the concept of ‘interest’ as an explanatory factor in political science is also fundamentally problematic in itself. As Hindess (1986) suggests, interests are arguably and fundamentally the products of assessments made by individual actors in given contexts. As such, they are contingent on the forms of assessment and the cognitive frames available to actors in such contexts: it follows that attributing clear, unequivocal and relatively immutable interests to actors and/or groups of actors depending for example on their institutional location, as much positivist PN literature does (Bevir and Rhodes 2003: 63, 2008a), is inherently fallacious, as is the assumption of

\textsuperscript{48} Cf. in particular Schneider et al’s studies on telecom policymaking in German and the EU, briefly described in section 2.2.3.
clear and univocal logical linkages between specific interests and specific instances of individual behaviour (Hindess 1986)⁴⁹.

In fact, the formation and refinement of individuals’ interests is more likely a product of political practice, rather than one of its causes (ibidem): in order to explain policy activity, it may therefore be more appropriate to focus on how the dynamic interplay of different ideas and discourses in a given context can constitute the basis for the formation and development of particular interests and positions on the part of policy actors in such a context, rather than assume a priori what actors’ interests are, and assign them fixed and immutable explanatory powers (Hindess 1986, Hajer 2003, Hay 2004a, Finlayson 2004, McNeill 2005).

The extensive use of quantitative methodologies that accompanies much positivist, RCT-inspired PN work is also unlikely to yield particularly meaningful results in relation to the cognitive aspects of policy activity: as Atkinson suggests, quantitative analyses of the frequency or the number of interactions between policy actors generally fail to capture, or capture only partially, the actual content of these interactions, i.e. the perceived value and meaning of the information that is exchanged through these interactions (Atkinson and Coleman 1992).

PN approaches inspired by critical realist (CR) principles, on the other hand, suffer from a tendency to reify networks as structures, the effects of which on individual agency can be interpreted univocally by the researcher (Hay 1998, Rhodes 2002, Bevir and Rhodes 2003, 2006a). Based as they are on relatively fixed definitions of what network structures are and how they affect individual behaviour, CR approaches tend in other words to neglect, like their positivist counterparts, the complexity of the cognitive factors that can influence political action: specific actors may for example experience and interpret the existence of ‘structures’ in different ways, and this may determine quite diverse responses in terms of individual action (Rhodes 2002). In order to understand and explain policy activity in a given context it may therefore be more useful to investigate in some detail if and how ‘structures’

⁴⁹ Hindess exemplifies this by referring to UK miners’ strikes in the Eighties, which at some point were both supported and opposed in the name of the same “interests”, namely the protection of workers’ jobs and salaries (Hindess 1986: 120).
are perceived to exist by different actors in such a context, and how they are perceived to constrain individual agency, i.e. to focus in particular on the cognitive dimensions of ‘structures’ as they are experienced and constructed by different actors - rather than assume their existence and effects on individual behaviour a priori (Bevir and Rhodes 2006a).

It should have become clear from the comments above that my personal preference when it comes to different approaches to the study of PNs therefore goes to approaches developed within an interpretive perspective.

This is not only for personal weltanschauung reasons, but also because, as we will see in the next section, interpretive PN approaches seem to integrate the relational and the cognitive dimensions of policymaking in a relatively effective and systematic manner, or at least they do not seem to neglect the cognitive dimension of policy activity as much as PN approaches based on other epistemological perspectives seem to do.

In the sections that follow I thus review interpretive PN approaches in more detail, discussing in particular some of their advantages and shortcomings, and I suggest ways in which particular shortcomings may be overcome through the integration into one’s analytical framework of additional heuristic constructs derived from interpretive policy analysis tout court.

### 2.3 Interpreting ICT Policy Networks in DCs

#### 2.3.1 Interpretive Approaches to Policy Networks

As discussed previously, interpretive approaches to the study of PNs posit that policy networks, like all social phenomena, are socially constructed through language and discourse. Interpretive PN analysis thus focuses primarily on policy actors’ individual perceptions, ideas and beliefs regarding the nature of the

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50 As Marsh and Furlong intelligently noted, ontology and epistemology are more like a skin than a sweater (Marsh and Furlong 2002).
51 Cf. ‘Interpretive Approaches’, section 2.2.2.
relationships they are involved in as part of the policy process, and on how these individual perceptions and ideas are combined, through social interaction, to form intersubjectively shared or ‘accepted’ narratives or discourses regarding the existence and the nature of PNs in given contexts (Rhodes 2002, Bevir and Rhodes 2003, 2006b, Hajer and Versteeg 2005, Bevir and Rhodes 2008b, Bevir and Richards 2009, Hay 2011). This is done in the conviction, common to interpretive policy research in general, that shared narratives and discourses regarding policy matters and policy activity in a given context are what ultimately shapes the experiences and the choices of policy actors in such a context (Yanow 2000).

In this respect, authors like Damgaard and Goldin have demonstrated for example how analysing actors’ individual perceptions and experiences of policy activity can tell us something about constraints to participation in PNs, which may be based on reasons like shame, or the wording and style of invitations – i.e. on cognitive factors that positivist or CR analyses of PNs may find it difficult to account for, focused as they are on what may be defined as the quantitative and/or structural aspects of PNs (Goldin 2003, Damgaard 2006). Several other authors have similarly suggested that discourse and interpersonal communication can significantly affect the interests and the perceived power of actors in the context of specific PNs, stressing therefore the importance of analysing the dominant discourses at work in given policy contexts if one is to understand the reasons why specific types of relationships between actors unfold, or are perceived to unfold, in such contexts (Schaap and Van Twist 1999, Kickert and Koppenjan 1999, Toke 2000, and see Cowhey 1990, Curtis 2003 with specific reference to policymaking in the telecom sector).

What distinguishes interpretive approaches to the study of PNs from their positivist or CR counterparts is in particular a conception of networks as practices, or processes, rather than as structures, and more precisely a view of PNs primarily as discursive, “meaningful” practices, enacted by individuals in specific contexts (Hay 1998, Bevir and Rhodes 2003). In an interpretive perspective, PNs exist in other words only insofar as and in the ways in which actors perceive them to exist, and as Hay suggests, the self-understanding of participants is in fact constitutive of
the networking process in given contexts (Bevir and Rhodes 2003, Bevir and Richards 2009, Hay 1998).

It follows that heuristic devices such as network typologies and/or causal models that link specific, predetermined dimensions of network activity to policy or process outcomes, such as those used in positivist and CR approaches, are not particularly useful in an interpretive approach to the study of PNs (Rhodes 2002). Rather, in an interpretive perspective it is in a sense essential to be anti-essentialist, because the perceived configuration and character of PNs can vary significantly depending on the individuals involved and on the ideas these individuals hold regarding policy and the policy process (Bevir and Rhodes 2003, Bevir and Richards 2009). Interpretive PN researchers thus normally shun the elaboration of causal models for the explanation of the workings of PNs in general, undertaking instead ‘local’ and inherently contingent interpretations of actors’ perceptions and ideas regarding the existence and the nature of PNs in given contexts, in an attempt to reconstruct the ‘realities’ of policymaking as they are intersubjectively perceived by the actors involved such contexts (Bevir and Rhodes 2005: 169-170).

Besides these fundamental considerations, however, from a theoretical point of view interpretive PN approaches have so far remained relatively undeveloped – with the notable exception perhaps of the work undertaken in this sense by Bevir and Rhodes (Hay 2004b, Bevir and Rhodes 2003, Bevir et al. 2003, Bevir and Rhodes 2005, 2006a, 2006b, 2008b).

The two authors propose in fact a relatively detailed analytical framework, developed also in response to a ‘typical’ critique to interpretive PN theory and interpretive policy analysis in general: that by focusing primarily on individuals’ perceptions of policy and the policy process, interpretive approaches to policy analysis do not take into account the causal significance of pre-existing material and/or structural constraints to individual action in given contexts (Bevir and Rhodes 2003, McAnulla 2006, Bevir and Rhodes 2006a).

Bevir and Rhodes address this critique by maintaining that individuals are not constrained (as posited in particular by CR theorists) by ‘objective’ and relatively
fixed material or structural constraints, but by what the two authors define as *traditions*, intended as historical and contingent groups of ideas that act as “starting points” for reflection and thought, and that are either accepted and reinforced or contested and modified through individual action and interaction (Bevir and Rhodes 2003: 32-34, Bevir *et al.* 2003, Bevir and Richards 2009). For Bevir and Rhodes, studying PNs implies in other words not only analysing actors’ perceptions at a given point in time, but also focusing on the cognitive or discursive ‘traditions’ that act as starting points for policy actors – conceived however not as phenomena that are opposed to, or provide a fixed context to, network interaction, but as discursive constructs that are enacted and modified *through* networks\(^{52}\).

The concept of ‘tradition’ is notably employed by the two authors also to explain change: according to Bevir and Rhodes, change in policy networking practice is conceived primarily as the result of individuals’ responses to *new ideas and narratives* (including perceptions of new events) that *challenge*, or do not fit into, the ‘traditions’ available to policy actors, i.e. which pose, in the authors’ words, “dilemmas” to individuals involved in policymaking (Bevir and Rhodes 2003: 35-37, Bevir and Richards 2009). In the context of this research, for example, the customary, ‘old style’ policymaking arrangements around telecommunication embodied by institutions like the ITU\(^{53}\) could be interpreted, in Bevir and Rhodes’s terms, as a ‘tradition’; and the perceived inadequacy, outlined in several studies (Drake 2000, MacLean 2003), of these ‘traditional’ arrangements in the face of the convergence of different technologies into ICTs, could be seen as one of the ‘dilemmas’ that national and international ICT policy networks have attempted to solve from the mid-1990s onwards, for example through the elaboration of initiatives such as the AISI (the aim of which could arguably be interpreted as that of inaugurating a new tradition of policymaking, or at least modifying existing ones)\(^{54}\).


\(^{53}\) Cf. ‘Complexity of Fora and Modes’, section 1.3.1.

\(^{54}\) Cf. section 1.2.
Bevir and Rhodes's approach is certainly a substantial advance in the ambit of interpretive PN analysis, and is perhaps the most detailed approach developed in this area so far. As suggested by Hay, however, it is not necessarily the only way to analyse PNs in an interpretive perspective (Hay 2004b, 2011), nor the most effective one.

Critics of the approach underline in particular how the notions of ‘tradition’ and ‘dilemma’ are used by their proponents more or less as explanatory “black boxes”\textsuperscript{55}, and in some cases both as dependent and independent variables in the explanation of the functioning of policy networks (Hay 2004a, Finlayson 2004, Smith 2008, Kjaer 2011). The two authors stress for example that traditions should not be seen as rigid and reified, but instead as contingent constructions developed by the investigator as an aid to understanding and explaining political activity (Bevir \textit{et al.} 2003): however, from a theoretical point of view it still remains unclear how specific things can conceptually become part of traditions, while others don’t - even if traditions are seen as constructed through analysis (Hay 2004a, Finlayson 2004). The concept of “dilemma” is also problematic in explanatory terms, and needs to be unpacked: in this respect Finlayson notes for example that if dilemmas are caused as Bevir and Rhodes suggest by new ideas and/or events that put actors under cognitive pressure, research should focus in particular on how and why these new ideas and events are cognitively ‘framed’ as problematic by policy actors – rather than assume their problematicity in a relatively arbitrary manner, as Finlayson suggests the two authors tend to do (Finlayson 2004).

The main point made by critics of Bevir and Rhodes’s approach to interpretive PN analysis is in other words that theoretical constructs such as traditions and dilemmas are not strictly necessary in interpretive explanations of policy activity (see in particular Hay 2004a, 2011), and may in fact be counterproductive, as they can reduce the level of detail or ‘granularity’ of such explanations, by regimenting explanation onto pre-determined analytical ‘tracks’.

\textsuperscript{55} In the Latourian sense, derived in turn from cybernetics, of elements that transform inputs into outputs but where what really counts are the inputs and outputs, as the rest (in this case what is inside the box) is too complex and at the same time is stable enough not to require an explanation (Latour 1987: 2-3).
In order to understand how PNs are variously constructed through discourse by the actors involved in them, it may instead be more useful (and indeed more appropriate, if one is to remain faithful to the principle that it is essential to be anti-essentialist) to avoid the use of pre-ordained and somewhat unnecessary analytical concepts or categories such as traditions and dilemmas, and focus instead in more detail on the dynamics by which specific discourses and narratives are constructed and employed by actors to make sense of policy processes and of the networks of relationships on which they are based.

Neither Bevir and Rhodes nor other interpretive PN analysts seem to provide detailed suggestions on how to do this, however, at least from a theoretical point of view. It is possible however to draw some lessons and indications in this respect from the wider berth of interpretive policy analysis tout court (i.e. not strictly related to PNs), as I illustrate in the next sections.

### 2.3.2 Discourse Analysis and Discourse Coalitions

In his critique to Bevir and Rhodes’s approach to the study of policy, Finlayson suggests that interpretive policy analysis should examine in detail how concepts and ideas regarding policy and the policy process are “disseminated (…), promoted, destroyed, redefined and redeployed”, and establish what makes some concepts or narratives more successful than others in given contexts (Finlayson 2004: 154).

In maintaining that policy analysis should focus in particular on how specific conceptions or ‘framings’ of policy and policymaking emerge, are developed and put in contact or contrast with each other in specific settings, Finlayson is not alone: since the early 1990s several policy scholars have in fact identified the analysis of discourse on policy and policymaking as a useful and rewarding technique for the understanding of the policy process - in the conviction that actors generally act upon the individual perceptions they have of the practices they are

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56 This is not to say that interpretive PN analysts do not delve on method, as we will see in Chapter 3.
involved in, and that such perceptions are, in turn, significantly influenced and shaped by socially/collectively-constructed overall discourses, or worldviews, on policy matters and policy practice in a given setting (Rein and Schön 1993, McRae 1993, Hay 1996, 1998, Howarth and Stavrakakis 2000, Whitley and Hosein 2005, Green 2007).

Particularly meaningful in this respect has been the increasingly widespread application in recent policy research of discourse analysis (DA) as a technique to understand how specific discourses emerge and are constructed in given settings (Gasper and Apthorpe 1996, Howarth and Stavrakakis 2000, Mottier 2002, Torfing 2002, Carver 2002, Hajer 2002, 2006a, Glynos et al. 2009).

In light of the importance, noted above, of understanding whether and how actors perceive PNPs to exist in specific settings (cf. previous section), DA - together with attendant analytical constructs developed specifically in the ambit of policy research, such as the concept of ‘discourse coalition’ (Hajer 1993) – seems in fact to constitute a promising technique for the substantiation and operationalization of interpretive PN research, as I illustrate in the sections that follow.

**Discourse Analysis**

Discourse analysis (DA) can be defined, with Howarth and Stavrakakis, as “the practice of analysing empirical raw materials and information as discursive forms”, with a view to identifying “sets of signifying practices that constitute a ‘discourse’ and its ‘reality’”, on the basis of which individuals perceive and experience the world (Howarth and Stavrakakis 2000: 4)\(^57\).

As such, DA has been fruitfully employed in a variety of ambits of particular relevance to this research, from the study of policy and policy processes in general (Hajer 1993, Rein and Schön 1993, McRae 1993, Hay 1996, Gasper and Apthorpe 1996, Howarth and Stavrakakis 2000, Hajer 2002), to studies focusing more specifically on development (and development policy) discourse (Gasper 1996b, Keeley and Scoones 2000a, McGee 2004b, Cornwall and Brock 2005) and/or

\(^{57}\) For a more detailed, working definition of ‘discourse’ see section 3.3.2.
studies pertaining to the more specific ambit of ICT4D (Schech 2002, Thompson 2004, Kendall et al. 2006, Stahl 2008, Chigona and Mooketsi 2011). In most of these cases, DA has proved particularly valuable in understanding how specific issues and/or practices are collectively ‘framed’ through the use of language and the formation and development of discourse, and how this in turn is susceptible of shaping, or affecting, actors’ practices in specific realms of individual or collective action.

There are however different ways to undertake DA in relation to the study of policy (Glynos et al. 2009). Of particular academic fortune in this respect has been, over recent years, argumentative discourse analysis (ADA)\(^58\), practised quite widely in particular in the context of interpretive policy analysis (Gasper and Apthorpe 1996, Gasper 1996a, Mottier 2002, Hajer 2002, Glynos et al. 2009).

The key tenet of ADA is that policy processes are fundamentally “practical processes of argumentation”, through which individuals and groups interactively produce “claims” regarding particular policy matters and particular solutions to policy problems (Fischer and Forester 1993: 2, Hajer 2009). The main objective of ADA is thus to study how particular arguments and claims are collectively constructed through discourse in specific policy contexts, as a way to explain why certain policy choices are made and/or why policy is made in specific ways in such contexts (Fischer and Forester 1993, Glynos et al. 2009).

ADA is in other words a \textit{relational} type of DA (Howarth and Stavrakakis 2000), which focuses not only on the content of discourses but also, if not especially, on their “argumentative” aspect, meant as the interplay and juxtaposition of different discourses in specific social settings. The key objects of ADA are thus not only the social constructs developed by particular communities through discourse, but also

\(^{58}\) As opposed for example to critical discourse analysis (CDA), a version of DA that is significantly informed by critical theory (Fairclough and Holes 1995, Fairclough 2000): in keeping with the anti-essentialist stance adopted in this study, I have chosen not to employ CDA in my work, mainly due to the preconceptions in terms of analytical categories, hypotheses and (in particular) conclusions that characterise the approach, as argued very effectively by Gasper and Apthorpe (Gasper and Apthorpe 1996: 6-7, Gasper 1996b). For a more detailed discussion of the distinctive characters of different DA approaches in the ambit of social science see also (Glynos \textit{et al.} 2009).
“the socio-political practices from which social constructs emerge and in which actors are engaged” (Hajer 2002: 62). In this respect, its proponents talk of ADA as a type of analysis that “emphasises discursive moves as being moves in logic as well as of style or community” (Gasper and Apthorpe 1996: 2) and which implies a vision of politics “as a play of ‘positioning’ at particular ‘sites’ of production” (Hajer 2002: 62): the role of the analyst is therefore in particular that of identifying and describing the relative and reciprocal ‘positioning’ of actors in relation to specific policy matters through language and discourse, and to understand the practices through which discourses are developed and positions taken in respect of them (Hajer and Waagenar 2003, Hajer 2009).

It should be noted that, with a few notable exceptions (cf. for example some of Hajer’s more recent work – in particular Hajer and Versteeg 2005, Hajer 2006b), ADA seems to have been applied nearly exclusively in studies focusing on policy content and policy outcomes as expressed through policy speech and statements, rather than in studies that focus on the discursive construction of the process by which policy is perceived to be made, like the present one.

There is however no reason why the principles of ADA could not be fruitfully applied also in interpretive studies of policy processes, rather than policy contents. On the contrary, as this study also intends to demonstrate, applying theoretical principles and analytical techniques derived from ADA can be particularly helpful in the study of perceptions of policymaking, as it can enable one to investigate not only the possible presence of coherent, shared systems of meanings through which the existence and the nature of PNs is constructed and defined in specific contexts, but also to understand who actively “sponsors” specific framings and understandings of the policy process in such a context (Rein and Schön 1993: 158), and how specific discourses on the nature of the policy process are rendered particularly powerful and dominant in the context under analysis.

This is made possible in particular by making reference to the concept of discourse coalition, as I discuss next.
Discourse Coalitions

Hajer maintains that in order to understand why specific policy choices are made in a given context, one should not only focus on the different discourses around policy that circulate in such a context, but also on how specific discourses are rendered particularly powerful and dominant through the work of what he defines as “discourse coalitions”, generally intended as groups of actors or entities engaged in the construction and propagation of particular, specific discourses around policy (Hajer 1993: 45).

The Dutch scholar postulates in particular that a discourse coalition, and the discourse it proposes or ‘performs’, can be said to have become dominant when two conditions are fulfilled: 1) discourse structuration – occurring when the discourse practiced by a specific coalition starts dominating the way in which a given group of actors perceives a phenomenon; and 2) discourse institutionalisation – when a discourse gives birth, or solidifies into, specific institutional arrangements that affect how policy is made and how policy problems are defined (Hajer 1993: 47-48, 2006a: 70, 2009).

Structuration and institutionalisation should be seen however as the results of the dominance of coalitions, rather than as their cause: as such, they are something that needs to be explained, rather than an explanans of how specific discourse coalitions can become dominant in specific settings. So what can explain the dominance of discourse coalitions in given contexts?

In this respect, Hajer helpfully suggests that from an analytical point of view, discourse coalitions should not be intended merely as groups of policy actors or ‘factions’ in a given policy arena, but as “the ensemble of a set of story lines, the actors that utter these story lines, and the practices that conform to these story lines, all organised around a discourse” (Hajer 1993: 47). In order to understand how discourse structuration and institutionalisation take place in given contexts one should therefore focus on what discourse coalitions are actually ‘made of’, i.e. on how coalition actors collectively employ different discursive elements or practices (for example narratives, public statements, or references to literature
and/or events) to *strengthen* the arguments they make, and how specific combinations of these elements or practices can contribute to giving particular argumentative ‘force’ to a discourse coalition, leading to discourse structuration and institutionalisation (Hajer 2003, Hajer and Waagenar 2003, Hajer and Versteeg 2005, Hajer 2006b, 2006a, 2009).

Again, Hajer applies the concept of discourse coalition primarily in relation to how perceptions of specific *policy matters* become dominant, rather than to the analysis of how specific perceptions or portrayals of the *policy process* become such: but also in this case I see no reason why the concept of discourse coalition could not be applied also to the study of *perceptions of the policy process*, as opposed to policy content.

In this study I have therefore attempted to integrate into my analytical framework also the concept of discourse coalition, seeking to understand how different coalitions perceive and define ICT policymaking and the policy process in a given context, who/what these coalitions are composed of, and in particular what argumentative/discursive tactics they employ in order to a) build their ‘version’ of the structure and the workings of the PN they are involved in, and b) ensure (or try to ensure) that such a version becomes a dominant, widely accepted vision and conception of the policy process (Hajer 1993, Gasper 1996a). In Chapter 3 I illustrate what this has meant in practice, as part of a discussion on method.

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Criticisms of ADA and of DA more generally as practised in the ambit of policy research (if not in the wider realm of social science *tout court*) typically revolve around two key, distinct arguments.

The first of these is that by focusing primarily if not exclusively on discourse, discourse-analytical approaches only capture the discursive and/or symbolic aspects of a phenomenon, failing to reveal the entire, or ‘real’, nature of the phenomenon in question (Carver 2002, Marsh and Furlong 2002, Bevir and Rhodes 2002). Such a critique rests however on positivist or critical realist
assumptions regarding the existence of a ‘reality’, and of ‘real’ phenomena, ‘out there’, independently from the interpretations that actors (or researchers) may make of them: as such, this type of critique is fundamentally *unintelligible* from an interpretive point of view, the key tenet of which is in fact that reality as we experience and perceive it is socially constructed through negotiations in language and discourse (Bevir and Rhodes 2002, and cf. section 2.2.2 for a more detailed discussion of this particular aspect of interpretive epistemology).

The second, typical critique of discourse-analytical approaches to the study of policy processes is that such approaches focus almost exclusively on *language*, and in particular on the *way linguistic constructs* are employed in the construction of discourse around policy - thus missing off possible *non-linguistic* aspects of the social construction of specific policy processes or phenomena (e.g. visual or other non-verbal communication, and/or patterns of individual or collective action) (Carver 2002, Yanow 1992, 1993, 2000). In this respect, Yanow (2000) suggests in particular that language is but one (albeit important) dimension of interpretive policy analysis, and maintains that in order to increase its explanatory capacity, interpretive policy analysis should focus also on elements of policy actors’ experiences that are not strictly related to language. This study takes in and fundamentally accepts this particular critique, and attempts to overcome this particular limitation of ADA as practised traditionally in policy research by broadening the focus of analysis to include a number of key, non-linguistic elements or factors susceptible of shaping actors’ perceptions and experiences of policy and the policy process, leading in turn also to a redefinition of the concept of ‘discourse coalition’ – as I illustrate in the next section.

### 2.3.3 Beyond Language: Policy Artefacts and the Policy Process

In Yanow’s view, policy and policymaking are “expressive acts” (Yanow 1993), which cannot be reduced to the simple activity of rationally “choosing” between policy alternatives (Apthorpe 1996a) - even as the result of discursive argumentation as suggested by proponents of the “argumentative turn” in policy analysis (Fischer and Forester 1993) - but should instead be interpreted more
broadly as *sense-making activities*, in which ideas, perceptions and symbolic constructs have an essential role (Yanow 1993, see also Hay 2004a, Hay 2004b).

Yanow maintains in particular that ideas and meanings about policy are developed, transmitted and exchanged amongst policy actors through the creation, use and manipulation of *policy artefacts*, which include not only linguistic/communicative instances but also objects, spaces and acts that carry particular meanings in the context of policy processes (Yanow 1993, 1995, 2000, 2007); these may include for example the spaces that policy refers to or occupies; programme-specific objects (particularly if the policy instances under analysis are linked to the production of objects, e.g. ID cards); or policy-related acts, such as acts of legislation, public hearings and consultations (i.e. events whose purpose is to “represent” policy and its meanings to a variety of publics), and the use of specific representational techniques as part of such acts (e.g. accounting) (Yanow 1995, 2000: 14-15)\(^{59}\).

A key tenet of Yanow’s approach is that, far from being carriers of univocal meanings, policy artefacts “are ‘read’ in a particular context, they carry the meanings of a particular point in time, or of a particular socio-cultural environment”: as such, policy artefacts can accommodate “multiple meanings” corresponding to the multiplicity of points of view of the various actors involved in the process (Yanow 1993: 47). In this perspective, the job of the interpretive analyst is therefore to investigate how specific policy artefacts are “read” by different policy actors, i.e. how and why such artefacts mean different things to different actors, in an attempt to understand how actors, through the manipulation and use of specific

\(^{59}\) In his more recent work Hajer makes similar points, suggesting that interpretive policy analysis should focus also if not especially on the *performative* aspects of discourse structuration and institutionalization (Hajer and Versteeg 2005, Hajer 2009). However, the line of analysis he proposes on this basis seems to focus primarily on performative acts, and – to a lesser extent – on the *spaces* in/through which such acts are performed (cf. in particular Hajer and Versteeg 2008, Hajer 2009): thanks to its specific and detailed focus also on the role played by *objects* and material resources more generally in actors’ interpretations of policy and the policy process, Yanow’s approach remains in my view a more complete and heuristically promising analytical perspective – hence the decision to integrate this, rather than Hajer’s more recent work, into the theoretical framework proposed in this study.
artefacts, make sense of policy matters and policy contents in a given context (Yanow 1995, 2000).

Similarly to Hajer, Yanow has applied her particular brand of interpretive policy analysis primarily in research focusing on policy content (cf. for example Yanow 1996, 2005a). In this study I contend however that a similar approach could be fruitfully applied also in support of an interpretive analysis of the processes by which policy is made, rather than to the analysis of policy content, by turning one’s attention to what could be defined as process-related artefacts. This would include for example:

- understanding the role of objects (e.g. documents, or material resources) in actors’ interpretations of the policy process, and investigating in particular how actors’ uses and interpretations of these objects contribute to the discursive construction of PNs;
- analysing the spaces where networked interactions around policy take place or are supposed to take place, and how these spaces and their characteristics are interpreted by different actors – with the ultimate aim of understanding the role of spatial concepts in the construction of discourse around policy process and PNs;
- analysing the different possible meanings attributed by actors to process-related acts (e.g. meetings, declarations, or process-related legislative acts), and understanding the role played by these meanings in the discursive construction of PNs.

In this sense I see Hajer’s discourse coalitions as constituted by the actors involved in them and by the policy (or rather, process-related) artefacts these actors construct and manipulate - intended with Yanow in the broadest sense, i.e. extending beyond linguistic artefacts, to include objects, spaces and acts.

The analytical framework proposed in this study therefore focuses not only on the discourses that define the existence and the workings of PNs around ICT policy in a given context, but also on how these different discourses are constructed,
performed and strengthened by different discourse coalitions through the employment of particular linguistic and non-linguistic process-related artefacts.

I summarise the key tenets of this approach in the section below.

2.4 Conclusions: Elements for a Tentative Framework

2.4.1 A Tentative Framework

As discussed previously, the key objective of this study is to fill a gap in contemporary ICT-policy-and-development literature by proposing a dedicated, comprehensive theoretical framework with which to analyse ICT policy processes in DCs.

Based on the discussion so far, and in accordance with the need documented previously to develop a framework that accounts both for the relational and the cognitive dimensions of ICT policy practice, I propose here an innovative analytical framework derived from interpretive policy network (PN) analysis and centred around the following epistemological and theoretical tenets:

1) policy networks are, as Bevir and Rhodes (2003) maintain, constituted by/based on an ensemble of specific, locally articulated discourses on the nature of the policy process; these discourses are assembled and rendered powerful by discourse coalitions, composed both of policy actors and of the policy process-related artefacts that these actors employ to construct and maintain a particular discourse (Hajer 1993; Yanow 1995, 2000);

2) in order to study policy networks in a given setting, one should therefore a) analyse the policy- and process-related artefacts that circulate in such a setting, and the uses and interpretations different policy actors make of these artefacts - and on this basis b) discern and interpret the various discourses that construct PNs and policy practice in a given context, and c) analyse what the coalitions that propose these discourses are composed

60 Cf. section 1.4.3.
61 Cf. section 1.4.2.
of, and importantly - how they relate to each other, with the aim of explaining phenomena such as discourse structuration and institutionalisation (Hajer 1993).

This position and approach can be also visually schematised as a two-way construction/reconstruction process – as portrayed in Figure 2.1.

*Figure 2.1 - Two-Way Construction/Reconstruction Process in Relation to Policy Networks*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phenomenon</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Discourse coalitions</em> construct and propagate</td>
<td>Identify the discourse coalitions that propose these discourses, and analyse what they are made of/how they work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>discourses on the policy process</td>
<td>Interpretively discern discourses on the policy process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by employing specific linguistic and non-linguistic <em>process-related artefacts</em></td>
<td>Analyse process-related artefacts in such a context and how they are interpreted by policy actors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>resulting in different shared interpretations regarding the existence and the nature of <em>policy networks</em> in a given context.</td>
<td>In order to understand how policy networks are discursively constructed in a given context</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interpreting ICT policy networks in this perspective means in particular:

- focusing on the perceptions ICT policy actors have of the processes they are involved in
- focusing on the elements that compose such perceptions (policy- or process-related artefacts and their interpretations), and how these are combined into identifiable, coherent discourses
• focusing on the differences and the relationships between these discourses
• focusing on how these discourses are differently constructed and performed by different discourse coalitions, and on how these coalitions differ from each other in terms of the resources they employ to construct and propagate particular ‘version’ of the policy process on one hand, and of the network of relationships on which such process is based on the other hand.

The framework proposed accounts for the relational and the cognitive aspects of ICT policy practice in the following ways:

a) by drawing on interpretive PN literature and focusing on networks of relations, it addresses relational issues and how these are cognitively perceived by actors (asking: how are the relationships at the basis of specific policy processes constructed and perceived by the actors involved in them?);

b) by drawing from interpretive policy analysis literature more generally and thus focusing on perceptions and ideas regarding the policy process, the framework addresses more generally the cognitive aspects of ICT policy practice (asking: how are not only relationships, but also other, specific aspects of ICT policy processes and practices perceived and experienced by actors?).

Importantly, as mentioned in section 1.4.2\textsuperscript{62} it should be noted that the relational and cognitive dimensions of ICT policy practice are intertwined and combined. No part of the framework is in other words designed to address specifically one or the other: rather, the proposed framework focuses, as a whole, on how networks of relationships and policy processes are discursively constructed\textsuperscript{63}, and how

\textsuperscript{62} Cf. in particular n.25.
\textsuperscript{63} By focusing for example, in methodological terms, on the ‘network’ objects and ‘process’ objects constructed through particular, distinct discourses – see section 3.3.2 with regards to the DA methodology adopted in this study.
discursive construction and interplay in this ambit are in a sense ‘constitutive’ of policymaking as a whole, as experienced by policy actors.

2.4.2 Operationalising the Approach

At a general level, the approach proposed in this study implies seeking answers to the following questions:

- What perceptions do actors have of their relationships with other actors involved in the discussion of ICT policy? Is there a network around ICT policy in the context under analysis? And if so, when and where is there a network, and what defines it?

In more practical or ‘operational’ terms, it implies answering the following, related sub-questions:

- How do actors think ICT policy is normally made, and what characterises specific perceived ways of making ICT policy?
- How and where are boundaries set? Who/what is considered to be inside the agglomeration of entities that produces ICT policy?
- What are ICT policy processes ‘made of’ – i.e. what linguistic and non-linguistic policy- and/or process-related artefacts contribute to characterising and shaping actors’ perceptions of the policy process?64

These ‘guiding’ questions can also be articulated and mapped more specifically in respect of the different dimensions of complexity that characterise ICT policymaking in DCs discussed in Chapter 1 and summarised in section 1.4.2 – as illustrated in Table 2.1.

As mentioned previously (section 1.4.3), and as the title of this dissertation suggests, I have chosen to subject this particular analytical framework and

64 It goes without saying that this is not literally a series of questions to be asked at interview. See Chapter 3 for methodological considerations in relation to the approach.
approach to a ‘proof of concept’, in the form of a detailed study of ICT policymaking in a particular African nation: the Republic of Uganda. In the next chapter I discuss the methodology adopted in this particular case, and in Chapter 4 I explain why I have chosen Uganda in particular as the object of a case study. In Chapters 5 and 6 I then report and discuss key findings from the case study, and draw conclusions both in relation to the case and in relation more generally to the heuristic value of the analytical framework developed as part of my research.

Before I proceed, in the next section I complete my discussion of the analytical framework and approach proposed here by clarifying the expected outcomes from the case study, and – perhaps more importantly – what is meant, in the context of this piece of research, by the word ‘explanation’.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complexity Factor</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multiplicity of actors</td>
<td>necessity of coordination between many governmental agencies, multiplicity of non-governmental actors potentially affected by ICT policy</td>
<td>How are roles assigned to various actors in the policy process through discourse? How are actors defined and classified?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiplicity of fora and extranational dimension</td>
<td>different policy venues for national decisions on telecommunications, trade, education, and other aspects relating to ICTs, different modes for the governance of specific technical aspects of ICTs</td>
<td>How are venues/modes defined and constructed through discourse?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical complexity</td>
<td>novelty of the area, rapid technological development and technological convergence, technology as a carrier of preset ideas/concepts relating to use and thus also of policy prescriptions</td>
<td>How is the object of ICT policy, i.e. ICTs, discursively constructed in the context under analysis? How are the technical characteristics of ICTs perceived to affect ICT policy making?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of technical and policy skills/awareness</td>
<td>variable levels of ICT proficiency amongst policymakers and population at large, variable understanding and perception of issues at stake and of ‘requirements’ of the policy process</td>
<td>How are ‘optimum’ and ‘actual’ levels of skills and awareness discursively constructed and defined? In other words, what do ‘ideal’ and ‘actual’ participants in the policy process look like?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design-reality gaps in relation to the policy process</td>
<td>problems relating to ‘ideal’ prioritisation of policy goals vs. reality of prioritisation, lack of consideration of historical and political context in ‘ideal’ models of the policy process</td>
<td>How are ‘ideal’ and ‘actual’ policy processes, and more particularly process of prioritisation, defined through discourse? What relationship is perceived to exist between these ‘ideal’/‘actual’ forms of policy process and historical/political ‘context’?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues around participation</td>
<td>limited existence/cohension of potential non-state policy participants at national level, possible ‘capture’ of representation by a few powerful actors, lack of resources for participation at international level</td>
<td>How is “the public” discursively configured? How are boundaries to participation set? What is participation perceived to imply in practice? Who is perceived to be particularly powerful in the context of ICT policy process? Who is perceived to be excluded - and why?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.4.3 Expected Outcomes of the Case Study - Or the Value and Meaning of ‘Explanation’ in an Interpretive Tradition

A common critique to interpretive approaches to policy analysis is that by focusing primarily on actors’ perceptions in a given context, they have little explanatory capacity, i.e. they fail to provide elements for the deduction of clear, general principles of causality regarding the types of policy process under study, and/or hypotheses that could be empirically tested in order to validate (or falsify) theories around policymaking (Dowding 2004, Schwartz-Shea and Yanow 2002, Yanow 2004, Hay 2011).

From an interpretive point of view, however, this type of critique is unreceivable. This because if it is accepted, as is the case in constructivist/interpretive approaches to social science, that reality is socially constructed through language and discourse, considering that actors’ experiences and perceptions of specific phenomena may differ both from individual to individual and depending on more general social and cultural factors, no meaningful generalisation is in fact possible, i.e. no general principles of causality can be deduced from the study of particular phenomena in particular contexts.

What interpretive research typically aims to provide is instead a relatively detailed account of how phenomena are experienced and perceived in a given context, in the conviction that it is on the basis of perceptions and experiences that individuals choose a particular course of action.

The expected outcome of the case study at the centre of this piece of research is thus an extensive and detailed interpretive account of how ICT policy processes and the networks of relationships at their basis are perceived to exist and function in the context under analysis.

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65 In this respect, Yanow stresses that interpretive research is often (wrongly) judged on the basis of fundamentally positivist ontological and epistemological criteria – i.e. on criteria that is doesn’t necessarily share, but which for various reasons are used in a “gatekeeping” function to define what is and what isn’t valid and “objective” research (Yanow 2004: 1).
From an interpretive point of view, such an account can legitimately function as an ‘explanation’, in this case of how ICT policymaking is perceived to take place in a specific national context. Importantly, it should be noted that in an interpretive perspective the fact that this type of explanation is inherently local and cannot be generalised doesn’t necessarily detract from its value: as I hope I will be able to demonstrate when I discuss findings in Chapters 5 and 6 of this dissertation, interpretive accounts are in fact no less analytical than explanations produced on the basis of other epistemological positions, and can be both valid and potentially useful.

In respect of the first aspect, the validity of an interpretive account arguably resides in fact first and foremost in its ability to provide as accurate and convincing a description as possible of how things played out in a specific instance. In this respect, it should be noted in particular that an interpretive approach obviously accepts also the possibility of producing other, different and competing accounts of the same situation (Bevir and Rhodes 2003): what matters is whether the account “stands”, i.e. whether the elements on which it is based do not, for example, contradict each other - and also whether such an account actually convinces the reader, intended as either or both the research subject and/or the academic community. Kvale talks in this sense respectively of a conception of truth as coherence, and of communicative validity, as typical of interpretive approaches to social science (Kvale 1995: 23).

In addition to this, basing an explanation primarily on local knowledge, is also likely to enhance what Kvale (1995) defines as the pragmatic validity of such an explanation, particularly in the case of a study like the present one: in this respect

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66 As opposed for example a conception of truth as correspondence (of a statement to a phenomenon), typical of positivist approaches, or truth intended in pragmatic terms, i.e. on the basis of the relationship between a statement and its practical consequences (Kvale 1995: 23). Kvale more generally suggests that the concept of validity shouldn’t be dismissed altogether in interpretive social science, but should be instead retained as a “fertile obsession” which, however, needs to be re-coded in constructivist, qualitative terms (Kvale 1995: 20). I make a number of conclusive considerations regarding validity in relation to this study based highlighted here in Chapter 6, as part of an overall discussion on the effectiveness and the utility of the analytical approach and the methodology adopted in this piece of research.
Yanow suggests that when it comes in particular to the study of development policy (and – I would add – of policy tout court in settings that are different from the one in which analysis originates) it may in fact be more appropriate and beneficial (and – dare we say it – ethical) to base explanations and conclusions primarily on local, contingent aspects and factors, rather than aiming to formulate ‘one-size-fits-all’ solutions or recommendations based on abstract, heteronomous theories and ‘models’ of the policy process – at least judging by the history of negative (or inexistent) impacts in DCs of policies informed by ‘general’ principles developed elsewhere, and usually in the Northern world (Yanow 2000: 5).

As to the usefulness of an interpretive account to its readers, the utility of ‘local’ explanations and accounts of policymaking practice could be said to lie precisely with the provision of detailed narratives regarding specific instances of policymaking (Bevir 2011, Hay 2011). That is to say that the impossibility of producing general or ‘grand’ theories of policymaking, because of the importance of the contingent, contextual political aspects of policy practice (Minogue 1983), does not mean that the policy analyst cannot make substantive contributions to such a practice. As Bevir and Rhodes say, the interpretive analyst’s contribution in this respect is that of “[telling] policy makers and administrators distinctive stories about their world and how it is governed” (Rhodes 2002: 413). And this should not necessarily be taken to refer only to actors that are directly involved in the processes described, but more broadly also to other, different actors involved in different processes, who may find resonances between the situations they experience and the story that is told: in fact, in the realm of ICT policy in DCs, marked as we have seen by a perceived “lack of awareness”, and where policy transfer is a distinct possibility, what policymakers seem to need are – after all - stories, or as Wilson put it, “war stories” (Bevir 2011)(Wilson 2006).

The aim of interpretive research is not, in other words, to tell its users what to achieve - as is the case with much positivist, prescription-oriented research - but “how they achieve what they achieve” (Lee and Hassard 1999: 400). Apthorpe summarised very effectively the utility of interpretive research in this respect as follows:
“[an] interpretive and narrative account pays attention to processes and explanations for these processes. Some of these will be recognised and readily seen to be crucial by various actors and observers. Such accounts can therefore be highly persuasive for certain actors and observers who wish to see such processes and explanations included in such an analysis. A study which plays down prescriptions while emphasising description is also harder to ridicule: it leaves room for stakeholders to learn and benefit from the enriched understanding offered, without feeling directly threatened” (Apthorpe 1996a: 176)

It is precisely in this spirit that I approached my research endeavour, and the appropriateness or not of the framework proposed here should (and will, in Chapter 6) be judged also on the basis of this criterion (the provision of a plausible and potentially useful account of ICT policy processes and practices in a given context).

In the next chapter I will discuss how I proceeded in practice, through a discussion of the key methodological principles that guided my work.
3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Methodological Options for Interpretive PN Analysis

Studies of policy networks situated in a constructivist/interpretive tradition are predominantly based on the extensive use of qualitative research methods, in particular when it comes to data analysis (Bevir and Rhodes 2006b).

This is mainly because, as several authors observe, qualitative data generation and data analysis methods have been found to be particularly effective precisely in enabling one to access and understand the sets of perceptions and beliefs held by individual actors, as interpretive PN research intends to do - or at least they have proved more effective in this respect than quantitative research methods, which by standardising and aggregating instances of individual behaviour tend to reduce the ‘granularity’ of the picture produced to the point where it becomes difficult, if not impossible, to actually glean individuals’ ideas and beliefs from it (Duke 2002, Devine 2002, Bevir and Rhodes 2006a).

67 Here, and throughout this chapter, I draw from Schwartz-Shea and Yanow’s suggestions regarding the importance, in the context of methodological debates, of distinguishing between data generation and data analysis techniques (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow 2002: 460); the two authors suggest in particular that what differentiates approaches developed within different epistemological traditions is not necessarily the adoption of particular methods for data generation (nothing precludes in fact interpretive researchers from counting things, for example – while positivist researchers may also use qualitative techniques to inform successive rounds of quantitative data generation), but the way in which data is analysed (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow 2002: 480). They then suggest – similarly to Bevir and Rhodes – that interpretive research is characterized in this respect by the near-exclusive application, for data analysis, of qualitative methods (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow 2002: 461, Bevir and Rhodes 2005).

68 This is not to say that interpretive researchers do not, or cannot, also use quantitative data generation techniques. In this respect, Read and Marsh note - similarly to Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2002) - that researchers operating in different epistemological traditions may in fact combine both qualitative and quantitative data generation methods in their work (see also previous footnote), and suggest - drawing from Creswell (1994) - that the differences between specific approaches lie in fact, if at all, in the ‘mix’ of techniques adopted, with some approaches making a ‘dominant’ use of specific methods, and a ‘less dominant’ use of other methods (Read and Marsh 2002: 240-241). In this perspective, interpretive research could thus be said to be characterized by a dominant use of qualitative methods, and a less dominant use of quantitative ones.
In the specific realm of interpretive PN literature, however, detailed elaborations and reflections specifically on issues of method in relation to theory are few and far between (Duke 2002, Finlayson 2004) – again with the notable exception perhaps of Bevir and Rhodes. In various texts that delve into some of the practical aspects of undertaking interpretive PN research, the two authors stress in particular how understanding and interpreting the meanings and beliefs of policy actors ideally requires not only the use of “traditional” qualitative methods like interviews and document analysis, but also the employment – where possible - of techniques developed principally in the fields of ethnology and anthropology, such as diary analysis, non-participant observation, and/or shadowing (Bevir and Rhodes 2004b, 2005, 2006b). Employing an ample variety of qualitative methods and techniques is seen by Bevir and Rhodes as particularly important in order to effectively grasp the complex worldviews collectively held by actors, which the simple acceptance of actors’ words at face value as gathered through interviews would not guarantee (Bevir and Rhodes 2004a).

In this piece of research I have therefore attempted to adopt an open and flexible methodological approach, combining for example ‘classic’ qualitative data generation methodologies traditionally employed in the ambit of constructivist political science, such as interviews and document analysis, with perhaps less common, but nevertheless very fruitful qualitative data generation methods, such as the direct or indirect observation of objects, spaces and acts in some way related (or perceived to be related) to the policy process - reflecting amongst other things also the relatively wide scope of the analytical framework at the basis of this study (see section 3.2). In terms of data analysis, I have then focused firstly on the preliminary identification and classification of linguistic and non-linguistic process-related artefacts in the context at the centre of investigation, but eventually built, on this basis, also a more comprehensive and detailed analysis of the key discourses around ICT policymaking that circulate in such a context, and a substantive comparative analysis of the discourse coalitions that produce and maintain each discourse – so as to grasp the complex nature of the relationships between different discourses and discourse coalitions in ways that a single analytical dimension or approach (for example discourse analysis only) may find it difficult to do.
I illustrate in more detail the methods I have employed for data generation and data analysis in sections 3.2 and 3.3. Before I do that, in the next section I illustrate briefly the overall research strategy adopted for this study.

**3.1.1 Case Study Strategy in Interpretive PN Analysis**

The design adopted to ‘test’ the analytical framework developed as part of this research is that of a single, in-depth *case study* (CS) (Yin 1994).

Yin suggests that CS strategy is particularly appropriate for the investigation of contemporary, real-life phenomena, and is especially effective when the boundaries of a phenomenon are not clearly evident and need to explored (Yin 1994: 13), as is often the case in PN research. It is probably for these reasons that CS strategy is the most common research strategy found in policy network literature (Manning 2002).

In traditional CS methodology literature, however, CS strategy is usually associated with positivist research approaches, as a method that can be employed to ‘test’ specific hypotheses - and is considered instead somewhat incompatible with ethnographic case work and other primarily qualitative approaches (see in particular Yin 1994: 14). Yin does not exclude however the possibility of undertaking CS also without specific *a priori* theoretical propositions meant to be tested by researchers: in this case, he talks of “exploratory” studies, i.e. studies whose purpose is simply to explore a specific area or subject (Yin 1994: 21). In this respect, Yin maintains however that valid exploratory CS research should at least specify a) what is to be explored; b) the purpose of the exploration; and c) the criteria by which the success of the exploration will be judged (Yin 1994: 29). Seen in this perspective, CS strategy is thus after all not necessarily incompatible with interpretive research. In the context of this study, it is not difficult for example to see that a) I intended to explore perceptions of the ICT policy processes in a

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69 So much so that Raab actually laments the proliferation of short, “sketchy” case studies as a peculiar and penalising characteristic of much PN literature (Raab 2001). Needless to say, I hope that my work will contribute to bucking this trend, constituting as it does a more extensive and detailed CS than is normally the case.
specific national context; b) for the purpose of understanding how one or more PNs are perceived to exist around ICT policy in such a context, and ultimately understand what shapes individual and collective choice in such a context; and that c) I will consider my exploration to be successful if it produces a coherent and understandable interpretive account of the way in which ICT policy networks are discursively constructed and experienced by the actors involved\textsuperscript{70}.

Considering and enacting a CS strategy from an interpretive point of view also helps in fact overcome, or nullify, some of the shortcomings traditionally associated with the strategy. In Yin’s view, one of the limitations of CS strategy is for example that, due to its focus on one or a limited number of cases, such a strategy makes it difficult, if not impossible, to generalise findings to entire populations (intended as ensembles of similar phenomena or individuals), as most positivist science aims to do (Yin 1994: 10). In an interpretive perspective, however, being unable to generalise findings to wider settings is not necessarily a problem, as understanding and explanation are seen as inherently local (cf. section 2.4.3).

This doesn’t mean however that CS strategy cannot be instructive also at a more general level. In this respect, Yin suggests for example that while the results of CS research may not be generalised to entire populations, they can at least be generalised to theory (Yin 1994: 10) – similarly to what this study also intends to do\textsuperscript{71}. In addition to this, as Mol and Law suggest case studies can also do “all kinds of other work”: for example, they can sensitise readers to events and push them to know more, and their findings may indeed be transferable/translatable to other, specific settings – if one accepts that this operation would inevitably have some costs, as elements that do not correspond across settings may pose application problems (Mol and Law 2002: 15, Law 1999: 9). Schwartz-Shea and Yanow additionally suggest that case studies may generate detailed data that could be of use also in other instances of interpretive research (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow 2002: 461).

\textsuperscript{70} On matters of validity and the usefulness of “exploration” as a way to understand things, as opposed to finding unambiguous causal links, see section 2.4.3.

\textsuperscript{71} I recall here that one of the key drivers of this study is in fact also to understand whether the analytical framework applied in it may in general be an effective and appropriate one for the study of ICT policymaking in DCs (cf. section 1.4.3).
Based on this discussion, there doesn’t seem to be in other words any particular reason why CS strategy should not be employed also in interpretive research, and in a sense – due to its prolonged exclusive focus on one or a few specific situations and contexts – CS strategy may in fact be the most appropriate, if not the only way to undertake interpretive analysis in political science (Yanow 2003: 9).

I have therefore consciously chosen to construct this research project around a single, detailed case study - and in the next sections I will illustrate in more detail how I have handled the data generation and data analysis components of such a strategy as part of this project.

3.2 Data Generation

Data generation took place over a period of around 3 years, between 2006 and 2009\textsuperscript{72}.

During this period, I resided in Uganda for a total of 23 months (4 months between November 2006 and February 2007, and 19 months between August 2007 and February 2009): this prolonged permanence in the field enabled me not only to generate a significant amount of data, but also to experience extensive exposure to the country’s social, political and cultural environment, both in urban and semi-urban or rural contexts\textsuperscript{73} - something that arguably enhanced my ability to understand the nuances of local political discourse.

As illustrated below (sections 3.2.1 to 3.3.3), data generation involved in particular document collection, semi-structured interviews and direct or indirect observation of particular material and non-material aspects of ICT policy activity.

\textsuperscript{72} The data generated refers to a wider timespan however, going from the mid-1990s to the end of 2008 (cf. the chronology presented in section 4.3.1).

\textsuperscript{73} During my stay in the country I lived in Hoima (Western Uganda), Busia (Eastern Uganda) and Kabale (South Western Uganda), and I paid regular visits to the capital city Kampala.
In chronological terms, I started generating data by assembling and reviewing media articles, official statements and other documents relating to ICT policy in Uganda. This preliminary ‘desk research’, recommended by a number of scholars as a key starting point in interpretive policy research (Yanow 2000, Hajer 2006a), took place in the first 4-month period of my stay in Uganda, and provided me with an initial overview of the area under study and of the main issues and positions that characterised it, including a tentative and provisional chronology of events.

This was then followed, in the early part of my second, 19-month stay in Uganda, by a number of initial, orientational interviews with a restricted number of key informants pertaining to different fields, whom I identified through the analysis of the documents consulted in the first phase of research: these were what Hajer calls “helicopter interviews”, so called because, like desk research, they are designed to provide an initial overview of the area, from different, relatively general perspectives (Hajer 2006a: 73). Besides helping me develop further my overview of the context I was researching, these initial, ‘helicopter’ interviews also provided me with opportunities to ask informants to suggest further documents worth analysing, and/or people worth speaking to, thus starting the snowballing processes around which I organised subsequent work (cf. 3.2.2).

By this stage, the analysis of data had already started. The analytical framework proposed with this study had in fact already been developed in full prior to commencing data generation, and it had helped me steer my data generation work (for example by leading me to focus also on non-linguistic aspects of policy experience, or on particular symbolic aspects, such as metaphors): with time however my work in the field eventually came to be characterised by a very fruitful, continuous alternation between data generation and data analysis, in an iterative process that is relatively common in interpretive policy research (Yanow 2000, 2004, Hajer 2006a). In particular, I undertook interviews and collected further documentation, and at the same time started analysing and coding documents and interviews summaries, leading to more interviews, and more document collection,
and/or observation/analysis of a number of non-material aspects of ICT policy practice (cf. section 3.2.3).

I discuss my alternating between data analysis and data generation in more detail in section 3.3. In the sections that follow, I illustrate instead more extensively how I approached and undertook specific aspects of data generation.

### 3.2.1 Written Documents

Written documents are a key primary source in interpretive studies, and are of paramount importance in policy research (Yanow 2000, Duke 2002, Tait 2002).

The documents I consulted for this study varied quite significantly in nature and origin, and included not only ‘public realm’ documents such as official policy statements, transcripts of parliamentary sessions, or civil society commentary about ICT policy and the policy process in online and offline media, but also documents designed mainly for internal or limited distribution, such as minutes of meetings, memos, budget notes, emails to discussion lists and other types of grey literature produced both within and outside government (for example for/by donors and/or CSOs). Particular attention has been paid also to apparently simple, ‘secondary’ documents, such as lists (for example of participants; or of resources) or indexes and other classificatory documents – in the conviction that categorisation processes and the act of listing, naming, classifying and so on are key aspects of world-building in the realm of policy (Gasper and Apthorpe 1996, Apthorpe 1996b, Cambrosio et al. 1990).

I gathered and selected these documents using multiple techniques. I initially started with online searches on governmental websites, CSO websites and other online platforms: this type of search has continued throughout the various phases of the study, for a period of just under 3 years. Once in the field, I supplemented this with visits to a number of local documentation centres\(^\text{74}\), where I scanned all relevant library shelves in detail in search of any documents (written or

\(^\text{74}\) These included the UNCST library, the UCC library, the Parliament’s library, the WOUGNET documentation centre and the library of the Makerere Institute of Social Research at the University of Makerere.)
audiovisual) that may have been of relevance to the study, whether they referred specifically to ICT policy or more generally to the policy process and/or to ICT promotion and diffusion in the country.

In addition to this, during my work in the field I also applied a form of ‘document snowballing’, whereby I asked informants to suggest relevant documents they thought I should consult, and/or asked them to provide me with any documents in their possession they would like to share. ‘Document snowballing’ has been demonstrated as particularly useful in relation to policy analysis, as it helps not only gather important documents in general but also identify those that are considered as key by policy actors – i.e. those that play a particular role in actors’ ‘world-building’ activities (Keeley and Scoones 2000b, and see McGregor 2004 for an application in the specific ambit of PN analysis). In this respect, my search for relevant documents through this technique was not necessarily just a preliminary data generation method, but also a way to start constructing the universe of the phenomenon under study in collaboration with informants (Yanow 2004: 27). In response to my requests for suggestions during interviews, in some cases I was pointed to documents I should try and find; in other cases I was given hard copy documents directly by the informant; and in a few cases I was provided with large collections of grey literature in electronic format, which I saved on a pen drive I kept with me for this purpose.

These techniques yielded a total of just over 3300 documents of various kinds.

Just under a thousand of these (988 to be precise) were transcripts from parliamentary debates (the *Uganda Hansard*) covering a period of 10 years from 1998 to 2008, available in electronic format: due to the relatively generic nature of the contents of the transcripts and the absence of an index by topic, in this instance I used computer software (NVIVO) to search the collection by content and identify sessions where relevant matters had been discussed75.

75 The *Uganda Hansard* is available in electronic format at: http://www.parliament.go.ug/index.php?option=com_wrapper&Itemid=33 (last consulted on 25 October 2010). The search function provided through the Parliament’s website does not highlight the sections of transcripts that contain the keywords one is searching for within the results – hence my use of NVIVO searches instead, applied to the entire batch of
I read and analysed all the remaining 2300+ documents one by one over a period of three years, using the analytical categories discussed in section 3.3.

### 3.2.2 Interviews

In-depth interviews are a very common data generation method in constructivist approaches to the study of politics and the policy process (for examples of their use in relation to policy networks see Keeley and Scoones 2000a, 2000b, 2000c, Duke 2002, Rhodes 2002, van Bueren et al. 2003, Damgaard 2006). I define in-depth interviews, with Devine, as conversations with informants “based on an interview guide, open-ended questions and informal probing to facilitate a discussion of issues in a semi-structured or unstructured manner” (Devine 2002: 198): as such, they are a particularly useful data generation method in constructivist policy analysis, because they enable investigators to explore in some detail, and in a targeted manner, actors’ experiences and beliefs with regard to the policy process, and the perceptions actors have of their own role and that of others in such a process (Yin 1994, Duke 2002, Devine 2002, Bevir and Rhodes 2004b).

Interviews are also of particular significance in the context of interpretive research because they allow the interactive, collaborative construction of meanings between the researcher and the informant, i.e. they represent unique opportunities for the construction of intersubjective interpretations of the phenomena under analysis during the course of research (Kvale 1996, Sinding and Aronson 2003).

Using in-depth interviews within an interpretive perspective also leads to a reduction, or reconsideration, of some of the potentially problematic aspects traditionally associated with the technique, such as:

- **Selection** – Besides selecting informants based on lists of names found in official or unofficial policy documents, another main method for the selection of potential interviewees in policy analysis is ‘snowball sampling’.

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documents for the period in question, which I downloaded and saved locally on my computer using bulk download manager software.
whereby initial informants are asked to nominate other people they think it would be useful for the investigator to interview, and the same is done with every new interviewee (Duke 2002, Yanow 2004). Snowball sampling is seen by critics as potentially exclusionary and generally subject to bias, however, mainly because respondents may apply relatively arbitrary selection criteria when nominating peers, for a number of personal reasons that range from the political to the mnemonic (Devine 2002, Yanow 2004). This can obviously be a problem for studies in which this selection method is used to trace the boundaries of a policy network in positivist terms, and more generally in studies operating in a positivist tradition (cf. for example Farquharson 2005, Rethemeyer 2006). In an interpretive perspective, however, respondents’ selectiveness in terms of who they perceive to be or not be important or influential within a specific policy network is an integral aspect of the analysis, as the aim of interpretive research is in fact precisely to focus on actors’ personal perceptions of policy processes, including their perceptions of who is important or less important within such processes, and the possible discordances between these perceptions across different actors. Phenomena like the inclusion or exclusion of specific actors in narrative depictions of the policy process can in other words be particularly meaningful in interpretive research: exclusions may for example signify an attempt (conscious or unconscious) to silence specific parts of the PN, or specific discourses (Yanow 2004: 27). In this perspective, the use of snowballing for the selection of informants thus ceases to be problematic, and becomes in fact itself a moment of data generation during the course of the interpretive process (Duke 2002).

- **Access and power** – Several authors note that while surveys and structured interviews have the effect of constraining respondents’ behaviour, when it comes to semi-structured or unstructured interviews the opposite happens, i.e. it is the researcher who is potentially constrained by the interviewee, for example with regard to the duration of the interview, or the adherence to its intended agenda (Yin 1994, Garg 2006). This is particularly the case with elite interviews, where power differentials between the researcher and the informant can be rather substantial, and the time of respondents is usually at a premium (Duke 2002, Bevir and Rhodes 2005, Conti and O’Neil 2007).
One should consider however that constraints in terms of access and power differentials in relation to elites are also a key experiential feature for several participants in policy processes, especially in DCs (Grindle and Thomas 1991: 10): in an interpretive perspective, experiencing some of these constraints can therefore provide the researcher with an insight into how accessible and powerful specific sections of an elite are in relation to other policy actors. Therefore as long as some access is granted to the network of people making policy in a specific sector, and reflexivity on power differentials is overtly enacted by the investigator throughout the research process (Duke 2002, Conti and O’Neil 2007), data generation based on elite interviews remains feasible also in relatively difficult conditions, and within an interpretive perspective it can in fact provide substantially rich data precisely on issues of power and access in policy networks.

• “Bias” - An additional criticism often put to interview-based interpretive research is that relying principally on actors’ views as collected through interviews may be misleading, as actors may lie, paint events with their own gloss, attempt to answer questions in ways they presume the researcher expects, and/or provide ideological views of the phenomena at the centre of the analysis (Yin 1994, Dowding 2004, Bevir and Rhodes 2004a, 2005). On one hand, these critiques are often made from a positivist epistemological standpoint that sees actors’ interpretations as inherently fallacious when compared to “reality-out-there”, or wholly unimportant in relation to the phenomena under study: as such, from an interpretive point of view these critiques are fundamentally unintelligible. On the other hand, neither this study nor most interpretive policy research are based exclusively on interviews anyway, as they normally integrate this data generation method with others, such as observation, document analysis and so on: importantly, this is not necessarily for the purposes of “triangulation” (also a concept derived primarily from positivist, or at least non-interpretivist social research – cf. Devine 2002, Bryman 2006, for definitions of the concept, and Yanow 2003, Yanow 2004 for a critique), but because the aim of interpretive analysis is to provide an account of the different perspectives that construct a phenomenon, and such an analysis...
must by definition be based on data generated from multiple sources and through multiple techniques (Yanow 2000, 2003, 2004, Bevir and Rhodes 2004b, 2004a, 2005, Glynos et al. 2009). In this perspective, the possibility that respondents may provide ‘false testimony’ becomes in a sense somewhat irrelevant, both because respondents’ views are in a sense ‘diluted’ within a stream of rich data obtained from multiple sources, and – more fundamentally – also because in an interpretive perspective all testimony, including what may be judged by some as ‘false’ testimony, constitutes an instance of discourse.

For this study I undertook 43 in-depth interviews with 41 different informants, covering or having covered different and in some cases multiple ICT policy-related roles within government, parliament, CSOs, academia, donor agencies and the private sector. These included two policy analysts in central government functions; two parliamentary research staff; one MP; eight senior government officials involved at some stage in ICT policy development processes; four senior officials in the country’s communications regulatory authority; a presidential assistant; five members of staff in local CSOs and one in a regional NGO; five local entrepreneurs (three of whom with significant consultancy experience); two members of staff in large private telecom operators, responsible for policy analysis and liaison with government; four members of staff in donor organisations; four local academics (three of whom with significant consultancy experience); one local consultant; and one international consultant. A schematic list of respondents with details of roles, ordered by sector, is provided in Appendix V.

I selected informants mainly through snowballing and with additional inputs derived from document analysis (i.e. by identifying, within documents, the names of people who had been to various extents involved in ICT policy processes). The starting points for snowballing were selected amongst delegates of an international conference on e-government that took place in Kampala in March 2008, which I attended in the capacity of rapporteur, and which involved several key players in the field of ICT policy in the country under analysis, hailing from government,

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76 I interviewed two informants twice.
academia and the private and civil society sectors. The selection of further informants stopped when snowballing through respondent interviews stopped yielding names of new potential respondents, and potential respondents identified through documents had also already been interviewed. In four cases I was unable to interview selected respondents, mainly due to access-related issues, such as sustained lack of response by very senior officials (but cf. also my observations above regarding how this particular issue is in itself also an interesting aspect of respondent selection in research on elites), or respondents having since moved abroad and having proved difficult to contact.

It should be noted that respondents were selected only amongst those who had been and/or were currently involved, or included, in ICT policy processes as perceived by other actors. No specific efforts were in other words made to contact and interview potentially ‘excluded’ respondents, mainly due to the absence of a consistent and univocal criterion with which to identify them: the category of the ‘excluded’ proved in fact to be rather contentious in context under analysis, and was the object of significant debate – and one of the key objectives of the method and approach adopted here was in fact that of capturing also this particular debate (as opposed to unilaterally and arbitrarily deciding who had ‘really’ been excluded from ICT policymaking, for example). For a discussion of how the ‘excluded’ are variously characterised by different actors in the context under analysis see section 5.6.1.2.

The interviews were of variable duration, between 30 minutes and 2 hours, mainly depending on the informant’s availability. I approached every interview with a handful of guiding questions, focusing on the nature of the ICT policy process in the context under analysis, the history of such a process, the challenges met, and other, more targeted questions regarding the role of linguistic and non-linguistic artefacts related to the policy process. I nevertheless tried to keep the format of the interview and the questions asked as open-ended as possible, in order to let the conversation flow and yield data that may not have emerged if I had adopted a more rigid structure. This enabled me to cover all the themes I had set out to cover exhaustively and satisfactorily in nearly all interviews, but at the same time also
vary the focus/time spent on each theme depending on how important the respondent felt a particular theme was. The only exceptions to the above were:

- two interviews in which I was unable to cover all themes, mainly due to lack of time on the part of respondents (in both cases government officials);
- two interviews in which I focused my questions more broadly on policymaking and policy processes in Uganda (rather than exclusively on ICT policy), due to the role covered by respondents: in both cases the respondents were policy analysts in central government, whose role meant they had been engaged in policy practice and policy process management more generally rather than specifically in relation to ICT policy; both these respondents were also able to offer comments specifically regarding ICT policy, however;
- two ‘repeat’ interviews I made with respondents I had already consulted, in which I focused on a number of analytical themes and findings I had identified by then (metaphors in particular) rather than going back to my standard interview themes: this enabled me to ‘check’ some of my findings and guide further research.

The guiding questions I used in interviews are listed in Appendix VI.

In technical terms, I chose to record the interviews I made exclusively through written notes, rather than in audio(visual) format. This is mainly because recording interviews through audio(visual) technology has been proved to be potentially counterproductive in the context of elite research: the possible confidentiality of the themes covered during the interview may in fact inhibit elite informants from responding freely, for fear of being quoted on things that may turn against them (Nelson et al. 1977, Peabody et al. 1990, Duke 2002). In addition to this, recording and transcribing interviews has also been demonstrated not to be wholly infallible as a way of capturing interview data: on one hand in fact, unforeseen technical problems can arise during recording, and background noise may also prevent understanding on replay (Lee 2004, Halcomb and Davidson 2006) – all problems that again can prove particularly problematic in elite research compared to other types of social or political research, due to the impossibility of replicating interviews
with elite subjects (it may be very difficult for example to convince a politician or senior government official to give up one more hour of their time, if not more, to repeat an interview, and there may be no alternatives in terms of selecting another, similar informant with a similar role). On the other hand, as a human activity the act of transcribing can also in itself be subject to errors (e.g. the inadvertent skipping of sentences or sections, typos, etc.) – meaning that recording and verbatim transcription are not necessarily completely infallible (Halcomb and Davidson 2006).

This is not to say that note taking does not present some disadvantages compared to recording and transcription. Critics of note taking remark in particular that verbatim transcriptions are likely to yield very accurate and rich data compared to written summary notes, and that the existence of audio recordings of interviews also enables researchers to undertake multiple, subsequent rounds of analysis in search for particular nuances or details that may have been missed off in previous rounds, in ways that written notes do not necessarily allow (Peabody et al. 1990, Halcomb and Davidson 2006). In addition to this, note taking is said by some to be potentially subject to significant researcher bias, compared to recording and transcription (Nelson et al. 1977, Lee 2004).

According to a number of authors, however, many of the shortcomings associated with note taking can be overcome, at least partially, through the application of particular techniques – while others are not necessarily fully applicable to interpretive research.

With regard to techniques, a number of authors suggest for example that taking notes both during and immediately afterwards the interview can yield significant detail compared to taking notes only during or after the event, and that this, combined with the submission of interview summaries to respondents for ‘checking’, can significantly improve the quality and accuracy of interview data (Nelson et al. 1977, Peabody et al. 1990, Fasick 2001, Devine 2002, Garg 2006).

With regard to types of research, Halcomb and Davidson (2006) then point out that where research aims to identify common ideas or themes from data – as is the
case in this study, and as opposed for example to studies focusing on detailed
conversation analysis at micro-level - verbatim transcription may also not be strictly
necessary, and other techniques may be equally valid. In addition to this, it should
also be considered that ‘researcher bias’ is – similarly to ‘respondent bias’ (see
above) – also not necessarily as problematic in interpretive research as it can be
in research developed in other epistemological traditions: rather, it could be argued
that the aforementioned taking of notes during and after the interview, and their
editing so as to provide a summary to be shared with the informant, also constitute
an important, primary level of interpretation, that is integral to the interpretive
research process (Yanow 2000).

In light of the above, I thus opted for note taking as my method of choice for the
recording of interviews – accompanied however by some of the techniques
mentioned above.

The notes I took to record interviews were for example taken both during but
especially immediately after the interview had taken place. I then subsequently
drafted, on the basis of these notes, a summary of every interview in direct
dialogue format, usually within 24 hours of the interview – and I then emailed this
summary to the informant in question, for comment. Importantly, this process not
only provided me with a way of ‘checking’ whether the summary represented an
accurate representation of what had been said, as suggested above (Nelson et al.
1977, Devine 2002, Garg 2006), but also – by offering respondents also the
possibility to review the summary quite significantly and add or modify things – with
an opportunity to collectively construct and interpret specific concepts and
meanings in collaboration with informants, which is a key aspect of hermeneutic,
interpretive approaches to political science (Yanow 2000). The opportunity to
modify interview summaries was taken up by 6 informants out of the 43 I
interviewed. In one case, as part of this process, an informant decided to withdraw

77 Taking notes during interviews is certainly useful but should in fact ideally be kept to a
minimum, in order to avoid losing rapport and eye contact with the informant, and/or
influencing his or her style of response to allow time to take notes (Yanow 2000, Garg
2006).
78
the interview altogether, and didn’t offer (although requested) a chance to undertake a new interview instead.

3.2.3 Other Data Generation Methods

Having set out, following Yanow, to investigate not only linguistic instances of expression around ICT policy, but also non-linguistic artefacts relating to the policy process, and to understand what/how these artefacts mean to the actors involved in the policy process, I also undertook data generation in relation to non-linguistic artefacts, by observing and experiencing some of the objects, spaces and acts linked to ICT policymaking in the context under analysis (Yanow 2000: 27).

In this respect, Yanow notes that where direct observation is not possible, non-linguistic policy artefacts can also be indirectly reconstructed and interpreted by investigating their appearance and description in written texts (Yanow 2000: 31). So the first and simplest way for me to understand the meaning and the importance of specific non-linguistic artefacts in the context of the policy process was that of scanning relevant documents for descriptions and interpretations of such artefacts, and to additionally explore their meanings through interviews. This implied for example going through budget planning documents and other accountancy or inventory documents to establish what types and quantities of objects (intended as material resources) were employed or budgeted for in order to support specific policy processes (from photocopiers to fuel, cars or money to mention but a few); taking note of where (i.e. in which spaces) particular policymaking instances had taken place, and researching materials about these spaces and about concepts of spatiality in general in the social and political context under analysis; and sifting through documentation relating to various policy processes to identify mentions and/or descriptions of particular acts (e.g. meetings, launches and so on) considered to have been fundamental, or particularly meaningful in relation to such processes and to policymaking in general.

79 Cf. section 2.3.3.
In addition to this, fieldwork activity - and more generally my prolonged permanence in or near the field\textsuperscript{80} - provided me with opportunities to directly observe and experience a number of process-related non-linguistic artefacts, such as:

- **Objects** – Archival research meant I was also able to physically handle several process-related objects, such as reports and other documents, in original hard copy format. In addition to this, frequenting some of the spaces associated with ICT policymaking (see below) allowed me to make observations also about the material resources present in these spaces (for example objects in policy officials’ offices or in meeting rooms, and so on) and the ‘place’ they held within these environments. More generally, residing in the context under analysis for a relatively long period gave me several opportunities to better understand some of the contextual meanings (and costs) associated with the use of a number of everyday objects that are in various ways also employed in policymaking (for example understand the importance and the use made of mobile phones, internet connections, or cars in everyday life, as opposed to ‘governmental’ life)\textsuperscript{81}.

- **Spaces** – part of my work in the field also implied having direct physical experience of some of the spaces associated with the policy process under analysis, i.e. spaces where policy process discourse had been or was being generated and performed, and other spaces more loosely involved in the construction of such discourse (for example the offices of policy participants, the meeting rooms where meetings had taken place, parliamentary buildings, and so on). In addition to this, I also frequented relevant virtual spaces, by “lurking” on ICT-related electronic mailing lists where issues related to the objects of policy in the national context under

\textsuperscript{80} Cf. the introduction to this section.

\textsuperscript{81} From a purely anecdotal perspective I could recount for example the many times I was overtaken or stopped while driving by fast convoys of high-powered ministerial cars on their way to or from policy-related activities, or the many times I was pointed to the videoconference-enabled phones present in most offices at the Ministry of ICT as examples of the fruits of the country’s ICT policy (and generally observe how objects of this type were strictly associated with governmental activities, as they seemed pretty rare in other social contexts).
analysis were regularly discussed, and to then physically meet some of the participants in these discussions\textsuperscript{82}.

- Acts – During fieldwork I also had the opportunity to participate directly in three ICT policy-related events convened respectively by government, a donor organisation and a CSO\textsuperscript{83}, and I was able to view video footage of several other ICT policy-related workshops and meetings organised by the government that had been videorecorded and stored in document centres; these activities enabled me to experience directly and indirectly some of the protocol and the proxemics (Hall 1966) that characterise ICT policy-related acts and events.

In the next section I discuss how I analysed the rich data produced through the data generation techniques illustrated so far.

### 3.3 Data Analysis

Consistently with the analytical framework I outlined in section 2.4.1\textsuperscript{84}, I organised my analytical work around three movements, or steps:

1) the first step was the preliminary identification of key linguistic and non-linguistic artefacts relating to the ICT policy process, and an analysis of how different artefacts are variously employed, experienced and perceived in different contexts by different policy actors; this stage of analysis was significantly informed by Yanow’s suggestions on the subject, in particular in terms of the analytical categories employed (e.g. metaphors,

\textsuperscript{82} Discussion on mailing lists has been demonstrated to play a substantial role in ICT policy processes and the construction of ICT policy discourse, with both positive and negative effects (cf. Rethemeyer 2006, Kendall et al. 2006). I mention “lurking” in mailing lists only briefly here as the virtual equivalent of lurking in physical spaces that are related to policy: the actual content of electronic communications relating to policy I consulted for this study is conceptually part of the data generated from written documents (cf. 3.2.1).

\textsuperscript{83} These were respectively a pan-African conference on e-Government held in Kampala in 2008, during which I acted as rapporteur; a donor-sponsored collaborative workshop on the use of mobile technologies for development in East Africa, also held in the capital in 2008, which also saw the participation of Ugandan government officials; and a CSO-hosted workshop on the development of software applications in support of development held at the University of Makerere also in 2008, attended by several ‘players’ in the ICT policy field.

\textsuperscript{84} See in particular Figure 2.1.
classifications, narratives for linguistic artefacts; and spaces, objects and acts for non-linguistic artefacts) (Yanow 2000).

2) I then proceeded to analysing how different artefacts are combined by policy actors to construct and perform discernible and identifiable discourses on the ICT policy process, employing a definition of discourse and of its fundamental characteristics derived from Parker’s work on the subject (Parker 1992); on this basis I then undertook a comparative analysis of such discourses, drawing from suggestions derived from Hajer et al.’s work in the ambit of argumentative discourse analysis (ADA) (Hajer 1993, 2002, 2006a, Gasper and Apthorpe 1996, Apthorpe 1996b).

3) The third and final step was to investigate the composition and the work of the different discourse coalitions that construct and propagate each of the discourses identified in step 2, highlighting differences and similarities between them in terms of the actors and the artefacts they are made of, and of the level of resourcing each coalition has at its disposal; in this part of my analysis I drew again from Hajer et al.’s suggestions in relation to ADA, but I also exercised a significant level of originality and autonomy in analytical terms.

In practical terms, this meant applying an extensive and iterative coding operation to the documents I had gathered and consulted, to interview summaries and to my personal notes on my experiences of spaces, objects and acts. The coding was mostly undertaken manually on hard copies of each document, and the results were also recorded manually, in summary form, into hard copy notebooks (cf. Figure 3.1). \[85\]

In chronological terms, as mentioned in section 3.2 analysis started quite early on in the second phase of my presence in the field (2007-2008), in parallel with data generation. Right from the start of this second phase I found myself in fact undertaking interviews on one hand and at the same time compiling interview summaries (and therefore enacting a first, basic level of interpretation), and I had

\[85\] The coding was in manual form both because a lot of the data I had generated was in hard copy format only (photocopies in particular), and because of the often intermittent and unreliable supply of electric power in the area where I lived, which made working with non electronic means decidedly more effective.
also started coding the first documents I had collected, looking for patterns and themes that could guide further research. Throughout this process, the analytical categories and themes I was employing and focusing on thus kept evolving, based both on the results of data generation and data analysis, and leading to more data collection on one hand, and to further, more detailed and/or targeted analytical efforts regarding particular aspects of my research on the other hand (for example the identification of additional non-linguistic artefacts such as objects, spaces and acts that could be the object of subsequent instances of additional data generation and data analysis, and so on).

My permanence in the field eventually came to be marked by successive iterations of this dynamic, whereby I conceptually, but also physically, paced back and forth between data generation and data analysis\(^{86}\) (in particular the analysis of artefacts and the identification and delineation of discourses), until I felt that data generation was complete enough for a final, comprehensive analysis and interpretation of the phenomenon under study, leading to the production of a written account (Yanow 2000: 39, Hajer 2006a: 74).

The final stages of my analytical work were then marked by further, iterative coding and recoding of the materials I had collected or generated, depending on the analytical step, or ‘movement’ I was dealing with at the time. By this time key findings had started to emerge: I concluded my analysis in June 2009 (four months after my return from the field), and proceeded to drawing conclusions and writing this thesis.

In the next sections I outline in more detail the principles on which I based my analytical work.

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\(^{86}\) I mention physical to-and-fro-ing because throughout my stay in Uganda I lived in various places all located a few hundred kilometres away from the capital Kampala, which ultimately constituted my field, and I travelled back and forth from my home to the capital, alternating moments of data generation in Kampala with moments of analysis in the relatively quiet and conducive small town environments in which I lived.
Figure 3.1 - Notebooks Used for Manual Coding
3.3.1 Process-Related Artefacts

3.3.1.1 Linguistic Artefacts

The first types of artefacts I focused on as part of my analysis were linguistic artefacts as found in or created through documents, interviews and other data generation methods. Following Yanow’s suggestions in this respect, I focused in particular on metaphors, classifications, and narratives (Yanow 2000: 41-62).

Metaphor Analysis

Policy actors and political actors in general often make use of metaphors to describe their activities and/or specific aspects of the political process they are involved in (Bevir et al. 2003, Bevir and Rhodes 2005, Ringmar 2005, Walter and Helmig 2005, Yanow 2005a).

Metaphors are to be intended, with Yanow, as semantic vehicles used to transfer meanings from one context to another, which act as models both of and for situations (Yanow 2000: 42-43, 2005a). Analysing the use of metaphors in policy speech, and in particular the different types of vehicles chosen to transfer specific meanings, and exploring the conceptual characteristics of such vehicles, is thus likely to tell the researcher something new and perhaps sometimes also unexpected about the policy or the process that specific rhetorical constructs refer to (Yanow 2000). Bevir and Rhodes also underline the importance of exploring the meaning of rhetoric itself and of its use as they are perceived by policy actors – i.e. understand what rhetoric is used for, on which occasions, and so on (Bevir and Rhodes 2005: 179).

In my work I have therefore attempted to identify the key metaphors used by ICT policy actors to describe ICT policy and the policy process, and I have analysed in detail the different characteristics of these rhetorical devices and the meanings policy actors intend to convey with them.
Classification (or Category) Analysis

The act of naming, coding and classifying entities into categories is identified by several authors as a key aspect of policymaking activity, as it allows the framing and representation of specific phenomena so as to render them intelligible and manageable as policy objects (Cambrosio *et al.* 1990, Rose and Miller 1992, Rein and Schön 1993, Arts 2003). The labelling and framing of entities and processes has also been shown to have particular importance when it comes to development policy (Apthorpe 1996a, 1996b, 1999). In Yanow’s words, “categories entail and reflect a set of ideas about their subject matter” (Yanow 2000: 49): as such, the intended and perceived meaning of categories and the way in which categories and classifications are formed are of particular interest to interpretive policy analysts, as proxies of particular worldviews regarding policy issues or the policy process.

As part of my analysis I have therefore focused also on how specific categories of entities and phenomena relating to the policy process are constructed, and on how classifications operated on the basis of such categories are used to construct specific interpretations of the policy process. This has implied looking for example at how policy actors define and classify variously process-related entities such as stakeholders, types of policy, or types of policy process, and identifying, as suggested by Yanow, what elements belonging to the same category have in common, what – perhaps more interestingly – they do not have in common, and – importantly – from whose point of view specific categories appear to have been created and/or make (or not make) sense (Yanow 2000: 51, 55).

Narrative Analysis

Several studies suggest that as part of their work policy actors often construct and tell *stories*, intended as narrative concatenations of concepts and events with a beginning, a middle and an end, that are designed to illustrate and explain specific phenomena, and/or persuade people of something through exemplification or historical accounts (Roe 1991, Kaplan 1993, Gasper 1996a, Latour 2005: 189-190, Yanow 2000: 57, Kendall *et al.* 2006).
Narrative analysis is thus a key tool of the trade in interpretive PN research, as it allows the researcher to detect the presence of specific, relatively articulate depictions of particular aspects of policy and the policy process, and thus go some way in highlighting the foundations on which key discourses on policy and the policy process are based (cf. for example Toke 2000, Keeley and Scoones 2000b, Freidberg and Horowitz 2004).

When it comes to narrative analysis, Yanow invites researchers to focus in particular on the possible presence of asymmetries between the stories told by different actors on a specific phenomenon, as such asymmetries may signal power differentials between policy actors, for example in access to policy-relevant information (Yanow 2000: 59).

In my work I have therefore attempted to trace the presence in documents and interview summaries of coherent, articulate ‘stories’ and narratives regarding the ICT policy process or aspects of it, and to understand how these narratives are logically structured, and how they are employed by actors to construct and promote particular interpretations of the policy process.

3.3.1.2 Non-Linguistic Artefacts

Following Yanow’s suggestions in this respect, and to overcome a key limitation of ‘tradtional’ ADA approaches (their near-exclusive focus on language – cf. section 2.3.3), I supplemented my analysis of linguistic artefacts with an analysis of objects, spaces and acts (Yanow 1993, 1995, 2000).

Objects

As mentioned previously, the objects analysed for this study were process-related objects, rather than objects relating to policy content or implementation as has mainly been the case in Yanow’s work (Yanow 2000).

In this perspective, I directed my attention in particular to what could be defined as ‘enabling objects’, i.e. objects (or, more generally, material resources) perceived
by policy actors as essential or particularly important in order to conduct and/or manage ICT policy processes.

I investigated in particular the form of these objects (for example textual, physical or ‘virtual’), their intended function, their distribution/accessibility to policy actors, and their origin (in terms of production and/or funding), as described and interpreted by policy actors. The analysis of the origin of documents turned out to be particularly useful when it came to identifying differences and commonalities between specific discourse coalitions. Other analytical dimensions generally contributed to a better understanding of some of the perceived ‘practical’ realities of ICT policymaking in the context under analysis.

Spaces

My analysis of the spaces of ICT policymaking focused in particular on the relationships between spaces (e.g. their relative distance from each other, or their density), their absolute location in the national context, and the differences and similarities between them, especially in terms of ownership (e.g. governmental spaces as opposed to non-governmental ones).

I investigated in other words what is done where in relation to the ICT policy process, where specific spaces are located, what these spaces mean to policy actors, and how, for example, accessible/inaccessible, solemn/informal, owned/alien (or home/away, to use a metaphor originating in sport) these spaces are perceived to be by policy actors. This applied to both physical and “virtual” spaces (e.g. email discussion lists, or web fora), and enabled me to understand some of the symbolic relationships between specific discourses and specific spaces and venues.

Acts

In Yanow’s words, “the acts of legislating, of holding hearings, of inviting (potential) clients’ views – and the omission of any of these – often carry great meaning (especially in their absence)” (Yanow 2000: 76): it is easy to see how, in this respect, Yanow’s brand of interpretive policy analysis most closely matches our
aims in terms of the analysis of the policy process, as opposed to that of policy content.

In the context of this study, I focused specifically on instances of individual or collective action considered by actors to be of particular importance in the context of the ICT policy process, i.e. on what could also be defined as the ‘milestones’ of the process (for example inaugural acts, conclusive acts, policy “launches” and so on). I also contrasted this however with an evaluation of what could be defined as more ‘peripheral’ acts, i.e. to acts generally not considered to form an integral part of the policy process, but nevertheless of some relevance in terms of their content.

In doing this work I paid particular attention to the possible existence of rituals, intended with Yanow as regularly repeated patterns of action taking place at specific times and at specific situations, whose practical purposes may in some cases actually differ from official ones (Yanow 2000: 78). According to Yanow, rituals can be detected in particular where the non-achievement of the intended goals of a set of actions is not necessarily seen as a problem by participants, because “success” is implicitly interpreted differently by different actors compared to the official goals of an act as stated in policy documents (ibidem). So I focused also on what appeared to be the intended purposes of specific policymaking acts, and on policy actors’ perceptions of the importance and the successfulness of such acts, looking for discrepancies between intended and actual purposes.

The initial investigation of linguistic and non-linguistic policy artefacts described in this section provide useful elements on which to base the following steps of my analysis, which I illustrate in the next sections.

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87 Yanow also proposes myth analysis as a possible additional analytical technique or dimension in relation to acts, whereby the analyst investigates possible discrepancies in meaning between acts and words, or between specific acts (Yanow 1992: 401, 2000: 80-82). As part of this study I did try to engage in myth analysis, but I didn’t find this dimension of analysis particularly useful, as it didn’t seem to yield particularly important insights into the constructions of the ICT policy process circulating in the context under analysis. This, and reasons of space, therefore led me to abandon this particular line of analysis in the case of this study – comforted also by the fact that the broader discourse-analytical exercise I would undertake as part of the study would have in any case enabled me to understand at least in part something about the possible silences created through process-related discourse, an understanding that is the key aim of myth analysis as proposed by Yanow (Yanow 1992).
3.3.2 Discourse Analysis

The second step of my analysis consisted in interpretively identifying and discerning the key discourses on the ICT policy process circulating in the context at the centre of investigation.

In the context of this study, discourse is defined, with Parker, as a system of statements, or set of meanings, that constructs an object (Parker 1992: 8) – the object (or objects) being in our case ICT policy practices and processes in the context under analysis, and the networks of relationships perceived to be at their basis. This definition is compatible with an interpretive view of PNs as constituted by a multiplicity of discourses and narratives (Rhodes 2002, Bevir and Rhodes 2003), and with other definitions of discourse adopted in the realm of policy analysis - in particular Hajer’s definition of discourse as the “ensemble of ideas, concepts and categories through which meaning is given to phenomena” (Hajer 1993: 45)\(^88\).

For this aspect of my research, I adopted a discourse-analytical approach. As mentioned in section 2.3.2, discourse analysis (DA) has found several fruitful applications in the ambit of interpretive policy research (Hajer 1993, 2002, Hajer and Laws 2006, Gasper and Apthorpe 1996, Howarth and Stavrakakis 2000). The value of DA in policy research, and more specifically that of argumentative discourse analysis (ADA), lies in particular – again as seen in section 2.3.2 - in the possibility it offers of capturing how actors position themselves in respect of particular policy (or policy process) matters by way of language, through an analysis not only of the nature and the contents of specific, collectively constructed discourses around policy-related matters, but also of the interplay and of the symbolic relationships between such discourses.

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\(^88\) A detailed discussion of the numerous different definitions of discourse adopted both in policy-related literature and more generally in the social sciences lies beyond the scope of this thesis (a good summary of several definitions, in particular in relation to discourse analysis in the context of development policy, can however be found in Gasper and Apthorpe 1996). I chose to adopt Parker’s definition here both because of its simplicity and because of its emphasis on the active, constructive aspect of discourse. However, such a definition should be considered, as Parker also states, only as a working definition (Parker 1992: 5) which can be developed further and in different directions depending on the context and the objectives of one’s work.
In practical terms, proponents of ADA suggest in particular that the identification and understanding of different discourses in relation to policy and policymaking should be built on the basis of a detailed analysis of the rhetorical devices, tropes, taxonomies and storylines employed by actors in their descriptions of policy and of policy processes (Gasper and Apthorpe 1996, Hajer 2003, 2006a). In this respect, the findings drawn from the analysis of process-related artefacts described in the previous section turned out to be particularly useful – especially those relating to the metaphors, classifications and narratives employed by actors to describe ICT policy and policymaking.

The emergence of coherent and discernible discourses in the ambit under analysis then took place via the repeated iterations between data generation and data analysis I described earlier in this section.

In this respect, Yanow (2004) suggests that interpretive research is in fact characterised by a relatively ‘improvisational’ nature\(^89\), whereby the researcher oscillates between data generation and data analysis, following hunches, personal impressions/ reflections and/or unexpected opportunities for access that may open up in particular moments during the course of research. In an interpretive perspective, procedural ‘systematicity’ is in other words best intended not as the adherence to rigid, predetermined heuristic/analytical protocols, but on the contrary, as the ability to adapt one’s methodological and analytical strategy according to what is found in the field, and the application of a certain level of flexibility in regularly revisiting one’s interpretations and findings along the way\(^90\).

Nevertheless, I found it useful, as a way to enhance the systematicity of my discourse analytical efforts, to integrate into my analytical framework also a number of relatively stable criteria for the identification and classification of

\(^89\) Which is not to say that interpretive researchers do not draw from a pre-existing repertoire of methods and techniques (Yanow 2004: 10).

\(^90\) In this respect, Yanow also suggests that in an interpretive perspective ‘analytical rigour’ is ultimately constituted in fact by “the crafting of a sound argument, in which observations build upon observations (…) until the logic of the argument compels reason to say ‘Ah, yes, this makes sense as an explanation!’” (Yanow 2004: 10)
discourses, which I applied in particular to streamline my analysis in later, final stages. The criteria in question, again derived from Parker’s work in this respect (Parker 1992, Chapter 1), are the following ones:

- **discourses are about objects**: discourses constitute objects, and analysis should focus on the objects they refer to, and describe them; in the context of this study, the specific focus on the cognitive and relational aspects of ICT policy practice has led me in particular to analyse the ‘network’ and ‘process’ objects constructed by different discourses.\(^{91}\)

- **discourses configure subjects**: discourses constitute some of the objects they refer to as subjects; i.e. they configure spaces “for particular types of self to step in” (Parker 1992: 9) and assign, for example, rights to speak and things to say to some of the actors they address;

- **discourses link to other discourses**: discourses usually make reference to other discourses, either for reinforcement or for contrast, and DA needs to examine in particular the contrasting aspects of specific discourses at work in the same setting; as suggested also by Yanow and by proponents of ADA, interpretive policy analysis should in fact focus in particular on the hiatuses between different discourses and interpretations around policy and the policy process (Yanow 2000, Hajer and Waagenar 2003).

- **discourses are historically located**: discourses have a specific temporal dimension, in that they emerge in reference to (and thus configure) objects perceived to be pre-existent to them; this is also another way in which discourses refer, or link, to other discourses: in this case, to the discourses that constructed “past” objects; in this respect, Finlayson points out that interpretive policy analysis should not in fact provide ‘static’ portraits of the narratives and concepts that underlie the existence of PNs, but focus on the “life” of concepts, i.e. on the way in which concepts change and undergo transformation as a consequence of their use and manipulation.

\(^{91}\) Cf. my observations in section 1.4.2 on how the analytical framework proposed, as a whole, is intended to address both the cognitive and relational aspects of ICT policymaking, and how these two aspects or dimensions are intertwined: *networks* of relationships are cognitively constructed through discourse – and at the same time cognitive perceptions of the policy *process* (including of the network of relationships at its basis) are, through their interplay, ‘constitutive’ of the actual relationships between policy actors in a given setting.
over time and across different settings (Finlayson 2004: 154); in the discourse analytical perspective practiced in this study, investigating not only what the ‘past’ objects of a discourse are, but also how these objects have emerged and/or changed over time in the context of the discourse, can provide useful indications regarding the overall historical development of the discourse in question92.

Integrating these analytical criteria into the final stages of my analytical work arguably enabled me to better understand and define the different discourses on the subject of ICT policymaking circulating in the context under analysis, and – quite importantly – also offered a relatively solid analytical framework with which to compare specific discourses along specific dimensions, as recommended by scholars operating in an ADA perspective (cf. for example Hajer and Waagenar 2003), for example by comparing the different objects created by each discourse, or the different subjects, and so on.

This part of my analysis was then followed by an investigation of the different discourse coalitions that are ‘behind’ each of the discourses identified, and by a comparison of their respective composition and strength, as illustrated in the next section.

### 3.3.3 Discourse Coalitions

The third movement, or step, of my analysis implied investigating the nature and composition of the discourse coalitions ‘responsible’ for developing and propagating each of the discourses I had identified and analysed. This happened after I left the field, when I concentrated primarily on concluding my analysis.

92 These are only four of seven criteria identified by Parker as defining the existence of discourses. The other three are: discourses are realised in texts (intended broadly as “tissues of meanings” reproduced in many forms, not just written documents); discourses are coherent sets of meanings; discourses are reflexive, i.e. they also make reference to themselves (Parker 1992: 6-16). In my view, the first is relatively obvious and it has in fact inspired most of my analytical framework so far (cf. the inclusion of objects and acts as artefacts to be interpreted); the second I have already mentioned as an integral part of my working definition of discourse; and the third does not, in my view, apply to all discourses. Hence the omission of these three criteria from the core principles of the analytical framework employed in this study: the four criteria I selected are in my eyes of superior heuristic value and likely to bear more fruits for the purposes of this study.
As noted above, Hajer defines a coalition not only as a group of people, but as “the ensemble of a set of story lines, the actors that utter these story lines, and the practices that conform to these story lines, all organised around a discourse” (Hajer 1993: 47).

In this respect, it’s important to note that the ‘membership’ of discourse coalitions is not ‘exclusive’. In this regard, Hajer suggests in particular that discourse coalitions “are not primarily made up of particular persons (let alone with a coherent set of ideas of beliefs that is not specific to context), but of the practices in the context of which actors employ storylines and (re)produce or transform particular discourses. [This] helps to come to terms with the fact that some actors might utter contradictory statements (…) or indeed help to reproduce different discourse coalitions” (Hajer 2009: 60). In addition to this, it should also be considered that in my analysis I applied a particularly comprehensive conception of the composition of discourse coalitions, which as discussed in section 2.3.3 extends to include also the objects, spaces and acts through which a particular discourse is articulated and ‘promoted’.

In my analysis of discourse coalitions I focused in other words not only on who (i.e. which policy actors, or types of policy actor) appears to populate specific coalitions, but also on:

- *how* each coalition constructs its discourse (i.e. what artefacts, linguistic in particular, specific coalitions employ in the construction of their discourse);
- *where* discourse coalitions appear to do their work (i.e. what *spaces* coalitions appear to inhabit and/or work in);
- *what material resources* discourse coalitions employ and/or have at their disposal to construct and propagate their discourse (i.e. what *objects* are at their disposal, and in what quantity, from what origin, etc.);
- through *what key acts* discourse coalitions appear to construct and propagate their discourse (i.e. what *acts or events* are employed by coalition actors to confirm or reconfirm, and strengthen, their discourse).
I then proceeded to a comparison of these different dimensions of discourse coalition composition, in an attempt to understand the reasons for the apparent dominance, or particular power/strength of particular discourses, i.e. the factors that may explain, at least in part, phenomena such as discourse *structuration* and discourse *institutionalisation*, as defined by Hajer (Hajer 1993: 47-48, 2006a: 70).93

In other words, I have sought to identify in particular the argumentative and material tactics policy actors appear to put in place in order to a) build a particular discursive version of, or ‘take’ on, the nature of the ICT policy processes and networks they are involved in, and b) ensure (or attempt to ensure) that such ‘version’ or discourse becomes a dominant, widely accepted vision and conception of the ICT policy process and of the relationships that form its basis (Hajer 1993, Gasper 1996a, Hajer 2009).

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The three analytical steps, or ‘movements’, described above enabled me to draw a number of interesting conclusions with regard to the questions that have inspired and driven this piece of research.94 I discuss these conclusions, together with the rest of my findings, in Chapters 5 and 6 of this dissertation. Before I proceed to that, however, in the next chapter I provide a relatively brief and schematic introduction to the particular case at the centre of this study, designed to help the reader better understand and contextualise the ambit in/from which such findings and conclusions have been drawn.

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93 See also Section 2.3.2.
94 Cf. Section 2.4.2.
4. A CASE STUDY OF ICT POLICYMAKING IN UGANDA

This chapter provides a brief introduction to the case at the centre of this study, and explains why Uganda has been chosen as the context for this research.

In section 4.1 I provide some basic contextual information on Uganda’s social, political and institutional setup. In section 4.2 I explain why Uganda constitutes an interesting context for this piece of research. In section 4.3 I provide a chronology of key ICT policy events in the country, and a ‘glossary’ of key ICT policy actors, and then describe in some detail a number of key policymaking instances to which I have made particular reference as part of my work.

Obviously what is narrated here should not be taken as an exhaustive or definitive account - if only because attempting to provide such an account would be in contradiction with the interpretive perspective adopted in this study, which recognises that different interpretations may exist of particular historical events, or of actors’ roles in specific situations. The function of this chapter is merely that of providing a temporary ‘framing’, or contextualisation, designed to help the reader situate and understand the analytical account that follows it, in Chapter 5.

4.1 Uganda: An Introduction

The Republic of Uganda is a landlocked nation located in East Africa, bordering the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, and Tanzania. It has a temperate equatorial climate and, as of 2009, a population of 32.7 million, compared to the DRC’s 66 million, Kenya’s 39.8 million, Rwanda’s 9.9 million, Sudan’s 42.2 million, and Tanzania’s 43.7 million (World Bank 2009b).

95 For the reasons why this study focuses more generally on ICT policymaking in an African LDC see section 1.3.2.
96 See Appendix I for a map of the country.
Its official languages are English and Kiswahili, but a variety of other idioms are also widely spoken, in particular Bantu languages such as Luganda, and other idioms belonging to the Sudanic and Nilotic groups of languages.

In the sections that follow I provide a brief summary of Uganda's political and economic history since independence.\footnote{I limit this summary to Uganda’s postcolonial political history because this study focuses on national ICT policymaking, and Uganda has existed as a formally independent and autonomous national policymaking entity only after it rid itself of colonial rule; and because Ugandan ICT policy and policymaking have arguably been shaped more significantly by events pertaining to the country’s more recent history, than by events dating back to colonial times, or at least no elements emerged from my analysis that pointed to the importance of particular events dating back to the country’s history prior to independence. Things would arguably have been different if I had focused, for example, on land policy (cf. for example Mamdani 1999).}

\subsection*{4.1.1 From Independence to 1986}

Uganda gained independence from the UK on 9 October 1962.

The country’s first Constitution was intended to install a Westminster-style multi-party system of government, but was unique in its character in that it also provided for a federal arrangement between the Kingdom of the central region of Buganda (a particularly powerful entity in Uganda’s ensemble of cultural groups) and the rest of the republic (Oloka-Onyango 1997, Haroub and Nassali 2002).

This 1962 Constitution was according to Mukholi “a delicate compromise (...) designed for a country whose diverse peoples were knitted together by force” (Mukholi 2004), which didn’t last for long: in 1966 Prime Minister Milton Obote unilaterally suspended it and promulgated a new interim Constitution, which abolished the federal arrangements and provided for a powerful executive President who would head the country and its government (Mukholi 2004: 16).

A new Constitution was promulgated in 1967, which contributed according to Haroub and Nassali to the gradual instalment of a “\textit{de jure} one-party political system” in the country (Haroub and Nassali 2002: 16).
Following increasing political and economic instability in the country, in 1971 Obote was overthrown by General Idi Amin. Amin initially pledged to restore multi-party democracy, but proceeded instead to suspend the 1967 Constitution and to govern the country by decrees, bypassing Parliament and installing a de facto military dictatorship that was to have disastrous effects on the country’s economy (Haroub and Nassali 2002: 21).

Amin was eventually deposed in 1979, following an ill-advised invasion of Tanzania that backfired into the seizing of Kampala by Tanzanian forces and Ugandan guerrilla groups. There followed what Sathyamurty has defined as a “chaotic interregnum” (Sathyamurthy 1994: 513), characterised by the rapid succession of three different interim governments and coinciding with the arrival of the IMF in the country and the beginning of the influence of Bretton Woods institutions on Uganda’s budgetary planning (Sathyamurthy 1994: 515). In 1981 Milton Obote eventually returned to power, and set Uganda on a development trajectory based on attracting foreign investment and on significant reliance on bilateral and multilateral assistance by foreign donors (Sathyamurthy 1994: 518). According to Mukholi, the ‘Obote II’ regime engaged however, like the first one, in significant violations of political freedoms and human rights (Mukholi 2004: 24), generating political discontent that eventually led to the formation of several clandestine rebel groups, which subsequently merged into a single formation, the National Resistance Movement (NRM), led by Yoweri Museveni. Following prolonged rebel activity and infighting within the regular army, in 1985 Obote was deposed a second time, again with a military coup (ibidem). Key components of the NRM refused however to collaborate with the new military regime installed after Obote’s fall, and after a prolonged struggle, the National Resistance Army (the military section of the NRM) eventually seized power in 1986, leading to the instauration of the ‘Movement’ system of government, and to the opening of a new era for Uganda, marked by relative political and economic stability (Gingyera-Pinycwa 1994).
4.1.2 After 1986

The NRM government initially retained the articles of the 1967 Constitution on presidential powers, suspending however the parts relating to the executive and to Parliament. Although the rebel movement had pledged to restore democracy in Uganda, the new government also temporarily banned political party activities, purportedly because of the conviction shared by ‘Movement’ figureheads that before full democracy could be installed, the new government needed to work on increasing the country’s security and economic stability, and this effort could have been jeopardised by the potential resurgence of the sectarian tensions that had characterised the first phase of the republic’s history (Mukholi 2004).

In 1988 the government eventually appointed a Constitutional commission, tasked with reviewing the country’s fundamental law. A new draft Constitution produced by the commission was discussed and amended by an elected Constitutional Assembly from 1992 onwards, and promulgated in 1995: amongst its key features, it extended the NRM’s exclusive hold on political power for an additional five years, after which a referendum would be held to determine whether the people of Uganda wished to adopt a multi-party political system. This sanctioned the transformation of the Movement system from what had originally been intended as an ‘interim arrangement’ into a more stable and entrenched model of governance, based on the co-optation of opposition leaders into the government (Haroub and Nassali 2002, Makara et al. 2009).

Elections were held under this consolidated system in 1996, confirming Museveni in power as President. In 2000, the first referendum on the political system provided for by the Constitution was held, and the people opted to reject the transition to a multi-party system. This was followed by new elections in 2001, which returned Museveni and the NRM to power for a second term. Pressures by international donors, combined according to some analysts with infighting between

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98 Article 271, Constitution (Republic of Uganda 2005).
99 Turnout at the 2000 referendum was less than 50%, however: Bratton and Lambright impute this, and the actual result of the vote, to a “silent boycott” on the part of those who were in favour of multi-party democracy, who were of the opinion that political party activity is a fundamental, inalienable political right that shouldn’t be subject to consultation (Bratton and Lambright 2001).
different factions of the NRM (Makara et al. 2009), eventually led the Movement to embark on further political reform, however, and in 2003 Parliament approved the *Political Parties and Organisations Act*, which allowed the existence and operation of political parties and other political associations (Makara et al. 2009). In 2005 the people were again called to vote in a referendum on the political system, and they opted, on the NRM’s recommendation, to install multi-party democracy. This result led to a number of modifications to the electoral laws, including a controversial lifting of presidential term limits (Museveni had by then reached the maximum two terms allowed by the Constitution), and new regulations regarding the registration of political parties (Makara et al. 2009). New elections were held in February 2006, which resulted in Museveni’s election for a third term of presidency100 - and in the instalment of the first post-1986 multi-party Parliament in the country. A further round of elections in March 2011 confirmed Museveni in power for a fourth term.

### 4.1.3 Uganda Today

After two decades of political and economic turmoil, the advent of the NRM government brought relative stability to the country101.

The new government engaged in particular in several economic reforms oriented towards privatisation and market liberalisation, which according to the UN “reversed earlier policy and management failures that were (...) destructive of the economy and the investment climate” (UNCTAD 2000).

The increased economic and political stability brought about by these reforms is widely considered to have led to the dramatic improvement of Uganda’s macroeconomic performance during the 1990s, reflected for example in an average annual GDP growth of 6.8% between 1990 and 1999 (Enyimu 2006, World Bank 2008). The reforms also earned Uganda and the NRM regime international recognition and the praise of Bretton Woods institutions and of

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100 For a critical view of the factors that led to Museveni’s victory in the 2006 elections see (Akaki 2006, Kiiza et al. 2008, Makara et al. 2009).

101 With the important exception, however, of northern and north-eastern regions, where ethnic conflicts and a prolonged civil war caused by the rise of a new rebel movement, the Lord’s Resistance Army, ravaged vast areas and caused social and economic unrest that has continued, with varying levels of intensity, until recently.
bilateral and multilateral development assistance organisations, leading in turn to increased aid flows, and to Uganda being the first country to become a beneficiary of the World Bank’s HIPC debt relief scheme (Sathyamurthy 1994, Enyimu 2006).

Uganda thus passed in a relatively short period of time from a situation in which all international aid had been blocked due to the abuses of Obote’s regime (Sathyamurthy 1994), to a new international role as the “darling of the donors” (Verschoor 2007).

The dramatic economic growth enjoyed by Uganda during the 1990s eventually slowed down in the first years of the new century, however, and it soon became clear that new strategies were required in order for Uganda to “go beyond recovery” (UNCTAD 2000: 1) and consolidate the achievements gained, focusing particularly on poverty reduction and on the strengthening of sector-wide approaches to planning and development, so as to sustain GDP growth (Enyimu 2006, NRM 2006). Up until then GDP growth had in fact had little ‘real’ impact on the social and economic welfare of Ugandan citizens, as it had been counteracted by a significant concomitant increase of the population, meaning that real GDP per capita had actually grown at a relatively low rate. The significant decreases in overall poverty rates enjoyed at national level between 1992 and 2002 (from 55.7% to 37.7%) have also been regionally uneven, with rural regions (where the majority of the population lives) and northern areas remaining affected by poverty more significantly than urban areas (Enyimu 2006, World Bank 2008).

Uganda has therefore certainly enjoyed significant economic development since 1986, but both the government and the international organisations that support it have recognised that the country still faces several challenges in a number of sectors, including access to health and to education, in particular at secondary and tertiary level. This is reflected also in the country’s position in the UN’s Human Development Index (HDI) ranking, which has certainly improved over time.

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102 The average annual rate of increase in population in Uganda between 2001 and 2006 was 3.2%, compared to an average of 2.5% across Sub-Saharan countries for the same period (World Bank 2009a).
compared to other neighbouring countries, but which moved only four positions upwards in absolute terms between 1995 and 2008 (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 - HDI Ranking: Comparison between Uganda and Neighbouring Countries over Time (UNDP 1995, 2000, 2008)

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4.2 Why Uganda

Uganda is an interesting context for research on ICT policy both for general reasons and for reasons connected more specifically to its experiences in relation to ICT policymaking and ICT development.

4.2.1 Uganda as an LDC

At a general level, Uganda can be considered as relatively representative of LDCs as defined by the UN (UNCTAD 2005): as seen above, it has low GDP per capita levels and low human assets (cf. also its low HDI ranking), and factors such as its landlocked position, the war in the north, and climatic variations (from droughts to floods) make its economy vulnerable both to external and internal shocks (Enyimu 2006).

Due to the very low telephone and computer penetration it suffered up until the end of the Nineties (see 4.2.2), Uganda is also representative of LDCs in terms of ICT - so much so that the country was the object in 2001 of the first ever case study realised by the ITU in relation to internet diffusion in African LDCs (ITU 2001).
The country’s gradual transition to a relatively more open and democratic governance system over the past two decades (see previous section) then makes it an interesting case also from the more general perspective of policy analysis, as such a transition has undoubtedly impacted on policy discourse and policy practice. Local and international observers note for example that the ‘participatory development’ discourse promoted by international donors from the mid 1990s onwards - which emphasises the need for development policy to be formulated on the basis of wide consultation and public participation - seems to have found particularly fertile ground in the Ugandan context, influencing the government’s overall approach to policymaking and policy practice (Chekwoti et al. 2003, Brock et al. 2004). In Chapter 5 we will see to what extent this could be said to have affected policymaking practice also in the specific sector of ICT.

Uganda is an interesting case also for reasons related more specifically to ICTs and ICT policy, however, as illustrated in the next section.

4.2.2 The Emergence of the ICT4D Discourse

In the early days of the NRM regime, telecommunications did not appear to be a priority for the government (Shirley et al. 2002: 21): during the late 1990s, however, ICTs gradually became a regular feature of Ugandan political discourse.

The initial turning point in this respect has been indicated by many as President Museveni’s attendance at the first Global Knowledge for Development (GKD) forum, held in Canada in 1997, where he invited the international community to assist Uganda in the application of ICTs and traditional knowledge to development (UNCST 1997, New Vision 1997). Since then, ICTs started being mentioned as potential ‘development enablers’ in an increasing number of official government documents (cf. for example UNCST 1997, 2000c) and in other policy-related discursive manifestations, such as parliamentary statements\(^\text{103}\), and by the turn of

\[^{103}\text{“[ICT] is one of those which has a leverage, it has a multiply effect; therefore, if you invest in that, you get a lot of value for the money (...) you put in a little and it expands” (Johnson Nkuuhe MP, Uganda Hansard, 26 July 2000); “When you ask the people [in rural areas] what is their major constraint (...) they will tell you that [it is] lack of accurate}

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Uganda’s ‘local’ articulation of mainstream ICT4D discourse came complete with references to the challenges that the country was said to experience in relation to ICT diffusion, which echo the ones illustrated in general terms in Chapter 1, e.g. lack of infrastructure, or lack of skills and/or awareness regarding ICTs and their potential (UNCST 2000b, Hjelt and Bailey 2002 and personal interviews).

Mainstream ICT4D discourse thus seems to have emerged in Uganda in ways and forms that are similar to those in which it has emerged in other DC contexts (cf. Chapter 1), providing an additional reason for the choice of this country as the object of a case study.

4.2.3 A ‘Poster Boy’ of ICT Policy

Uganda has also generally been considered as very active and successful on the ICT policy front, at least within the African context.

The country’s 1996 Telecommunications Policy and the 1997 Communications Act in particular - which together provided for the privatisation of the incumbent PTO and the granting of a licence to a second national operator - are for example widely considered to have been a key factor in the dramatic growth of telephone penetration in the country over the past decade, a “stellar success” (MoWHC 2004b: 50) helped in particular by the expansion of mobile telephony. Following the move towards liberalisation, Uganda’s teledensity indicator has in fact increased from an extremely low 0.26% in 1999 (a score that was significantly low even compared to the average 1% attributed to LDCs as a group in the same period) (ITU 2001, Mbarika 2002), to around 2% in 2002, and on to an exceptional

information. (...) So if the Ministry of Finance could actually ensure that investment is put in communication, then you will find that a lot of jobs are created in the process, and this unemployment problem will be solved" (Johnson Nkuuhe MP, Uganda Hansard, 29 October 2001); “I want to say that if this country does not embrace ICTs as a basic tool for professional development and to increase professional competitiveness, we might as well forget about education” (Salaamu Musumba MP, Uganda Hansard, 8 July 2003).
13.3% in 2006 and 14.1% in 2007 (Masambu 2007, ITU 2009). The move to liberalisation also resulted, according to some, in the Ugandan telecom market becoming possibly the most open and liberalised in Africa at the time and in subsequent years (Intelecon 2000, EAC 2005, I-Network 2008): Uganda thus came to be widely praised for its “bold approach” to telecom reform (Shirley et al. 2002: 3), similarly to what had happened in the more general ambit of economic reform.

Telecom reform didn’t address however all the challenges experienced by the country in relation to ICT development and diffusion. Internet penetration has developed for example somewhat less dramatically than telephony over the same period of time: the ITU indicate that in 2001 only 0.25% of the population had access to internet facilities, a percentage that rose only to 0.75% in 2004, and 2.51% in 2007 (ITU 2006, 2009). A closer look at telephone penetration figures also reveals that distribution has been uneven: in 2008 the World Bank reported for example that only 2% of the population living in rural areas owned mobile phones, as opposed to 16% in urban areas (World Bank 2008: 3).

The Ugandan government has attempted to address these problems through dedicated policy initiatives, designed to accompany telecom reform. In 2001 it approved for example a Rural Communications Development Policy (RCDP) (UCC 2001), which amongst other things instituted a universal service fund, the Rural Communications Development Fund (RCDF), financed through a 1% levy on the revenue of telecommunication companies. The fund has so far been used to finance projects designed to facilitate the diffusion of ICTs in rural areas, such as the installation of public payphones and the provision of connectivity and websites to district headquarters, but progress on this front has been relatively slow, as demonstrated by the figures mentioned above. The RCDP and its attendant universal service fund have nevertheless been hailed as policy successes – so much so that in 2005 Canadian international development organisation the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and national telecom regulator

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104 Objective calculations of teledensity have become increasingly difficult following the advent of mobile telephony, due to factors which can lead both to overestimation and underestimations of real penetration and use (Heeks 2009): however, in general terms these figures arguably signal an impressive improvement overall.
the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) published a book that described in quite some detail the process that had led to the creation and implementation of the RCDF, in the hope, as the Minister responsible for communications at the time stated in his foreword to the volume, that “policy-makers, politicians, and decision-makers, both within and outside Africa, [would find the book] of use, especially if their governments choose to follow a path similar to that which Uganda has already started” (UCC 2005b: x).

Uganda is also generally perceived to have fared relatively well in terms of progress with the formulation of an official national ICT policy. By 2003 the country was for example amongst those considered by the AISI to have formulated a comprehensive ICT policy framework (together for example with Burundi, Rwanda and Mozambique), and therefore differentiated from ‘latecomer’ countries such as Ethiopia, Malawi or Tanzania (UNCST 2003a: 6-7). A World Bank-funded e-readiness study realised by a private consultancy company in 2004 sketched a similarly positive picture, attributing the country the highest score in relation to “networked policy readiness”, compared to readiness in sectors such as network access, penetration, e-commerce and education (MoWHC 2004c: 70).

Uganda is thus a typical and particularly representative case in two distinct ways: on one hand, as seen above, it is relatively representative of African LDCs, both in general terms and more specifically in relation to ICT provision and diffusion; on the other hand, it also typifies in some respects an ideal LDC of the sort normatively theorised in policy initiatives such as the AISI, i.e. a country that has ‘leapfrogged’ (or tried to leapfrog) specific stages of ICT development by way of policy, and that has achieved particular maturity in this respect. This makes it a particularly interesting context for research on ICT policymaking in DCs.

4.2.4 Proximity to the Field

It would be remiss of me not to mention that one of the reasons why I chose to focus on Uganda in particular is that due to personal developments I had the
opportunity to reside there for nearly two years\textsuperscript{105}: this meant I could investigate
the case and experience its environment in quite some detail over a long period of
time – both factors of particular importance for the successful application of an
interpretive approach to policy research.

4.3 ICT Policy Making in Uganda

In this section I provide some basic chronological and terminological coordinates in
relation to ICT policy and ICT policymaking in Uganda (4.3.1 and 4.3.2), and
describe in some detail a number of key ICT policymaking instances to which I
have made particular reference during my work (4.3.3).

4.3.1 A Selective Chronology of ICT Policy Development in
Uganda

The time span covered by this research extends from the mid-1990s to the end of
2008, when I completed my work in the field. During this period, the Ugandan
government initiated and completed several ICT policy formulation processes,
ranging from deep reforms of the telecom market to the formulation of a national
ICT policy framework and of sectoral and sub-sectoral policies relating to ICTs.
Below is a brief and selective chronological summary of the government’s activities
in this area during this period. A more detailed chronology is available in Appendix
II.

\begin{tabular}{ll}
1994 & The government decides to privatise the telecom arm of the Uganda Posts and Telecommunications Corporation (UPTC – a public corporation) and to institute a period of limited competition between the corporation that would result from the privatisation and a second private national telecom operator (the ‘duopoly’) (Shirley et al. 2002). \\
1995 & The Directorate of Information (DoI) in the Office of the President initiates studies to assess the information and communication needs of the country, designed to inform the eventual drafting a White Paper on the subject (Ofir 2003a and personal interviews).
\end{tabular}

\textsuperscript{105} Cf. section 3.2.
A new telecommunications policy is approved, providing for the institution of the ‘duopoly’ (see above) and for the creation of an independent telecom regulatory authority (UCC 2005d).

President Museveni attends the first GKD Conference in Toronto, where he calls for international donor assistance for the development and promotion of ICT applications in Uganda (New Vision 1997, UNCST 2000b, Ofir 2003a). He then tasks the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) with the formulation of a national ICT policy for Uganda (UNCST 2000b, Ofir 2003a).

The ‘duopoly’ is given a legal basis through the promulgation of the Uganda Communications Act. The act also institutes the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) as the independent regulatory authority for the sector. The telecom arm of the UTPC is incorporated as a separate entity, called Uganda Telecom Limited (UTL) (Republic of Uganda 1997, Shirley et al. 2002, Tusubira et al. 2003, Ofir 2003a).

As part of its efforts to formulate a national ICT policy, the UNCST commissions a study on the status of ICTs in Uganda (Ofir 2003a).

MTN is awarded a licence to operate as the second national telecom provider (Shirley et al. 2002).

The UNCST institutes a National ICT Policy Task Force (UNCST 2000c).

The DoI finalises its White Paper on Information and Communication for Development, based on the studies it commissioned in 1995. The paper contains policy recommendations for the development of the country’s information and communication systems, with a particular focus on broadcast media, the press, and public communication (DoI 1999).

In February, 51% of UTL is sold to an international consortium (Shirley et al. 2002, Tusubira et al. 2003).

The task force convened by the UNCST in 1999 finalises the first draft of a National ICT Policy Framework (NICTPF) (UNCST 2001b). The government recommends however that the policy framework be reviewed in light of the policy recommendations contained in the DoI’s White Paper. Two local consultants are hired for the task (Wasukira and Nassanga 2002b, Wasukira undated, Ofir 2003a and personal interviews).

A revised draft of the NICTPF based on the work of the two consultants mentioned above is approved by the UNCST and by the Ministry of Works, Housing and Communications.
(MoWHC), and subjected to public consultation (Kamagara 2002, Musoke 2002, Nsubuga 2002, UNCST 2002b).

2003 Cabinet approves the NICTPF (Komakech 2003 and personal interviews), and the MoWHC initiates a process for the development of plans for its implementation, based on guidelines provided by the AISI (UNCST 2003a, 2003b, 2003c).

2004 The MoWHC asks the UCC to undertake a review of the country’s 1996 Telecommunications Policy (UCC 2004b, Tusubira et al. 2007).

2005 The UCC completes the above review and delivers draft new policy on telecommunications, which stipulates amongst other things the full liberalisation of the telecom sector following the expiry of the ‘duopoly’ period (Nkuuhe 2005, UCC 2005d, 2005e). The MoWHC endorses the new policy and tables it to Cabinet (MoWHC 2005a), but Cabinet decides to put the new policy on hold, ostensibly to allow the ‘duopoly’ operators to continue developing the country’s core national telecom infrastructure in protected market conditions (Muwanga 2005b, Biryabarema 2005).

A number of Ministries and government agencies initiate sectoral or issue-specific ICT policy processes based on the “Round Table” (RT) model and methodology of policy process consultation, developed by Dutch NGO the International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD)\textsuperscript{106}, which provides the financial resources and the expertise necessary to administer RT processes (MTTI/IICD 2005b, MTTI 2005a, 2005b, NPA 2005a, 2005b, NPA/IICD 2005b, IICD 2006b).

2006 The government institutes a new Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (MoICT) and appoints Dr Ham-Mukasa Mulira as the country’s first Minister of ICT (Kalinaki 2006, Kisambira 2006). One of the first acts of the new Minister is the emanation of new policy guidelines that provide for the full liberalisation of the telecom sector (Tusubira et al. 2007).

Between 2006 and 2007 most of the RT-based ICT policy processes supported by the IICD come to an end (MTTI 2006b, NPA 2007 and personal correspondence)

2007 The MoICT initiates reviews of some of the country’s ICT-related policies and drafts a number of bills proposing new laws for the ICT sector, commonly referred to as “cyber laws” (MoICT 2007, 2008d).

\textsuperscript{106} More information on RT processes is provided in the next sections.
2008 Warid Telecom starts operating in January as Uganda’s third national telecom operator (Wafula 2008).

The MoICT finalises a new draft policy on information technology (IT) and submits it to public consultation (PIS Ltd. 2008, MoICT 2008c and personal interviews), and continues its review of other ICT-related policies (MoICT 2008d). It also appoints “think tank” teams tasked with the formulation of strategies for the development of broadband and business process outsourcing (BPO) (MoICT 2008f, 2008a, 2008d). One of the “cyber laws” is tabled in Parliament, while the others are gazetted – the last step before submission to Parliament (MoICT 2008d, Kazooba 2008, Wamala 2008).

4.3.2 A Glossary of Key Policy Actors

In this section I briefly introduce a number of key institutional actors that have to various extents been responsible for and/or involved in ICT policy formulation in Uganda during the time span covered by this research.

As is the case with the chronology presented in the previous section, what follows should not be taken as an exhaustive inventory and representation of all the actors involved in ICT policy formulation in the country over time, but rather just as an initial, simplified narrative ‘glossary’ of key institutional actors, designed to provide the reader with some basic coordinates with which to situate and understand the analysis developed in Chapter 5. The institutional actors listed here have been selected on the basis of their recurrence in descriptions of ICT-related policy processes contained in policy documents and/or media comment, or generated through personal interviews.

The Government

Policymaking in Uganda is a prerogative of the State: overall policy direction is provided by the President, and on this basis specific Ministries develop sector-
specific policies which are usually tabled to a Cabinet of Ministers for discussion and approval\textsuperscript{107}.

Since June 2006, formal responsibility for ICT policy formulation in Uganda has been in the hands of the Ministry of Information and Communication Technologies (MoICT) (MoICT 2008d: 5).

Prior to the creation of the MoICT, responsibility for ICT-related matters had been shared between two institutions: the Ministry of Works, Housing and Communications (MoWHC), mainly responsible for infrastructural issues and in particular for telecommunications; and the Directorate of Information (DoI), located in the Office of the President and responsible for overseeing the media and more generally the information sector in the country (UN CST 2002a, MoWHC 2003b: 2, infoDev 2008)\textsuperscript{108}.

A number of other governmental institutions have then been involved to various extents in specific aspects of ICT policy formulation over time, either autonomously or in collaboration with the Ministries responsible for the sector. These include:

- **Non-ICT Ministries**, such as the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Industry (MTTI) and the Ministry of Health (MoH), all of which have over the past few years developed ICT policies and/or strategies relating specifically to their sector of responsibility (IICD 2002, MoFA 2004, MoWHC 2004c, MTTI/IICD 2005b, MoH/IICD 2005b). Non-ICT Ministries have at times also been generally involved in the formulation of national ICT policy through inter-ministerial consultation.

\textsuperscript{107} Articles 11 and 112, Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (Republic of Uganda 2005). I use the term ‘usually’ because Art. 99 of the Ugandan Constitution also grants the President the power to unilaterally emanate presidential directives, which normally lead to the initiation of legislation acts necessary for their implementation, or to direct action by relevant Ministries (Transparency International 2004, Republic of Uganda 2005 and personal interviews).

\textsuperscript{108} The DoI was eventually transferred under the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) in 2006 and renamed as the Directorate of Information and National Guidance (OPM 2009).
• The Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST), a “semi-autonomous” agency established in 1990 within the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED), which spearheaded the formulation of the country’s National ICT Policy Framework (NICTPF) between 1997 and 2003, in collaboration with the MoWHC (UNCST 2000b, 2002a, 2007, MoFPED 2007b).

• Independent telecom regulator the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC), which since its establishment in 1997 has developed a number of key ICT-related policies at the request of relevant Ministries, such as the Rural Communications Development Policy (2001) and a proposed new policy on telecommunications (2005) (UCC 2001, 2005e).

• The National Planning Authority (NPA), an agency located within the MoFPED whose role is to manage national and decentralised development planning in the country in an integrated and participatory manner, and which as part of this role developed proposals for the integration of ICTs into Uganda’s Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) in 2006 (Chekwoti et al. 2003, NPA/IICD 2005b, NPA 2006b, MoFPED 2007a).

• The Uganda Investment Authority (UIA), also located within the MoFPED, whose role is to promote and facilitate private sector investment in Uganda; as part of this role, the UIA developed strategies for the use of ICTs in support of private sector growth as early as 2000 (as part of Uganda’s Big Push strategy, designed to attract foreign direct investment), and since 2004 it has provided support to the Presidential Investors Round Table (PIRT), a group of presidential advisors hailing from the private sector, whose recommendations are considered to have had significant influence on ICT policy (see below) (UIA undated, 2000, Daily Monitor 2006, UIA 2007: 2).
Parliament

The Ugandan Constitution invests Parliament with the power to legislate on any matter relating to “the peace, order, development and good governance of Uganda”\(^{109}\). Constituted by a single chamber (often referred to as “the House”), the Parliament of Uganda is elected every five years in coincidence with presidential elections, and is composed not only of representatives elected on the basis of geographic constituencies but also of one woman representative for every district and of a number of representatives elected from specific colleges, representing the army, the youth, persons with disabilities, and workers. All Ministers who are not already Members of Parliament are also included in the House as ex-officio MPs.

One of the key functions of Parliament is that of “scrutinising Government policy and administration”, and in particular to examine policies and bills proposed by the government, and monitor the performance of Ministries with regard to policy implementation (Parliament of Uganda 2009 and Art. 90 of the Constitution).

The House fulfils this role with the aid of sector- or issue-specific parliamentary committees, whose members examine policies, bills, budgets and policy statements submitted by relevant Ministries and report back to the full House with comments and recommendations, developed also on the basis of public consultation (see for example Baliddawa 2009a specifically in relation to ICTs).

Prior to the creation of the MoICT, most policy matters relating to the ICT sector used to be scrutinised by the Sessional Committee on Works, Housing and Communications, whose task was more generally to monitor the activities of the MoWHC (see for example Parliament of Uganda 2002, 2003, 2004)\(^{110}\).

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\(^{109}\) Art. 79 of the Constitution (Republic of Uganda 2005).

\(^{110}\) Prior to the creation of the MoICT, ICT policy matters would however also occasionally feature in the work of other committees, such as the Standing Committee on Science and Technology, due to its competence with regard to all science and technology policy matters in the country (Republic of Uganda 2006: 101); the Sessional Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development, responsible for monitoring the performance of MoFPED and therefore also of its constituent units, which included the UNCST, the UIA and the NPA (cf. *Uganda Hansard*, 4 September 2000); and the Sessional Committee on Presidential Affairs, responsible for monitoring the work of the Office of the President, which included the DoI (cf. *Uganda Hansard*, 28 August 2003).
Since the creation of the MoICT in 2006, ICT matters have been handled by the Sessional Committee on Information and Communication Technology (hereafter: “ICT Committee”), tasked with supervising the activities of the new Ministry (Uganda Hansard, 31 May 2006).

The Private Sector

In Uganda the private sector has been involved in ICT policy formulation in a variety of ways and through different fora over time.

Following the liberalisation of the telecom market, national telecom operators in particular have regularly been involved (or at least invited to participate) in ICT policy formulation activities: telecom service providers are defined for example as “major stakeholders” in documents relating to the UCC’s 2005 review of Uganda’s telecommunications policy (MoWHC 2005a), and the names of representatives from these companies regularly appear not only in lists of participants in ICT policy consultation activities organised by Parliament or by the government, but also amongst those of members of several task forces and think tanks created specifically to formulate policy for the ICT sector (UNCST 2000b, 2002b, UCC 2003a, Republic of Uganda 2008a, 2008b, MoICT 2008f, 2008e).

Local ICT industry players seem on the other hand to have been somewhat less influential or even present in the context of ICT policy activity, especially in the early years of Ugandan ICT policymaking. This is said to have been due at least in part to the absence of “credible, representative industry groups like the vendors, consumers and ISPs” at national level, which has made policy influence by local market players difficult and heavily dependent on individual initiative (WOUGNET 2005a: 22). Nkuuhe also noted in this respect that as late as 2007 the local ICT industry in Uganda was still “small, (...) growing and organising”, especially compared to what he defined as the “VIPs” of the Ugandan ICT sector, such as the big telecom operators (Nkuuhe 2007). Interviews and documentary analysis indicate however that since the creation of the MoICT and of the ICT Parliamentary Committee, local private sector players seem to have found more avenues for
policy influence and participation (MoICT 2008e, Republic of Uganda 2008b, MoICT 2008a)\textsuperscript{111}.

Another key source of private sector influence on ICT policy has been the \textit{Presidential Investors’ Round Table (PIRT)}, a World Bank-sponsored presidential initiative launched in 2004 designed to bring together “key actors from both the private and public sector, to form a common agenda for accelerating economic development” in Uganda (Tusubira \textit{et al.} 2007, UIA 2007: v). Composed by representatives of multinational companies such as General Motors, Microsoft, Diageo and Coca Cola, together with representatives of the Ugandan business sector, the government, and the World Bank, the PIRT also has an \textit{ICT Working Group}, whose recommendations have over time included the swift approval of the new telecom policy developed by the UCC in 2005, the creation of the MoICT, the formulation of a BPO strategy for the country and the speedy approval of the country’s “cyber laws” (UIA 2007: 12, 41 and 57, 2009).

\textit{Civil Society Organisations}

National CSOs and NGOs that have engaged in lobbying and advocacy activities and in some cases have also formally participated in policy formulation activities as ‘invited’ stakeholders include:

- The \textit{Council for Economic Empowerment for Women of Africa – Uganda (CEEEWA-U)}, particularly active on the policy advocacy front, especially in relation to the need for ICT policies to be sensitive to gender (CEEEWA-U 2005, 2008 and personal interviews).

- \textit{Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET)}, a network of women’s organisations that aims to “develop the use of information and communication technologies among women as tools to share information and address issues collectively” (WOUGNET 2008a). WOUGNET runs a

\textsuperscript{111} The quality and the effectiveness of this participation is however an object of debate, as we will see in Chapter 5.
Gender and ICT Policy Advocacy programme, aimed at “building (the) capacity of network members to effectively influence the formulation and implementation of gender sensitive ICT policies and programs” (WOUGNET 2008c). In addition to organising several capacity building workshops and online discussions on the subject of ICT policy, WOUGNET staff have personally participated in a number of steering groups tasked with the formulation of ICT-related policy (Okello 2003, WOUGNET 2005b, UCC 2005c, Okello and Ngolobe 2005, WOUGNET 2005a, 2006a, WOUGNET/CIPESA 2006, NPA 2005a, MoICT 2008f).

• The Uganda Women’s Caucus on ICT (UWCI), a “loose coalition” founded in 2003 by members of CEEWA-U, WOUGNET and other organisations specifically to advocate for gender-sensitive ICT policy processes in Uganda (WOUGNET 2008b), which undertook detailed gender analyses of the NICTPF and of other ICT policy documents (UWCI 2004 and personal interviews), and which has formally been involved in a number of ICT-related policy consultation processes, following explicit invitations by the government or the Parliamentary ICT Committee (UWCI 2008 and personal interviews).

• I-Network Uganda (hereafter: “I-Network”), a network organisation involved in running awareness-raising, training and discussion activities in relation to ICTs and ICT policy, which also got formally involved in ICT policy formulation through its collaboration with the IICD (see below) in the provision of expertise and administrative resources to governmental departments in the context of “Round Table” processes of ICT policy formulation (NPA/IICD 2005b, MoH/IICD 2005a, IICD/I-Network 2006, IICD 2006c, 2008b). Since then, I-Network has been involved, and has often facilitated, civil society discussions around specific ICT policy issues, both through physical workshops and online interaction, and is said to have exerted significant policy influence in this way (Ssekalo 2009 and personal interviews).

112 For an overview of “Round Table” (RT) processes see section 4.3.3, and for an overview of RT methodology see (Moens and Broerse 2006).
• **Collaboration on International ICT Policy for East and Southern Africa (CIPESA)**, an international organisation sponsored by the UK’s Department for International Development (DFID), which has been involved in ICT policy-related activities such as studies, workshops and online fora, in particular in collaboration with WOUGNET and I-Network (CIPESA 2005, CIPESA/I-Network 2006, WOUGNET/CIPESA 2006, CIPESA 2006).

**Academia**

Ugandan academics have been involved in ICT policy activity mainly by providing sector-specific specialist expertise, both through their participation in task forces and teams responsible for policy formulation (UNCST 2000b, WOUGNET/CIPESA 2006, MoICT 2008f) and through their engagement as remunerated consultants in the context of ICT policy processes (UNCST 2000c, 2000b, Wasukira and Nassanga 2002b, UNCST 2002b, PIS Ltd. 2008 and personal interviews).

In both cases, the overwhelming majority of academics involved hail(ed) from the **University of Makerere**, the largest and oldest university in Uganda, located in Kampala, and in particular from specialist academic units such as the Faculty of Computing and Information Technology (CIT), the Faculty of Technology, and the Department of Mass Communication, or from administrative units such as the Directorate of ICT Support (DICTS) and the Quality Assurance Directorate (QAD).

**International Organisations**

ICT policy formulation in Uganda has also seen the involvement over time of a number of international organisations, which have provided the government and local CSOs and NGOs with assistance, usually in the form of funding and/or specialist expertise. These include:

• The **UNESCO National Commission for Uganda**, which provided funding and commissioned consultancies in support of the DOf’s work for the

- The **International Development Research Centre (IDRC)**, a Canadian international development organisation that funded a number of background studies on the state of ICTs in Uganda (including some of those undertaken by the DoI as mentioned above, in collaboration with UNESCO) (Ofir 2003a), and eventually provided many of the financial and human resources employed for the development of the NICTPF and for the formulation of the UCC’s *Rural Communications Development Policy* (IDRC 2000, UCC 2001, Tusubira 2003b, Ofir 2003a, UCC 2005b).

- The **International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD)**, a Dutch non-profit foundation that provided the financial and human resources necessary for the employment of its “Round Table” policy consultation methodology in support of the formulation of sector- or issue-specific ICT policies and strategies by the MoES, the MTTI, and the NPA, in collaboration with I-Network (IICD 2002, 2003, NPA 2005b, IICD 2006b, 2008a)\(^\text{113}\).

- The **United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)**, which as part of its AISI initiative provided part of the funding and the expertise at the basis of the formulation of the NICTPF and for the development of plans for its implementation, and which later assisted the MoH and the MoFA in the development of sector-specific ICT policies and strategies (UNCST 2000b, 2002b, UNCST/NFRD 2002a, UNCST 2003a, 2003b, MoWHC 2004d, MoH 2004, Kwaku Yamuah 2005, UNECA 2007).

- The **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**, which co-funded the DoI’s surveys on the country’s information and communication needs

\(^{113}\) See also previous sections and 4.3.1.
together with UNESCO (UNESCO 2001, Ofir 2003a and personal interviews), and later provided funding for the final stages of the formulation of the NICTPF and for the subsequent formulation of plans to implement it (UNCST 2002b, 2003a, 2004a)\(^{114}\).

### 4.3.3 Selection of ICT Policy Making Instances for Analysis

In this section I briefly describe four key instances of ICT policy development to which I have made particular reference during my work, and I explain the reasons why I have chosen to focus on them as part of this study.


The formulation of the NICTPF was the first significant effort made by the Ugandan government in relation to ICT policy. At the time of writing, the NICTPF was also the only comprehensive policy document defining Uganda’s overall policy goals in

\(^{114}\) This list only includes organisations that were involved in supporting actual policy formulation work, as opposed to those whose involvement was for example limited to sponsoring and/or realising studies and reports in relation to ICTs in support of decision-making, or to the provision of training and capacity building on ICTs and ICT policy to policymakers. The latter include organisations such as the *World Bank*, which sponsored a number of studies such as the 2001 National Information Infrastructure Agenda Uganda report, a 2004 report on e-readiness in the country, and a 2008 report on the use of ICTs to improve competitiveness (DIIAUP 2001, MoWHC 2003a, infoDev 2005, World Bank 2008); the *Association of Progressive Communications (APC)*, which provided support in the form of capacity building for CSOs and monitoring and evaluation activities specifically in relation to ICT policy in Uganda (Okello 2003, APC/IICD 2007c); the *United States Agency for International Development (USAID)*, which provided Ugandan policymakers and regulators with support in terms of capacity building (in particular with regard to telecom regulation) and which also delivered generic ICT training to government officials (Hjelt and Bailey 2002, USAID 2007); and the *United States Trade and Development Agency (USTDA)*, which sponsored the realisation of a national ICT master plan and e-government network feasibility study delivered to the MoWHC in 2006 (ARBT 2005, MEGA-TECH and Partners 2006). The list also refers primarily to policy processes that have been concluded, and thus excludes international actors involved in ongoing policy processes, such as the *Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)* and the *East African Community (EAC)*, which are currently supporting a review of the national ICT policies of member countries under the auspices of RICTSP (Regional ICT Support Programme), an EU-funded regional development framework designed amongst other things to foster the harmonization of ICT policy in the region on the basis of a model ICT policy and ICT bill approved by COMESA in 2003 (COMESA 2004, Wakabi 2003, Daily Monitor 2004). Local consultants for the RICTSP policy harmonization project were appointed only in late 2008, following a workshop held in Kampala in the summer of the same year (MoICT 2008b and personal interviews): the project is therefore still in its early stages and has thus been excluded from our analysis. For more information on RICTSP see also [http://bit.ly/ebT7vt](http://bit.ly/ebT7vt).
relation to ICTs: for these reasons alone, the NICTPF process is a key process that deserves analytical attention.

But the NICTPF is a particularly interesting case also due to a number of peculiarities that characterised its formulation.

Firstly, the NICTPF process took place at a time when no single institution was formally responsible for the ICT sector in Uganda, and several government departments appeared to vie for the ‘ownership’ of this policy area, including the UNCST (and with it, the MoFPED), the MoWHC and the DoI (personal interviews). This state of affairs is reflected also in the fact that up until 2000, two relatively similar policy processes had been running in parallel under the leadership of different institutions: on one hand, in 1997 the UNCST had embarked on the formulation of a national ICT policy on the President’s mandate in 1997; on the other hand, the DoI had initiated a similar process in 1995 in relation to the contents of information and communication activity in the country, which culminated in the production of a White Paper designed to be eventually transformed into a “National Communication and Information for Development Policy Framework” (UNCST 2000a, 2000c, 2000b, DoI 1999, Tayeebwa 2000, Uhlig 2001, UNESCO 2001, Wasukira and Nassanga 2002a, Ofir 2003a and personal interviews).

Matters came to a head in 2000, when a dialogue was held between the MoWHC (which by then had endorsed the process led by the UNCST) and the DoI, and it was decided that the MoWHC and the UNSCT would continue to lead the process of formulation of a national ICT policy, and that the findings of the DoI’s white paper should be integrated into such a process (UNCST 2000b and personal interviews)\textsuperscript{115}.

\textsuperscript{115} In the words of a DoI official: “There were two Ministries, Works and Information, and each one wanted to claim the paper, with the other supporting it, and then it was decided it would be the Ministry of Works leading. (...) We convinced our Minister, we told him that since they are going to facilitate information, and we get to keep content, let’s use them.” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 2 December 2008).
The NICTPF is thus the result of the *fusion* of two different processes into a single one - something that led to considerable delays and ‘false starts’ in terms of its formulation\textsuperscript{116}, and which forced different Ministries to reach an agreement with regard to who would have overall responsibility for the ICT sector. Ofir maintains in this respect that one of the outcomes of the NICTPF process was in fact the ‘creation of a new policy regime’ in relation to ICTs in Uganda (Ofir 2003a: 17).

Secondly, the NICTPF process is interesting because it was characterised by the successive involvement over time of several different international donors\textsuperscript{117}, but at the same time many local actors maintain that such a significant involvement did not affect Uganda’s ‘ownership’ of the process of the policy document that resulted from it\textsuperscript{118}.

The perceived level of local ownership of the NICTPF, the “confusion” and the “turf wars” that characterised the early stages of its formulation (personal interviews), and the progressive delineation through the NICTPF process of a new ‘policy regime’ around ICTs, arguably make of this process a particularly interesting case in the context of this study.


The Telecommunications Policy Review (TPR) undertaken by the UCC between 2004 and 2005 is an interesting case firstly because, differently from the NICTPF process, it is an example of an ICT policy process managed exclusively “in house”\textsuperscript{119}.

\textsuperscript{116} “Valuable time was lost” through the running of two similar processes in parallel, said the Minister of Information at the time (UNCST 2002b); one of the informants consulted for this study also suggested that “[at] some point the process (…) broke down (…) [it] stalled completely” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 19 September 2008).

\textsuperscript{117} Cf. section 4.3.2.

\textsuperscript{118} “There was a deliberate effort by donors to leave ownership to Ugandan actors, and IDRC’s support was just that: support” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 September 2008). “Initially, UNECA came to present papers on policy processes. [But] the initial assessments they were talking about had already been done in our case. Our policy was largely pushed by non-state actors, initially. It already came from down rather than up, it was reactive. Things were already in motion.” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 November 2008). “(…) the [NICTPF] is what the name says it is, i.e. a national process, (…) for example all meetings were convened by local actors and so on. This cannot be said of the Rwandan policy for example, which was developed by AISI in collaboration with SIDA: it is a good and comprehensive document, but is it really theirs [of the Rwandans]? Implementation too is also not in their hands.” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 19 May 2008).
by a governmental agency (the UCC), rather than through the use of consultants and/or with the support of international development organisations (UCC 2004b, Masambu 2004).

The TPR differs from the NICTPF process also in that it was particularly quick: in the matter of a few months the working group created by the UCC to conduct the review held several planning meetings, developed a variety of background papers, conducted several rounds of public consultation and delivered four successive drafts of a new telecom policy, the last of which was submitted to the MoWHC, which had commissioned the review, in April 2005 – seven months after the working group had been created (UCC 2004b, 2004f, 2004g, 2004m, 2004k, 2004n, 2004o, Ssemboga 2004a, Kaggwa-Sewankambo 2004, UCC 2005d, 2005e, MoWHC 2005a).

What makes the TPR process all the more interesting however is that the TPR represents an example of an ICT policy process that failed: as seen in 4.3.1, the new policy was rejected by the Cabinet, ostensibly because the government wanted to allow the duopoly operators to continue developing the country’s core telecom infrastructure in protected market conditions (Biryabarema 2005, Muwanga 2005b).

The TPR’s failure is particularly extraordinary considering that according to many the new policy had been the result of extensive and detailed consultation. A UCC official interviewed for this study succinctly summarised this negative outcome as follows: “You’d have thought that the fact that that policy was bottom-up would have made it more acceptable, but it did not go like that” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 5 December 2008). The government’s refusal to approve the new policy therefore also caused significant resentment on the part of a number of policy actors, who suspected that the decision had been caused by lobbying on the part of the duopoly operators.

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119 “It is very frustrating to waste our time for over a year, consulting stakeholders in the ICT industry, taking us off our valuable work to discuss and contribute to what we think is the best way forward for this nation only to hit a dead end. (…) Are there powers that are at play behind the scenes?” (Wire Lunghabo 2005). “The period upon which we had agreed with [MTN and UTL] ended in July this year. What more is there to be done? Why don’t we
Another interesting aspect of the TPR debacle is that the policy objectives of the review were eventually attained through the emanation of Ministerial guidelines by the new MoICT shortly after its creation, demonstrating the possibility of achieving specific policy objectives in different ways, i.e. through different policy processes\textsuperscript{120}. The emanation of the 2006 guidelines appears in other words to have functioned as a de facto alternative policy formulation process to that of the formulation and approval of a full policy - and more specifically as a sort of ‘shortcut’ that allowed the new Ministry to bypass the complexities associated with organising and managing a full policy process.

The TPR was thus a relatively quick and purportedly very participative and ‘bottom-up’ policy process that failed at the last hurdle, the objectives of which were eventually obtained by other means: this makes it a particularly interesting case in the context of this research.

\textit{The IICD-Sponsored “Round Table” Policy Processes (2005-2007)}

Between 2005 and 2007 Dutch NGO the International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD) sponsored two ICT-related policy development processes in collaboration with the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Industry (MTTI) and the National Planning Agency (NPA) (MTTI/IICD 2005b, NPA/IICD 2005b).

The MTTI project was aimed at supporting the Ministry in the development of an ICT policy implementation programme for the sector, through the organisation and facilitation of policy consultation meetings based on the IICD’s own “Round Table”

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\textsuperscript{120} According to an MoICT official: “(…) we started working and we picked up the pieces from where the other Minister had left them. The first issue on the agenda was to decide whether to open up or not, and we decided to open. The Minister announced ministerial guidelines later that year, so even if the Telecom Policy had not come out, the guidelines were made, in order to open up the market” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 26 September 2008).
The RT processes supported by the IICD are of particular interest here because, differently from the NICTPF process and the TPR process, they represent examples of the substantive and close involvement of an international organisation in ICT policy development, extending beyond the mere provision of budgetary support, to include the proposition and eventual use of a specific method on which to base policy formulation. Documents relating to these processes reveal in fact that significant negotiations took place between the IICD, the governmental

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121 The Round Table (RT) process is in the words of its proponents “a string of interventions alternated by individual activities of prototype owners” (Moens and Broerse 2006: 34). It was developed by the IICD in collaboration with a group of ex-Shell managers as a tool designed to “bring about relevant policy and projects in a participatory and locally owned way” (ibidem). It is based on three main components: “scenario development, prioritization of leverage areas for change, and project development” (ibidem). A key step in the RT process is in particular the organisation of a Round Table Workshop (RTW), a multi-stakeholder meeting designed to “bring the whole system into the room” to discuss a specific issue, for example a policy (Moens and Broerse 2006: 36, de Jager 2005a). RTWs are then generally followed by the development of formal proposals (for example a policy statement, or a full policy document) and by further consultation and validation activities, eventually leading to a final document. For more information on RTW processes see (IICD 2004).
institutions involved and I-Network precisely with regard to how to make ICT policy (Anon 2005a, de Jager 2005b, Wasukira 2005a, NPA/IICD 2005c, IICD 2005a, Wasukira 2005b, IICD 2006a). Analysing these processes has therefore yielded valuable insights into the different perceptions and definitions of ICT policy and policymaking that circulated in Uganda at the time, and into some of the motivations that can lead an international organisation to get involved in ICT policy activity at national level.

The MTTI and the NPA policy processes are also of interest specifically for their scope, and for their relationship to the NICTPF process.

The MTTI process is for example a sectoral ICT policy process, explicitly described in a number of documents as a step in the implementation of the NICTPF (MTTI/IICD 2005b: 1, 2005a: 11, MTTI 2006b: 9). To use a spatial metaphor, the MTTI process could thus be said to constitute a ramification “downwards” of the NICTPF, into a specific sector of governmental activity.

The NPA process is on the other hand a ramification “upwards” of the NICTPF, intended as it was as an attempt to create a linkage between the country’s national ICT policy and its overall development plans. The NICTPF is mentioned for example in several documents relating to this process as the framework on the basis of which the NPA decided to engage in ICT policymaking (NPA 2005a, NPA/IICD 2005c, NPA 2005b), and the NPA process was depicted at least in one case as “a continuation of the work” of the UNCST with regard to the implementation of the framework (Wasukira 2005b). The NPA process was in fact seen by many also as an attempt to position the NPA as a super partes agency tasked with coordinating the implementation of the NICTPF: the ‘strategy paper’ process had in fact started prior to the creation of the MoICT, when according to some, “nobody [seemed] to have a complete overview of how the [implementation of the NICTPF was] proceeding” (IICD 2005a, I-Network 2005). The creation of the
MoICT eventually filled this gap, however, leading to the NPA’s ‘abdication’ from this overall coordination role\textsuperscript{122}.

The relative positioning of these policy processes and of their products ‘above’ and ‘below’ the policy ‘core’ represented by the NICTPF provide an additional reason for their choice as interesting cases for this study\textsuperscript{123}.

\textit{The Development of Sub-Sector Policies Under the MoICT}

Since its creation in 2006, the MoICT has embarked on the review or the creation anew of a number of \textit{sub-sectoral policies}, designed to regulate and develop activities in sectors that are perceived as subordinate to, and constitutive of, the overall, generic ‘portfolio’ of the new Ministry. These include:

- reviews of the country’s Telecommunications Policy, Postal Policy and Broadcast Policy (MoICT 2006, 2007);
- a new policy on the information technology sector (“IT Policy”) (MoICT 2006), and strategies on broadband infrastructure and business process outsourcing (MoICT 2008d).

These processes are of interest to us firstly because they are the first processes managed by a single institution whose responsibility is explicitly and exclusively that of formulating ICT policy. Many respondents maintain in fact that the creation of the MoICT led to a much needed centralisation and harmonisation of ICT policy development efforts, and to increased clarity with regard to the structures and channels available for participation to policy formulation by the public (World Bank 2008, Torach \textit{et al.} 2007, Nakkazi 2006a, Kisambira 2006 and personal interviews)\textsuperscript{124}. It is therefore interesting to see how these policy processes differ from the ones that had taken place up until then.

\textsuperscript{122} “There was a gap for a neutral institution, and the NPA could do that role. Then the Ministry came, and everything was harmonised, with more coordination.” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 12 November 2008).

\textsuperscript{123} On the importance of relative/reciprocal positioning of policies as perceived by the actors involved in policy formulation see also Chapter 5.

\textsuperscript{124} “Prior to the creation of the Ministry of ICT, I think the process was more haphazard (…). The Ministry of ICT has made it more clear. (…) [The MoICT], with its criteria, (…)
Secondly, these processes are also the result of the apparent consolidation of several years of practice in the field of ICT policy development, reflected for example in the MoICT’s concomitant use of multiple, different policy formulation methods and techniques that had been tried and tested previously, such as the formation of task forces and “think tank” teams composed of local ICT experts and stakeholders, or the reliance on the use of consultants. Studying these processes can therefore help us understand how specific policymaking practices have in a sense ‘sedimented’ in the Ugandan ICT policy context, constituting something akin to a ‘tradition’ of Ugandan ICT policymaking.

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This section concludes my introduction to the case at the centre of this study. In the next chapter, I provide a detailed account of the findings from my research.

establishes who is consulted.” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 28 September 2008). “Now, every sector is represented in the Ministry. Before, there was no institutional framework. It was not organised in a sector. There was less participation, because people did not have faith (...). Also, now there is focused funding for the sector” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 12 November 2008).

125 It should be noted that the two methods are not exclusive of each other, e.g. specific policies may be developed mainly by think tanks, but based on background studies provided by consultants, or they may be developed mainly by consultants, but followed by substantial discussion both internally and externally to the Ministry (MoICT 2008f, 2008c, 2008a, 2008e and personal interviews).
5. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

In this chapter I report key findings from my study of ICT policy networks and policymaking in Uganda based on the analytical framework illustrated in Chapter 2 and 3.

I start by providing a relatively brief and schematic account of findings regarding the linguistic and non-linguistic artefacts that feature most prominently in actors’ descriptions of the ICT policy process (Part I). I then proceed to illustrate the key characteristics of the overall discourses on national ICT policymaking I have been able to identify through my work, and review the nature and composition of the discourse coalitions that construct and propagate each discourse (Part II). Finally, I make a number of analytical considerations regarding the relationships between the different discourses identified in the study, and between the coalitions that promulgate them – and put my findings into context with reference to contemporary literature regarding development policymaking and ICT4D (Part III). Overall conclusions regarding the case under analysis and the effectiveness of the method employed are then discussed in Chapter 6.
Part I - Process-Related Artefacts

5.1 Linguistic Artefacts

I structure this part of my account around the three categories of linguistic artefact discussed in section 3.3.1.1: *metaphors*, *categories* and *narratives*.

5.1.1 Metaphors

The metaphors most commonly employed by Ugandan policy actors in accounts of ICT policymaking practices centre around three key ‘themes: a) construction and housing; b) conflict and competition; c) transport and trajectory.

5.1.1.1 Construction and Housing

In several cases ICT policy is metaphorically described by actors as a “house” constituted by “pillars” and other “building blocks”. In other cases, actors have also referred to the institutions responsible for ICT policymaking as the “home(s)” of ICT policy (in particular the MoICT, perceived by many as a long overdue ‘single home’, or point of reference, for ICT policy).

Symbolic constructs of this kind generally tend to convey a perception/interpretation of the work undertaken by Ugandan policy actors in relation to ICT along the years as equivalent to the ‘construction’ of something new (be this ICT policy as a house, or a house *for* ICT policy).

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126 Due to the space limitations imposed by the doctoral dissertation format, this part of my account will necessarily be selective in its presentation of evidence. Further information and illustrative examples of the data that support these findings are provided however in Appendix III of this dissertation.

127 Examples of this type of construction-related metaphors are contained in Section A-1 of Appendix III.
5.1.1.2 Conflict and Competition

In other cases Ugandan ICT policymaking is described by actors and observers as being or having been characterised by “(turf) wars”, “struggles”, “battles” and “fights”.

Of particular note in this respect is a gradual shift from references to conflicts within government in descriptions or evaluations of the early years of Ugandan ICT policymaking (marked as we have seen by a certain level of confusion regarding institutional responsibilities for the sector)\(^{128}\), to references to struggles between government and non-governmental actors (private sector actors in particular), and/or to competition for participation amongst non-governmental actors, in descriptions of later stages of Ugandan ICT policy history (when ‘fighting’ within government appeared to have subsided)\(^{129}\).

This shift of the locus of conflict from within government to outside government conceptually implies the discursive configuration of ‘government’ as an increasingly unitary, easily identifiable and ‘harmonious’ entity involved in and responsible for ICT policymaking, with which other parts of society entertain (or wish to entertain) a relationship.

5.1.1.3 Transport and Trajectory

In yet other cases, ICT policymaking and the ICT policy process are variously described as trajectories, “paths” or “routes” that can be covered by different means (including “planes” and “cars”), and more generally as akin to a journey that requires a number of relevant and important actors to be “on board”\(^{130}\).

This conveys a general sense of ICT policymaking as a purposeful, constructive activity associated with concepts of ‘progress’ and ‘goals’ – i.e. of ICT policy as development policy.

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\(^{128}\) Cf. Section 4.3.3.

\(^{129}\) See Section A-2 in Appendix III for some examples.

\(^{130}\) Cf. Section A-3 in Appendix III.
In Part II of this chapter we will see how all the discourses around ICT policymaking identified in this study make use of, or integrate, to various extents, one or more of these metaphorical constructs.

5.1.2 Classifications and Categories

As suggested by Yanow (2000), classification and categorisation operations are an important aspect of the world-building activities of individuals. In the context under analysis I have been able to identify two key objects of classification and categorisation work: stakeholders (intended as legitimate or potential participants in the ICT policy process), and policy processes.

5.1.2.1 Stakeholder Definition and Categorisation

In the Ugandan context ICT policy “stakeholders” are the object of two types of categorisation and classification work:

- **Ontological classification** - intended as the basic or fundamental differentiation between who/what is considered a legitimate and/or potential stakeholder, and who/what is not
- **Typological classification** – intended as the identification and distinction of different types of ICT policy stakeholder according to a variety of criteria.

5.1.2.1.1 Ontological Classification

At a very simple and basic level, “stakeholders” are identified and categorised as such by their explicit naming and/or listing in descriptive or prescriptive documents or verbal utterances regarding the policy process.

Key aspects worth noting in this respect are:

- The existence of a certain level of variation in the definition of who/what is explicitly defined as a ‘stakeholder’, sometimes even in the context of the same policy process: certain types of actors are for example listed as stakeholders in some documents but not in others produced in relation to
the same process - and more generally various categories of actors are also conceptually aggregated or disaggregated in successive documents referring to the same process\textsuperscript{131};

- Phenomena of explicit \textit{juxtaposition} of different ‘lists’ of stakeholders by different actors in the context of ICT policy debates (for example the proposal by MPs or by CSOs of listings of stakeholders to be consulted that differ from those proposed and listed by government)

- The notable \textit{durability} of some lists of individual stakeholders over time: in several cases, lists of participants in past policy consultation events are for example \textit{re-used} for other purposes and other events, albeit subjected to partial review; stakeholder identification and classification is in other words often the result of a collective, cumulative ‘choral’ effort, iterated over time;

- The explicit inclusion and extensive presence in formal or informal listings of \textit{government as a stakeholder}, be it as a unitary entity or – more commonly – as an ensemble of multiple, different entities (e.g. different Ministries or agencies); of particular note in this respect is that the nomination of multiple governmental entities as ‘stakeholders’ is said by some to have the ultimate effect of ‘squeezing’ non-governmental actors into an apparently minor role; also worthy of note is the fact that in many instances of this kind government also insists on configuring itself as “just one of many stakeholders” acting on a level playing field\textsuperscript{132}.

\section*{5.1.2.1.2 Typological Classification}

Another way in which ICT policy stakeholders are defined as such, and – more importantly – differentiated from each other in the context under analysis is through classifications \textit{by type}. Most notable in this respect are:

\textsuperscript{131} For example, a document relating to the NICTPF process lists amongst the ideal participants in consultation workshops aggregate categories such as “Telecom Service Providers and Regulators” (an unusual aggregation between regulators and the regulated), “Private Sector/Cooperatives”, and “Civil Society/NGOs”. Successive documents and drafts then disaggregate some of these categories or eliminate them, subsuming them into new ones – possibly as a consequence of remonstrations, or simple reviews of the importance of each type of actor (UNCST 2000c: 4, 2000b: 3, 2002b: 19). More examples of variations of this kind are contained in section B-1.1.1 of Appendix III.

\textsuperscript{132} Selected data extracts in support of the conclusions presented in this section are provided in section B-1.1 of Appendix III.
• Classifications and distinctions based on the type of interest (i.e. the ‘stake’) actors are assumed to hold in ICT policy, corresponding in a sense to what they can take from the ICT policy process.

• Classifications and distinctions based on the type of contribution actors are assumed to be able to make to the policy process, i.e. based on what they can give to the policy process, on the basis of their abilities and expertise (or lack thereof).

Classification by Interest

In this perspective, stakeholders are first and foremost those who are perceived to have an ‘interest’ in policy outcomes, because they are or may be affected by them.

Distinctions are then drawn on the basis of the nature and/or the ‘size’ of the interest(s) in question. For example:

• In several cases distinctions are drawn, implicitly or literally, between primary (or “major”) stakeholders and secondary (and implicitly “minor”) ones. “Primary” stakeholders comprise those who are variously perceived to hold a “major” stake in ICT policy: in most cases this means governmental entities (as the main implementers of policy), but in several cases the category is conceptually extended to also include large private sector operators, mainly due to the significance of their commercial/financial interests in relation to ICTs. “Secondary” stakeholders comprise instead “all others” (sometimes literally), and in particular CSOs, academia and, in some cases, donors. The importance of these distinctions lies in the fact that in most cases different ‘ideal’ levels of involvement and engagement in specific phases of the policy process are then hypothesised or recommended for either category.

133 It is for example the case of the TPR, which theorised different levels of involvement for “primary” and “secondary” stakeholders. Interestingly, the same distinction between “primary” and “secondary” was also applied in the TPR process to the subcategory of donors, divided into donors with ‘direct’ interests (those who give “direct development funds...
• In other cases, distinctions are drawn between what could be defined as “patriotic” stakeholders, whose interests are perceived to be aligned with broader and more general “national” interests, and “selfish” stakeholders, who act purely on the basis of private, commercial interests and/or “foreign” interests. This distinction usually characterises ‘negative’ takes on the ICT policy process, and emerges in particular from tensions between the interests specific actors are ‘ideally’ or ‘officially’ perceived to have (e.g. by government), and the interests they are perceived to ‘really’ have (by other actors, not excluding single government officials however). Stakeholder classification by interest is thus not necessarily as straightforward an operation as it may seem at first sight, and may in fact at times become the object of significant and rather explicit conflict.\textsuperscript{134}

Classification by Contribution

In this perspective, stakeholders are defined as such on the basis of what they can give, i.e. contribute, to the policy process. On this basis actors then often operate a distinction between “ideal” ICT policy stakeholders vs. “undesirable” ones.

“Ideal” stakeholders are those who can contribute to the ICT policy process in one or more of the following ways:

• by possessing and sharing specialist knowledge and data;
• by being in powerful or influential positions and “lending” their power to the process;
• by having significant experience of the Ugandan ICT sector and of ICTs in general, and sharing it with other participants;
• by being reliable and present;

\textsuperscript{134} Examples of how classification by interest is operated in practice are included in Section B-1.2.1 of Appendix III.
• by being in a position to mobilise and represent specific groups or sectors of society.

Undesirable stakeholders are, on the other hand, the incompetent, the unprepared, people who do not stick to the topic and thus “derail” the process\textsuperscript{135}, and/or people who fail to turn up as expected.

Being an “ideal” stakeholder in Ugandan ICT policy would therefore seem to require one to be able to do, or have done, quite a lot of work, and be in a position to dedicate plenty of time and resources to the process. Stakeholder definition by contribution seems in other words to be a particularly selective mechanism, which potentially reduces the number of individuals who ‘fit the bill’ to just a few.

I got a partial confirmation of this when I asked respondents, on the basis of preliminary observations and conversations\textsuperscript{136}, whether this may be the reason why ICT policymaking in Uganda seemed to be the prerogative of what could be defined as the “usual suspects”, intended as people whose names invariably appeared in documents describing the composition of ICT policy ‘task forces’ and/or in consultation lists: several respondents did in fact confirm (and at times justified) that when it came to ICT policy formulation, a small group of the “usual suspects” (an interesting category in itself) were usually involved\textsuperscript{137}.

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In Part II of this chapter we will see how stakeholder classification operations and the distinctions and categorisations that descend from them are variously employed by Ugandan actors in the construction of different, comprehensive discourses around national ICT policymaking.

In the next section, I discuss instead how not only stakeholders, but also policy processes can sometimes be the object of classification operations.

\textsuperscript{135} Itself another interesting transport-related metaphor – cf. 5.1.1.
\textsuperscript{136} In particular a conversation with a fellow researcher who already had an extensive experience of the ICT sector in the country.
\textsuperscript{137} Section B-1.2.2 of Appendix III contains several examples of how the categories of “desirable” vs. “undesirable” stakeholders are discursively constructed in practice, and a selection of actors’ responses when asked to consider the role of the “usual suspects” in Ugandan ICT policymaking.
5.1.2.2 Process Categorisation

Ugandan ICT policy actors also subject policy processes to classification and categorisation operations, and they do so in two key ways:

- On the basis of the perceived relationship/positioning between ICT policy process(es) and other policy processes (i.e. through ‘external’ categorisations in relation to context);
- On the basis of the stimuli and/or the inputs on which specific ICT policy processes are perceived to be based, or originate from (i.e. an ‘internal’, or ‘intra’-categorisation operation, distinguishing between different ways of making ICT policy).

5.1.2.2.1 Classification By Relative Positioning

One way in which the nature, or function, of ICT policy processes is discursively constructed and better delineated is through comparisons with, or juxtapositions to, other policy processes. These happen mainly along the following lines:

- **ICT Policy Processes vs. National Development Planning.** In this respect, ICT policy processes are most commonly described, especially in official documents, as an “integral part” of national development policy processes, and/or as something that “descends” from them. Sometimes however this linkage has been perceived as insufficient and problematic (for example in the context of the IICD-sponsored RT process involving the NPA).

- **ICT Policy Processes vs. Other Sectoral Processes.** In this case, ICT policy development is most commonly perceived as distinct but also related to (but not necessarily dependent on) policy processes in other sectors. In some cases the distinction is very weak (and the relationship conversely strong) – as was the case for example with the NICTPF process and the concurrent ‘information and communication’ policy process managed by the

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138 Which as seen in Section 4.3.3 was designed precisely to improve the integration between ICT policy and national development policy – and not without problems (cf. for example NPA 2005a: 3, Wasukira 2007).
DoI (which as we have seen were in fact eventually merged into a single process from 2000 onwards), or with relationships between the ‘framework’ policies like the NICTPF and ‘sub-sector’ (AKA “pillar”) processes such as telecom policy, broadcasting policy and so on prior to the creation of the MoICT. In other cases the distinction is clearer: ICT policy is for example often seen as ‘related’ to other, usually generic ‘framework’ policies and laws (e.g. taxation, or intellectual property legislation), or tightly linked with, but still distinct from, ‘sectoral’ ICT policies emanating from other Ministries (e.g. the sectoral policies produced by the MTTI, or the MoH).\(^{139}\)

In general, both official government documents and unofficial sources tend to portray national ICT policy processes as conceptually positioned below national development policymaking, alongside other ‘framework’ policies and laws, and in direct or indirect relationship with sectoral or sub-sectoral policies positioned below them – as portrayed in Figure 5.1.\(^{140}\)

A third way in which Ugandan ICT policy processes are differentiated from others is then in respect of ICT policy processes in other countries, variously perceived as being at more or less ‘advanced’ stages of ICT policy formulation. Of particular note in this respect are the frequent comparisons made by several actors with neighbouring Rwanda, invariably perceived to be at a more advanced and mature stage of policy formulation and implementation with regard to ICT.\(^{141}\)

\(^{139}\) Cf. Section 4.3.3.

\(^{140}\) Examples of how relative positioning in relation to national development processes and sectoral processes is operated in practice are provided in Sections B-2.1.1 and B-2.1.2 of Appendix III.

\(^{141}\) Cf. Appendix III, Sections B-2.1.3.
5.1.2.2.2 Classification By Stimulus: “Top-Down” Vs. “Bottom-Up”

A key way in which Ugandan ICT policy actors distinguish different types of policy process is on the basis of the *stimulus* from which processes are perceived to have originated from. Here, the differentiation is usually between so called “top-down” and “bottom-up” policy processes.

“Bottom-up” processes are those perceived to stem from stimuli originating from actors placed ‘outside’ government (e.g. from civil society, or – more commonly – from private sector operators). “Top-down” processes are instead those in which decisions and deliberations regarding the need to make policy and the identification of the issues at stake originate primarily from government.
Importantly, “bottom-up” processes are generally perceived as particularly desirable, while “top-down” processes are variously defined as undesirable but necessary at times, or as plainly undesirable.\footnote{142}

Another element worth noting is that in some cases actors suggested that these two ‘models’ or types of policy process are not necessarily mutually exclusive, and that in fact they actually seem to co-exist in the Ugandan context.\footnote{143}

\subsection*{5.1.2.2.3 Classification by Input: “Internal” Vs. “External” Inputs}

Actors sometimes distinguish between different types of ICT policy process based on whether they are resourced and administered primarily through the use of ‘internal’ human resources and knowledge inputs (e.g. through the formation of local task forces or “think tanks”, or the use of resources internal to government), or through reliance on ‘external’ ones (e.g. through the use of consultants or “facilitators”, who are often of foreign origin).

Processes based on ‘internal’ inputs are often perceived as preferable, as they are considered to be conducive to better ‘ownership’ of policy outcomes by relevant national stakeholders.

Some actors recognise however that ‘external’ inputs may sometimes help, or resign to the fact that the use of ‘external’ facilitators and/or consultants is in many cases an actual requirement for the provision of funding by donors in support of ICT policy development efforts.\footnote{144}

\footnote{142} Examples of this two-way characterisation of the ICT policy process and of the value attributed to either category are provided in Section B-2.2.1 of Appendix III.
\footnote{143} Cf. Appendix III, Section B-2.2.2.
\footnote{144} Cf. Appendix III, Section B-2.3.
5.1.3 Narratives

As explained in section 3.3.1.1, narratives are intended in this study as conceptual concatenations of ideas and events featuring a beginning, a middle, and an end, that serve the purpose of illustrating and explaining specific phenomena, and/or persuading people of something through exemplification or historical accounts (Roe 1991, Kaplan 1993, Gasper 1996a, Yanow 2000: 57, Kendall et al. 2006).

Based on this definition I have identified the following key narratives in Ugandan ICT policy discourse:

- a set of ‘foundational’ narratives on the origins of ICT policy in Uganda;
- a major narrative portraying the ICT policy process as a linear process
- two conflicting narratives on the participative nature of Ugandan ICT policy practice

5.1.3.1 ‘In the Beginning Was…’, or the Origins of ICT Policy in Uganda

One first set of narratives refers to the origins of ICT policy in Uganda, i.e. to what is perceived as having “kicked off” and motivated the NICTPF process and what followed it.

There are two key narratives in this respect: one based around a Presidential visit to Canada in 1997, and the other telling of the existence, prior to the NICTPF process, of “scattered initiatives” in relation to ICT and ICT policy that needed to be coordinated.

5.1.3.1.1 The President’s Visit to Canada

The first ‘foundational’ narrative on ICT policymaking in Uganda can be summarised as follows:
In June 1997, President Museveni travelled to Toronto, Canada to attend the first ‘Global Knowledge for Development’ (GKD) conference as a guest of honour. At the conference, the Ugandan President gave a speech on the use of knowledge as a developmental tool, and invited the international community to assist Uganda in applying ICTs and traditional knowledge systems to socio-economic development. This invitation was taken up by a number of international donors, who started supporting ICT-related projects in Uganda. The government soon realised that it was necessary to have a national policy to regulate all these initiatives, and mandated the UNCST to develop such a policy (New Vision 1997, UNCST 2000c, 2000b, 2002b).

Key elements and variants of this narrative can be found in a plethora of official documents and have emerged also during field interviews.

In chronological terms, the narrative is found in particular in documents dating back to the early years of the history of ICT policy in Uganda, suggesting that its function may have in fact been specifically that of legitimising the policy effort and the involvement of specific institutions during the policy formulation process, rather than upon or after its completion. More recently, the ‘Presidential’ narrative was in fact exposed by some of those who had contributed to its diffusion as having a somewhat ‘mythical’ character.

5.1.3.1.2 The Narrative of ‘Scattered Initiatives’

This second ‘foundational’ narrative on ICT policy in Uganda I identified is in some ways connected to the first, in that it refers to the existence of “scattered
initiatives”¹⁴⁹ in relation to ICT policy requiring coordination, which as we have seen are mentioned also as part of the narrative discussed in the previous section.

This narrative is nevertheless presented separately here because it can also be found in variants that do not make reference to the President’s visit to Canada – i.e. it sometimes stands, self-contained, also on its own.

The “scattered initiatives” narrative is very effectively summarised in the following extract from a workshop report produced as part of the NICTPF process:

“[Following the President’s invitation to support Uganda in the promotion of ICTs], a number of international organisations and development partners started supporting initiatives for ICT development in different sectors. This, coupled with the liberalisation of the [ICT] sector, has led to rapid expansion of the ICT industry in the country. A number of institutions and other stakeholders interested in diverse aspects of ICTs are developing different approaches including their own institutional policies to facilitate their use of ICTs for development. These developments have accelerated the need for a national policy to direct the use and application of ICTs for our national development” (UNCST 2000b: 2)¹⁵⁰

Implicit ending: the NICTPF provided such a ‘coordinated’ policy and framework.

[Additional ending: the creation of the MoICT in 2006 completed this process]¹⁵¹

Again also in this case there are elements that suggest that this narrative has a somewhat mythical character:

- on one hand a number of sources suggest for example that the “scattered” ICT policy initiatives mentioned in the narrative existed also prior to the President’s visit to Canada, and that these were in most cases ‘indigenous’

¹⁴⁹ As effectively described by a respondent (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 November 2008).
¹⁵⁰ For other examples of the articulation of this narrative see Section C-1.2 in Appendix III.
¹⁵¹ Data substantiating the conceptualisation of both these ‘ endings’ is provided in Section C-1.2.2 of Appendix III.
to Uganda (therefore putting in doubt the *beginning* of the story in its various versions)\textsuperscript{152};

- on the other hand, the (happy) *ending(s)* of the narrative (order being brought by the NICTPF and/or the creation of the MoICT) is (are) also contrasted by a number of sources lamenting the persistence of lack of coordination with regard to ICT policy even after the NICTPF was approved and/or the MoICT was created\textsuperscript{153}.

Also in this case the narrative seems to have served the function of aligning disparate actors towards one goal (the production of a single, coordinated ICT policy framework, and the ‘order’ that would follow from it).

### 5.1.3.1.3 “Minor” Narratives About Donors

It’s interesting to note how donors do not seem to play a particularly active role in the two stories mentioned above. Further investigation of this aspect has in fact enabled me to detect two additional, ‘minor’ narratives on the role of donors in the ‘birth’ of ICT policy in Uganda, both of which tend to downplay the importance of donors in this respect, portraying donors as having had either a positive but relatively passive role, or an actually negative one. The two narratives could be summarised as follows:

**Donors as Passive, Non-Intrusive Supporters of ICT Policy Initiatives\textsuperscript{154}**

| The government realised there was a need for a policy in a given area; it asked for support from development partner(s); development partner(s) responded positively to the request; so the government was enabled to develop policy as intended, with support from development partner(s). |

\textsuperscript{152} Cf. Appendix III, Section C-1.2.1.

\textsuperscript{153} Cf. Appendix III, Section C-1.2.3.

\textsuperscript{154} Examples provided in Section C-1.3.1 of Appendix III.
Donors as Those Responsible for “Scattered Initiatives” 155

Donors started pushing several initiatives in relation to ICTs and ICT policy; this led to “scattered initiatives”, and also caused difficulties with formulating a coordinated, nationally owned ICT policy; in the end the Ugandan government managed however to prevail.

The two narratives differ in terms of how / by whom they are articulated in practice: the first, ‘positive’ one is actively constructed also with the collaboration of donors156 (although a number of documents produced by donors also contradict it at times)157; the second, ‘negative’ one appears instead (unsurprisingly) to be constructed exclusively with local, ‘indigenous’ inputs.

The function of both these narratives seems to be common, however, in that both of them tend to portray the Ugandan ICT policy process as (ideally or ‘really’) ‘nationally owned’, and therefore legitimate in terms of outcomes. They are therefore in many ways compatible with the two key foundational narratives highlighted above.

155 Examples provided in Section C-1.3.3 of Appendix III.
156 A particularly telling example of how donors contribute to the construction of this narrative is provided in Section C-1.3.1.1 of Appendix III.
157 Cf. Section C-1.3.2 of Appendix III.
5.1.3.2 The “Linear Process” Narrative

The narrative that emerged most clearly from document analysis and field interviews tells of the ICT policy process as a *linear process* made up of different, clearly identifiable steps aligned in a specific sequence.

### 5.1.3.2.1 Key Elements

Roughly speaking, the ‘linear process’ (LP) story goes as follows:

| The ICT policy process starts with preliminary research on a specific ICT-related subject, either directly by a task force/working group or indirectly through the use of consultants; a ‘concept paper’ is then drafted on the basis of this research, and used as the basis for a first round of consultations with relevant, ‘key’ stakeholders; following these consultations a first draft policy document is produced, and submitted to relevant fora for wider consultation; the results of public consultation may inform additional, subsequent drafts that are again subjected to consultation; once consultation is complete a final draft of the policy is eventually realised and then presented in one or more public fora for final discussion and validation/approval; the validated, final policy document is then formally submitted to the Ministry (or equivalent government agency) that commissioned the process or is responsible for the area; the Ministry then arranges for the tabling to Cabinet of the policy document, requesting approval by Cabinet members; if officially endorsed and approved by Cabinet, the policy document may then in some cases be also submitted for approval by Parliament. |

The LP narrative is particularly popular and widespread, and is found both in *prescriptive* descriptions of the policy process and in *ex post* reconstructions of specific ICT policy making efforts.

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158 Sometimes referred to also as a ‘background paper’ or a ‘reference paper’.

159 See Section C-2.1 of Appendix III.
For analytical purposes, the narrative can be represented also with a simplified diagram, in which each of the phases highlighted above corresponds to a discrete, sequential step in the process (Figure 5.2).
(brackets) denote the optional character of specific steps in the process.

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160 (brackets) denote the optional character of specific steps in the process.
5.1.3.2.2 Controversial Points

A closer examination of both official and unofficial accounts of how specific ICT policy processes unfolded in Uganda in the period under analysis reveals the existence of two ‘passages’ or points in the LP narrative that are the object of significant controversy: consultation phases, and endings. In both cases the controversy stems from disagreements regarding whether such passages actually take (or took) place, and how. This has the effect of endangering the integrity and the ‘flow’ of the narrative and of exposing some of its mythical aspects.

Consultation Phases

In some cases policy actors deem consultation phases to be or have been ineffective, mainly because consultation is or has been insufficient, or superficial. This is sometimes articulated through requests for consultation exercises to be repeated (as was the case with the NICTPF process, for example)\(^{161}\) - effectively breaking down the supposed linearity of the process – or, more commonly, through simple but significant expressions of frustration and/or resignation\(^{162}\).

In other cases consultation activities are instead experienced as a hindrance, in that they are perceived to ‘slow down’ the policy process excessively (the implication being that they should be sped up, if not – but this is very much a sort of ‘verboten’ taboo - skipped altogether)\(^{163}\).

The End

The most controversial aspect/passage of the LP narrative seems to be its end, however.

\(^{161}\) See Section C-2.2.1.1 of Appendix III.

\(^{162}\) I will return to issues regarding the perceived nature and quality of consultation later in the text, as part of a discussion of narratives on participation (Section 5.1.3.3). For examples of expressions of dissatisfaction with consultation phases see Appendix III, Section C-2.2.1.2.

\(^{163}\) Cf. Section C-2.2.1.3 in Appendix III.
In the case of the NICTPF, for example, I was able to detect the existence in Ugandan ICT policy discourse of the following three quite different and fundamentally contradictory versions of how the process eventually ended, all articulated after the process had supposedly come to an end:

- the NICTPF was approved by Cabinet and Parliament in 2003 and is thus a fully valid policy framework
- the NICTPF was approved only by Cabinet, and is therefore not valid/legal because it wasn’t approved also by Parliament
- the NICTPF wasn’t approved even by Cabinet; it is still just a draft\textsuperscript{164}.

In the case of the TPR, we are instead in presence of what many consider as an unexpected ending (the ‘blockage’ of the new telecom policy by Cabinet), followed by a resolution that amounted to the skipping of the ‘normal’ stages of the policy process (the emanation of Ministerial Guidelines)\textsuperscript{165} in order to obtain the same policy goals (the liberalisation of the telecom sector)\textsuperscript{166}.

5.1.3.2.3 Closure vs. Openness

A key characteristic of the LP story is that it depicts a process that alternates phases that are ‘closed’ to the public (e.g. preliminary research, drafting or tabling to Cabinet – all usually undertaken by a restricted number of actors internal or very close to government) to phases that are more ‘open’ to it (e.g. consultation and validation phases).

The existence of ‘closed’ phases of the policy process is usually justified on the basis of the need to reduce the complexity and potential ‘messiness’ of the policy process, and allowing the process to progress as intended\textsuperscript{167}.

\textsuperscript{164} See Section C-2.2.2.1 of Appendix III.
\textsuperscript{165} Cf. Section 4.3.3.
\textsuperscript{166} See Section C-2.2.2.2 of Appendix III.
\textsuperscript{167} Cf. Appendix III, Section C-2.3 for some examples.
Closer examination of the ‘controversial points’ described in the previous section reveals however that such points, or passages, tend to coincide with parts of the process that are normally closed to the inputs of the general public and taken forward by relatively few, key actors involved in the LP story.

In other words, the LP story seems to have some clear ‘protagonists’, whose role in determining how the story unfolds seems to be particularly important – and it’s this role that is usually contested in critiques of the narrative.

For reasons that will become clear in the next section, these ‘protagonists’ of the LP story could be described as ‘transliminal actors’.

5.1.3.2.4 Transliminal Actors

‘Transliminal actors’ are to be intended in the context of this research as actors perceived to be responsible for ‘pushing’ the policy process across the thresholds that separate and distinguish its different phases.\(^{168}\)

There appear to be three main categories of transliminal actor in the context under analysis: drafters, consultants, and Ministers in their relation with the Cabinet.

Drafters

‘Drafters’ are to be intended here as those responsible for closing the consultation phases of the policy process and summarising the inputs of ‘stakeholders’ into policy drafts, ready to be pushed through to the next stage (further consultation, or validation and/or approval).

Several documents suggest that drafters are perceived as particularly influential actors, and at times their work appears to be put under particularly close scrutiny and criticised by other policy actors.\(^{169}\).

\(^{168}\) In this context the term ‘transliminal’ doesn’t therefore have any connotations associated with parapsychology.

\(^{169}\) Cf. Section C-2.4.1 of Appendix III.
Consultants

In the context under analysis, consultants are often described as (ideally) ‘neutral’ actors, employed in most cases to ‘speed up’ specific stages of the policy process\textsuperscript{170}. They are normally involved in ‘closed’ phases of the policy process, such as preliminary research phases (during which they ‘frame’ policy issues before the process is open to wider consultation)\textsuperscript{171}, or drafting phases (when doubling up as ‘drafters’). In some cases, however, they can also be responsible for ‘open’ phases of the ICT policy process – for example when they act as ‘facilitators’ in consultation workshops or similar activities, again acting in a supposedly ‘neutral’ manner. The supposed ‘neutrality’ of consultants and of ‘experts’ in general is nevertheless sometimes put in doubt by other policy actors\textsuperscript{172}.

Ministers and the Cabinet

Ministers and the Cabinet are responsible for taking forward the ‘closed’ phases of the policy process located at the ‘end’ of the LP story.

Their role is an exclusive one, in that they cannot normally be bypassed or substituted by others\textsuperscript{173}. The ‘happy ending’ of the linear policy process is thus perceived to be dependent on their ability and ‘power’, which in turn are often seen as very much dependent on their individual character: this can make them the object of very targeted, personalised criticisms\textsuperscript{174}.

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In Part II of this chapter we will see how the LP story constitutes an extraordinarily important ‘building block’ in the construction of specific discourses around ICT policymaking in Uganda, and how transliminal actors not only play a key part in

\textsuperscript{170} Cf. Appendix III, Section C-2.4.2.1 and C-2.4.2.3.
\textsuperscript{171} Cf. Appendix III, Section C-2.4.2.2.
\textsuperscript{172} Cf. Appendix III, Section C-2.4.2.3.
\textsuperscript{173} Cf. Appendix III, Section C-2.4.3.1.
\textsuperscript{174} Cf. Appendix III, Section C-2.4.3.2.
this story, but also play a key role in ‘maintaining’ this story and the discourses that depend upon it alive and – most importantly - dominant.

5.1.3.3 Narratives Around Participation

The third set of narratives around ICT policymaking in Uganda emerging from my study focuses on public participation. There are two key narratives in this respect:

- A ‘major’ narrative depicting Ugandan ICT policymaking as highly participative
- A ‘minor’ narrative that represents a sort of inversion of the ‘major’ one.

5.1.3.3.1 The Positive Narrative on Participation

This narrative could be summarised as follows:

Right from the early years ICT policy formulation in Uganda has been characterised by a high level of public participation. All relevant stakeholders have traditionally been involved at relevant stages of the policy process, through a variety of channels. As a result, Uganda has traditionally formulated realistic, nationally owned and widely accepted national ICT policies.

Elements of this narrative are found in several official government documents, but at times also in documents produced by non-governmental entities (donors in particular). See the examples provided in Section C-3.1.1 of Appendix III.

Some variants of the narrative notably indicate also the reasons why Uganda is said to have pursued and be pursuing a particularly ‘participative’ course of action in respect of ICT policy - the most common being:

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175 See the examples provided in Section C-3.1.1 of Appendix III.
• the conviction that participation increases national ‘ownership’ of policy, rendering the latter more ‘adequate’ to the country’s needs (i.e. a rational, ‘means to an end’ reason)\textsuperscript{176}
• the existence of an established tradition of participatory policymaking in Uganda, inaugurated by the advent of the NRM regime (i.e. prior to the ICT policy era), which makes participation in Ugandan ICT policymaking a ‘natural’ choice, in line with the Government’s ‘way of working’ (in other words, a political reason)\textsuperscript{177}.

‘Qualifications’

The ‘positive’ narrative on participation is sometimes ‘qualified’ by some of its proponents, i.e. some of its aspects are put into context and/or diminished in strength, without leading however to the complete refutation of the story:

• In some cases, actors point out for example that the level of participation has improved/increased over time (contradicting somewhat the idea that ICT policy had been highly participative right from the very start)
• In other cases, actors admit that participation is in fact synecdochic rather than ‘full’, i.e. that it happens through the representation of many (or ‘all’) by a few
• In yet other cases, actors offer a somewhat more cynical, ‘political’ view, suggesting that participation does take place, but that the reasons why people participate are linked to personal or institutional convenience rather than a desire to produce ‘adequate’, widely ‘owned’ policy\textsuperscript{178}.

5.1.3.3.2 The Inverted, Opposite Narrative

I define this second narrative as ‘minor’ firstly because it is less widespread, but in particular because it seems to be constructed on / derived from the first one, of which it represents a specular ‘inversion’ or refutation.

\textsuperscript{176} See Appendix III, Section C-3.1.2.1.
\textsuperscript{177} Cf. Section C-3.1.2.2, Appendix III.
\textsuperscript{178} Examples of how the narrative is ‘qualified’ in practice are provided in Section C-3.1.3 of Appendix III.
The narrative can be summarised as follows:

Right from the start ICT policy formulation has never been particularly participative in Uganda. Consultation has been at best superficial, and at worst non-existent, and the representation of citizens' points of views is too often the prerogative of too small and incestuous a group of people (the 'usual suspects'). As a result, the 'real' level of national ownership in Ugandan ICT policymaking is low, and the policies produced do not meet the needs of relevant stakeholders.

This story, or version of events, is articulated in particular in non-governmental contexts such as civil society or the private sector. In some notable cases, however, some versions of it emerge also in governmental contexts.

The narrative is in particular centred around two core argumentative elements, or 'claims':

- that the consultation efforts undertaken by government in relation to ICT policy are minimal and/or merely formulaic and thus do not guarantee a chance for 'real' participation\textsuperscript{179}
- and/or that the synecdochic participation arrangements mentioned above are often inappropriate for the purpose, as they tend to lead to the formation of unaccountable 'inner circles' of policy actors, exposing the policy process to 'hijacking' by a few\textsuperscript{180}.

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As we will see in Part II of this chapter, like the LP ‘story’ these two narratives on participation represent key ‘building blocks’ in the construction of relatively complex and articulate discourses around Ugandan ICT policymaking.

\textsuperscript{179} See examples in Section C-3.2.1 of Appendix III.
\textsuperscript{180} Cf. Section C-3.2.2, Appendix III.
In the next section I review findings in relation to a second category of these ‘building blocks’: non-linguistic, or ‘material’, process-related artefacts, as interpreted by policy actors.

### 5.2 Non-Linguistic Artefacts

As discussed in section 2.3.3, actors’ interpretations of the policy process are arguably built also through the exchange, manipulation and interpretation of non-linguistic, or ‘material’, policy- or process-related artefacts. In this respect, Yanow suggests that interpretive policy research should thus focus for example also on how key non-linguistic artefacts such as objects, spaces and acts relating to policy or the policy process are experienced and interpreted by policy actors in a given context (Yanow 1993, 1995). In this section I review key findings in relation to this particular aspect of my analytical work\(^\text{181}\).

#### 5.2.1 Objects

There are two main categories of object that feature regularly in actors’ descriptions of national ICT policymaking in Uganda:

- **Textual objects.** i.e. objects designed primarily to carry/convey information in the context of the policy process
- **Non-textual objects and resources,** i.e. objects considered as necessary to administer and support the policy process in ‘practical’ or ‘material’ terms (e.g. IT equipment, stationery, fuel, means of transport *et al.*).

##### 5.2.1.1 Textual Objects

#### 5.2.1.1 ‘Debate Framers’

When I asked respondents what resources and/or materials they considered as necessary or essential in order to undertake ICT policymaking work, in several cases the first response was ‘research’ or, more generally, ‘information’ - for

\(^{181}\) The principles of which have been illustrated in section 3.3.1.2.
example on the status of ICT in Uganda, and/or on the policies adopted by other
countries in this respect\textsuperscript{182}. The provision of preliminary, contextual information
designed to ‘frame’ and orient policy debate seemed in other words to be
perceived by many as paramount to ICT policy formulation.

The form through which preliminary, ‘framing’ information is most often conveyed
is that of the ‘reference paper’, or ‘background paper’ - the production of which is,
as seen previously, generally considered a key step, or episode, in the ‘linear
process’ story\textsuperscript{183}. In some cases, framing information is conveyed however also
through shorter, ‘digested’ documents, such as ‘executive summaries’ or ‘aide-
memoires’, ostensibly designed for those considered not to be inclined, or not to
have the time, to read long texts\textsuperscript{184}.

The perceived function of textual objects such as reference papers and aide-
memoires seems to be in particular that of “bring[ing] all participants to the same
starting level” (de Jager 2005a) in terms of their understanding of policy issues
prior to consultation and deliberation. Preliminary ‘debate framers’ seem in other
words to fulfil a sort of ‘normalising’ function in respect of the policy process, by
‘levelling up’ the knowledge of actual or intended policy actors in relation to the
issues at stake.

Further, mid-process ‘debate framing’ is then usually entrusted to policy drafts,
which often contain sections circumscribing the boundaries of a policy issue and
justifying the need to make policy about it, and which are more generally designed
to capture the state and progress of specific policy debates at given points in
time\textsuperscript{185}.

The importance of ‘debate framing’ textual objects such as reference papers and
policy drafts becomes apparent in particular when their distribution and
accessibility is experienced as problematic. In some cases actors lament for
example that specific ‘framing’ documents (policy drafts in particular) have not

\textsuperscript{182} See section Appendix III, D-1.1.1 for some examples extracted from field interviews.
\textsuperscript{183} Cf. 5.3.1.2.
\textsuperscript{184} See section D-1.1.2 of Appendix II for some examples.
\textsuperscript{185} Examples in this sense are illustrated in section D-1.1.3 of Appendix III.
been distributed as widely or in as timely a manner as they should have been, or that the format of these documents is not particularly user-friendly (e.g. they are too long, or too complex), meaning that in most cases they will remain unread. Importantly, these shortcomings have the effect, in actors’ views, of reducing the chances of meaningful participation by the public in policy formulation.\textsuperscript{186}

5.2.1.1.2 Process-Related Textual Objects

Alongside references to ‘debate framing’ objects such as those discussed in the previous section, verbal and written descriptions of Ugandan ICT policy activity often contain references to what could be defined as process-related textual objects, intended as texts designed explicitly to define and/or prescribe how ICT policy is or should be made, and how policy processes should unfold in practice.

With the exception of those emerging from interviews with local informants, most of the linguistic artefacts discussed in section 5.1 are in fact contained in, and conveyed through, textual objects of this kind - which include:

- Documents that enumerate and describe the different ‘stages’, or ‘phases’ of ICT policy processes, either \textit{ex post} or \textit{a priori}: these include, amongst others, ‘guideline’ documents and ‘roadmaps’ for policy formulation produced by the government and/or by donors, project proposals emanating from donors, speeches and presentations made by policy actors on the subject of the policy process, and sections of policy drafts or other documents that ‘reconstruct’ the policy formulation or consultation ‘steps’ undertaken up to a specific moment in time\textsuperscript{187}.

- Documents that attribute \textit{roles and responsibilities} to specific categories of policy actor in the context of ICT policy processes: these include for example ‘stakeholder engagement’ documents such as those produced in support of the TPR process, but also apparently simpler and merely ‘bureaucratic’ textual objects, such as contracts, memoranda of understanding, and ‘terms of reference’ (ToR) documents, which may at

\textsuperscript{186} Cf. section D-1.1.4 of Appendix III.
\textsuperscript{187} Cf. Section D-1.2.1 of Appendix III.
first sight seem of secondary importance but which according to some actors actually go a long way in shaping experiences and perceptions of the policy process.\textsuperscript{188}

- Documents that specify general, government-wide (as opposed to ICT policy-specific) rules and regulations regarding policy formulation – for example ‘checklists’ for the production of Cabinet memos, or documents detailing the rules that govern the work of Parliament and of its committees.\textsuperscript{189}

In analytical terms, the textual objects described above have a number of things in common:

- With the exception of speeches and presentations (and differently from the ‘debate framers’ described in the previous section), most of them are quite clearly ‘internal’ documents, i.e. documents intended mainly for distribution to, and fruition by, actors who are directly responsible for managing and/or providing support to the policy process ‘behind the scenes’ (in particular, donors and governmental actors).

- Most of them (again with the exception of presentations and speeches) are produced collectively, through interactions between government officials and/or between the latter and representatives of donor agencies.

- In many of these documents, donor prescriptions emerge much more clearly than in other policy-related documents (e.g. the ‘debate framing’ documents described previously).

With respect to the latter aspect (inputs by donors), it’s also worth noting that - with the exception perhaps of the documents produced by the UCC’s TPR working group - process-related documents produced with the involvement of donors and CSOs, or directly by them, contain significantly more detail in terms of the specification of roles and responsibilities and the identification of process phases than documents produced by the government.

\textsuperscript{188} Cf. Section D-1.2.2 of Appendix III.
\textsuperscript{189} Cf. Section D-1.2.3 of Appendix III.
In this respect, process-related documents produced by the government and generally intended for relatively wide consumption (e.g. speeches, or policy drafts) seem to constitute a sort of official, generic foreground in relation to descriptions and/or prescriptions regarding the policy process, while more detailed, operationally-oriented descriptions and specifications of roles, responsibilities and deliverables in relation to ICT policy formulation are developed in a much less public background, populated by ‘bureaucratic’ documents such as ToRs, contracts and progress reports, in which the role of donors, and – to a more limited extent – that of local CSOs and NGOs, seems to be particularly important and decisive\textsuperscript{190}. In Part II of this chapter we will see how a significant portion of this ‘background’ work is kept ‘out of view’ in some discourses on Ugandan ICT policymaking, and brought to the fore in others.

5.2.1.2 Non-Textual Objects and Resources

Documentary analysis and field interviews also revealed the existence of a third key category of enabling objects, or ‘tools of the trade’, perceived by policy actors as necessary, if not essential, for ICT policy activity: the non-textual, material objects and resources necessary to support the communication and interaction activities at the basis of policy practice.

Most prominent amongst these are objects relating to transport, logistics, and document production and distribution, such as:

- **Vehicles** and **fuel**, necessary to attend meetings, undertake field missions, or even just transfer documents between different governmental offices
- **Meeting venues** and ‘refreshments’ (i.e. catering services), necessary for the organisation of meetings
- **Stationery, IT equipment, and office equipment**, necessary to produce and distribute textual objects
- **Access to the internet**, for communication and research purposes

\textsuperscript{190} Cf. Section D-1.2.4 of Appendix III.
• Cash, necessary to pay monetary allowances to participants in policy-related meetings\(^{191}\)

It goes without saying that owning or accessing material resources of this kind requires significant financial investment, not only on the part of government but also on the part of other categories of policy actor (e.g. consultants, or CSOs/NGOs)\(^{192}\).

In this respect, a number of actors suggest that the relative scarcity of financial resources available locally forces Ugandan policy actors (government in particular) to rely quite extensively on donor support. This engenders according to some a certain level of dependency on donors and on the support they provide in relation to the policy process\(^{193}\).

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There are three conclusions it seems safe to draw with regard to the ‘enabling objects’ of Ugandan ICT policymaking:

• They are quite variable in nature, including as they do both textual objects, and a relatively extensive range of non-textual objects and resources
• Access to either category of these objects is at times perceived as difficult and problematic
• Their production (in the case of textual objects), accessibility and distribution are often made possible, or at least easier, through donor interventions.

The latter conclusion in particular suggests that objects are an area or vehicle through which donors are particularly likely to leave a mark in terms of the shaping of conceptions and interpretations of how ICT policy processes are supposed to unfold. As we will see in Part II of this chapter, this is an important factor when it

\(^{191}\) Data supporting these findings is included and/or referenced in section D-2.1 of Appendix III.
\(^{192}\) Cf. Appendix III, D-2.2.
\(^{193}\) Cf. Appendix III, section D-2.3.
comes to the evaluation of the nature and the composition of the discourse coalitions at play in the Ugandan ICT policy context.

In the next section I turn my attention to a second key category of process-related artefact: the spaces of Ugandan ICT policy.

5.2.2 Spaces

As discussed in sections 2.3.3. and 3.3.1.2, spatial perceptions and experiences can be an important component of interpretations of the policy process. What is meant by space in the context of this study comprises the physical spaces associated with ICT policy (e.g. meeting rooms, workshop venues and the buildings that contain them), and the virtual spaces of ICT policy (e.g. discussion lists, or web fora).

A brief description of the key spaces of Ugandan ICT policy is contained in section E-1 of Appendix III. Here, I summarise findings from an analysis of the relationships between these spaces as they are experienced and perceived by local policy actors.

5.2.2.1 Kampala Vs. “Upcountry”

The first thing that emerged quite clearly from an analysis of the spaces of Ugandan ICT policy is that, with the exception of a few venues used occasionally for workshop meetings, practically all the spaces associated with ICT policy activity are in Kampala, the capital of Uganda – and in particular in what is actually a very small section of the city, corresponding to the central business district, where many government offices and the Parliament are located.

Central Kampala seems to represent in other words the nerve centre of ICT policy formulation in Uganda, while little or no activities relating to ICT policy appear to take place in “upcountry” Uganda.

194 Cf. Figures III.8, III.9 and III.10 in section E-2.1 of Appendix III.

195 A common expression in Ugandan speak, basically embracing everything that is located outside Kampala.
Such a ‘centralised’ arrangement is usually justified on the basis of its practicality: organising policy consultation activities upcountry is difficult and expensive, and the actors/stakeholders that ‘count’ are all based in Kampala anyway\textsuperscript{196}.

Several actors challenged this view, however, maintaining that the centralisation of ICT policy activities in the capital city means that the voices and the opinions of rural or semi-urban populations with regard of ICT policy are often (and wrongly) not fully (if at all) taken into account, leading in the long run to a significant and inappropriate ‘urban bias’ in ICT policy formulation\textsuperscript{197}.

This is not to say that the ICT-related needs of those who live outside Kampala are completely and wilfully ignored in the context of the policy process. In order for such needs to be taken into account, however, the voices and opinions of stakeholders residing outside the capital, and in particular their feedback regarding proposed ICT policy, need to be in some way ‘brought’ to Kampala and into the policy process. This usually happens by way of representation – i.e. through the representation of the points of view of stakeholders who are based outside Kampala by policy actors operating in/out of the capital city.

Interestingly, this representational or ‘spokesperson’ role in respect of rural or semi-urban communities seems to be the prerogative of non-governmental actors, such as:

- \textit{National CSOs/NGOs}, which regularly undertake consultation efforts in relation to ICT policy with extra-urban stakeholders, either through workshops and meetings held upcountry, or – more commonly – via email discussion lists and online fora.
- \textit{Consultants}, who as part of ICT policy-related assignments are sometimes tasked with undertaking surveys of ICT usage and/or needs and requirements at national level, and who as part of this effort conduct survey activities also outside Kampala.

\textsuperscript{196} See Appendix III, E-2.2.
\textsuperscript{197} Cf. Appendix III, E-2.3.
• *Parliamentarians*, who by definition are supposed to act as representatives of people from different constituencies and regions in the country

• The *media*, which sometimes pick up comments made in virtual spaces such as email discussion lists and online fora and give them a wider echo in the wider virtual spaces they construct and represent, thus bringing them to the attention of government officials and other policymakers.

The job of representing and integrating the interests and the needs of ICT policy stakeholders located outside Kampala in the context of the policy process seems in other words to be consistently ‘outsourced’ by government to non-governmental actors and entities, in the conviction that such actors and entities can “reach those parts [of society] that government cannot reach”\(^{198}\) (either due to perceived lack of resources or lack of time)\(^{199}\).

Finally, it should be noted that although ICT policy activities seem to take place nearly exclusively in the capital, there are in fact a few rare occasions in which these activities do take place outside Kampala.

In these cases, however, ‘outside Kampala’ usually means within easy reach of the capital, or very far from it.

With regard to the former, documentary analysis shows for example that on a few occasions ICT policy-related meetings and workshops have also been held in towns located on the outskirts of Kampala or not too far beyond (for example Entebbe, Seeta and Mukono), rather than in the capital. The reasons for these occasional sorties into (nearby) upcountry Uganda seem however to lie mainly in the expectation that this would improve attendance and participation by busy government officials and other key stakeholders, who may instead be easily distracted or delayed by other commitments if the meeting took place in the capital

\(^{198}\) Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 November 2008.

\(^{199}\) Documentary and interview extracts corroborating these findings are included in section E-2.4 of Appendix III.
city (in other words, such occasions are not usually considered as opportunities for the increased involvement of upcountry stakeholders in ICT policy formulation). With regard to the latter, in some cases Ugandan ICT policy actors happen to meet, by chance or design, also on the fringes of international ICT policy-related events, such as the WSIS, or ITU conferences: obviously however this too doesn’t really represent an opportunity for upcountry stakeholders to provide inputs into policymaking. In this respect, it’s interesting to note however that some non-governmental actors perceive international venues to provide opportunities for less structured and more equitable interaction and discussion on national ICT policy issues, or simply to gain better exposure as national ICT policy actors, than meetings held in Kampala.

### 5.2.2.3 Government Vs. “Outside”

Within the heavily concentrated spatial network in which ICT policy activities take place - located as we have seen in Kampala’s central business district - it is then possible to distinguish between two different categories of space: spaces located within government, and spaces located outside them.

‘Governmental’ spaces include boardrooms, meeting rooms and other types of office or meeting space located inside ministerial or parliamentary buildings and premises. This is where the ‘closed’ phases of ‘linear’ policy processes usually take place, and where the ‘transliminal actors’ described previously in this study do most of their work.

The spaces located outside government coincide instead with spaces where the more ‘open’ phases of the policy process usually take place - e.g. public consultation workshops and events. Extra-governmental spaces include in particular physical spaces such as conference venues and meeting rooms in high-

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200 See section E-2.5.1 of Appendix III.
201 Cf. section E-2.5.2 of Appendix III.
202 Cf. section 5.1.3.2.4.
end hotels across the capital, and virtual spaces such as email discussion lists (usually hosted and run by CSOs and other NGOs)\textsuperscript{203}.

Access to governmental spaces is usually controlled relatively tightly, and subject to certain conditions - which for non-governmental actors usually include having an appointment, undergoing thorough security checks, and sometimes also leaving a form of identification at the reception desk.

Access to spaces located outside government is instead relatively easier, mainly due to their fundamentally ‘public’ nature - but it is still subject to particular conditions. Hiring rooms and catering services in executive hotels implies for example the availability of significant financial resources, due to the high tariffs charged – meaning that only selected actors may be in the position to command the resources necessary to organise events in these spaces. As in other African capitals, access to Kampala’s executive hotels is also often subject to security checks, and generally requires individuals to be dressed in suitably smart or at least ‘acceptable’ attire. Access to virtual spaces such as email distribution lists generally presupposes on the other hand the capacity to use email and the availability of internet access – which as seen in Chapter 4 are still not particularly widespread in Uganda\textsuperscript{204}.

On the basis of these findings, it could be said that the ‘linear process’ narrative discussed in section 5.1.3.2 is in a sense also very much a story of iterative transitions between these two types of space. In this perspective, the existence of relatively clear distinctions and – importantly – physical separations between these two types of space could conversely be interpreted as one of the ways in which distinctions between the ‘closed’ phases and the ‘open’ phases of the policy process are reinforced.

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\textsuperscript{203} For examples of the distinctions between these two types of space on the basis of the type of activity usually held in each, see section E-3.1 of Appendix III.

\textsuperscript{204} Notes from personal experience and interview extracts or documentary data corroborating these findings are included in section E-3.2 of Appendix III.
In Part II of this chapter we will see how spatial considerations are an additional factor determining the shape and the nature of the discourse coalitions behind the different discourses on ICT policy identified through this study.

5.2.3 Acts

As mentioned in section 3.3.1.2, the meanings attached by actors to particular individual or collective policy-related acts also play a role in actors’ perceptions and experiences of the policy process.

In this section, I summarise the findings from my analysis of key acts considered by Ugandan ICT policy actors to be of particular relevance in the context of the policy process, and briefly discuss also the nature and value of apparently more ‘peripheral’ acts in this context.

5.2.3.1 “Workshops”

The act that features most prominently and most frequently in descriptions of (or prescriptions on) the ICT policy process is the workshop, commonly intended as a (variably) ‘open’ meeting between policy stakeholders and governmental authorities, in which participants discuss policy issues and formulate recommendations, and in which government may at times commit to particular courses of action.

As seen in section 5.1.3.2, for example, consultative workshops and other types of public consultation fora are for example considered an integral part of ‘linear’ policy processes. A number of sources also describe workshops as ‘milestones’ or ‘turning points’, and/or consider them a ‘requirement’ of policy processes. The perceived ubiquity and high frequency of workshops in the context of ICT policy processes are in fact such that they sometimes become the object of negative comments, complaints, and even jokes\textsuperscript{205}.

\textsuperscript{205} Cf. section F-1.1, Appendix III.
The most common stated or ‘official’ aims of consultative workshops are the following ones:

- The *discussion and identification of issues* meriting policy attention in a participative and open manner.
- The *building of consensus around, and creation of ‘buy-in’ to, policy drafts and other products or phases of the policy process*.
- The opportunity for participants to *influence the outcomes of policy processes*, through suggestions of amendments to policy drafts and requests for the inclusion of issues that may have been overlooked\(^{206}\).

It’s easy to see how all the stated, official objectives summarised above are connected to the concept of participation. Workshops are in other words conceived, at least officially, as acts designed to provide opportunities for key stakeholders and the wider public to participate in ICT policy making.

As evidenced in our discussion on narratives regarding participation, however (cf. section 5.1.3.3), according to several actors the official aims listed above often remain unachieved\(^{207}\).

What seems to be achieved instead through workshops is, according to many actors, one or more of a number of other, unofficial or ‘secondary’ aims and objectives, which include:

- *Networking* – intended as the possibility to meet, get to know, or rekindle relationships with other policy actors
- *Learning/Capacity Building* – intended as the possibility of learning more about ICT and ICT policy, and about the work of others in the ICT sector.
- *Legitimisation/Performance Measurement* – based on a vision of workshops as events through which the existence and the work of

\(^{206}\) See section F-1.2, Appendix III.
\(^{207}\) See also section C-3.2.1 of Appendix III.
particular organisations (CSOs/NGOs in particular) can be legitimised and measured\textsuperscript{208}.

In some respects, consultation workshops thus seem to potentially embody the characteristics of \textit{rituals} as intended by Yanow, i.e. repeated patterns of action that do not appear to fully achieve their stated objectives, but through which other, secondary objectives are achieved, leading participants to define them nevertheless as positive and useful acts in relation to the policy process (Yanow 2000: 78).

In the context under analysis, consultative workshops would seem in other words to constitute key rituals through which – first and foremost - networks are built, knowledge is developed, performance is documented and measured, and actors can gain and consolidate a role in the context of ICT policy processes.

\textbf{5.2.3.2 Openings and Closures}

Acts associated with the \textit{beginning} and the \textit{end} of ICT policy processes also seem to have particular symbolic importance in the context under analysis.

\textbf{5.2.3.2.1 Openings}

In most cases ICT policy processes are opened, or ‘launched’, with the formation of a task force (TF) or working group (WG) tasked with managing the policy formulation processes.

The importance of ‘inaugural’ acts of this kind is denoted firstly by the fact that they usually attract media attention and coverage, and/or are the subject of a press release (cf. for example Musoke 2002, Kamagara 2002, UCC 2004h).

More importantly however, the formation of these entities seems to be perceived at times also as a sort of ‘litmus test’ for the inclusiveness of the policy process in

\textsuperscript{208} See section F-1.3, Appendix III.
question: are the right categories of actors represented on the TF/WG? Is there gender balance? Is civil society/the local private sector/the rural population adequately represented?²⁰⁹

According to several actors, in fact, there do not seem to be any explicit standards or guidelines for the composition of ICT policy task forces in Uganda: TFs and WGs seem instead to have traditionally been built through the relatively autonomous and unilateral identification, by the government, of people considered to be ‘champions’ or ‘key stakeholders’ in relation to a given issue at a given moment in time (and in some cases, also on the basis of suggestions made by donors). TF/WG nomination would therefore seem in a sense to equate symbolically also to the taking of a sort of snapshot of ‘who’s who’ in relation to ICTs and ICT policy at a specific moment in time²¹⁰.

The opening or inauguration of each and every ICT policy process thus seems to be quite an important symbolic occasion, in which the attitude of the government with regard to inclusiveness is tested, and the key coordinates of the country’s national ICT policy network (or of sub-sectoral equivalents of such a network) are sketched, and measured.

5.2.3.2.2 Closures

Like openings, the completions of ICT policy processes also usually attract media attention, are the object of press releases and – at times – also of official ceremonies, such as ‘launch’ events (Wakabi 2003, Komakech 2003, Jaramogi 2003, Stienen 2006).

The symbolic importance of ‘closure’ acts of this kind becomes particularly clear however in instances where these are omitted, or their existence is put in doubt.

²⁰⁹ Cf. section F-2.1.1 of Appendix III.
²¹⁰ Cf. section F-2.1.2 of Appendix III.
In my discussion regarding the ‘linear process’ narrative\textsuperscript{211} I noted for example that a number of actors were under the impression that the NICTPF was never actually approved by Cabinet and/or by Parliament, and how lack of clarity in this respect sparked significant controversy – and in this respect, it’s interesting to note here that in some cases what was perceived to be missing was actually simply an official ‘launch’ event for the NICTPF, which had happened instead for other policies\textsuperscript{212}.

We have also seen previously, in the context of the same discussion, how the TPR process (in this case without doubt) never actually reached completion as intended, and again how this sparked significant controversy and criticism. In this respect, it should be noted that the ‘pragmatic’ closure represented by the emanation shortly after of ministerial guidelines designed to achieve the same effects of the ‘full’ TPR was in any case met with a certain disappointment by some of those who had participated in the process. Closure had in other words not been achieved as expected\textsuperscript{213}.

The perceived absence of these conclusive acts is particularly important from a symbolic point of view because - as seen in section 5.1.3.2.2 - it has the effect of fundamentally putting in doubt the linearity perceived by many to characterise ICT policy processes in Uganda: ‘closing’ acts seem in other words to be a key symbolic aspect of perceptions and interpretations of the ICT policy process as a ‘linear’, step-by-step process.

\textbf{5.2.3.3 ‘Peripheral’ Acts}

Ugandan ICT policy activity is also characterised by a variety of acts performed on what could be defined in a sense as the ‘periphery’ of the official policy process managed by government. These include:

\textsuperscript{211} Cf. section 5.1.3.2.2.
\textsuperscript{212} Cf. section F-2.2, Appendix III.
\textsuperscript{213} \textit{Ibidem.}
• meetings organised independently by CSOs and attended primarily if not exclusively by non-governmental actors (cf. WOUGNET 2002, 2006a, 2006b, 2006c)
• training or evaluation workshops convened by donors and attended by donor staff and local CSO staff (cf. I-Network 2003, PANOS London 2004, APC 2007, APC/IICD 2007c)
• acts of lobbying and/or public campaigning with regard to ICT policy (usually performed by local CSOs) (cf. UWCI 2004, CEEWA-U 2005)
• and acts of research (i.e. research activities) not related to or commissioned in the context of policy processes (e.g. Shirley et al. 2002, Tusubira et al. 2003, CIPESA/I-Network 2006, Wire Lunghabo 2007, DENIVA/i-Network 2007, Tusubira et al. 2007).

A common characteristic of acts of this kind is that in most cases they represent acts of reflection and/or discussion regarding ICT policy not strictly linked to the policy process, rather than instances of deliberation and/or decision-making in the context of these processes.

In the next part of this chapter, which focuses on the overall discourses around ICT policy circulating in the Ugandan context, we will see how these ‘peripheral’ acts, like all the other process-related artefacts described so far, constitute one of the components of the discourse coalitions that construct and propagate Ugandan discourse regarding the ICT policy process.
Part II – Discourses and Discourse Coalitions

In adherence to the analytical framework illustrated in section 2.4.1, in this section I discuss findings in relation to the discourses that have contributed in my view to shaping and constructing different local interpretations of ICT policy processes and practices in Uganda, and I investigate and review the nature and composition of the discourse coalitions that appear to develop and propagate each discourse.

I do so with the ultimate aim of providing answers to the questions that have inspired and driven this piece of research, which I find useful to recall here as follows:

- What perceptions do actors have of their relationships with other actors involved in the discussion of ICT policy? Is there a network around ICT policy in the context under analysis? And if so, when and where is there a network, and what defines it?
- How do actors think ICT policy is normally made, and what characterises specific perceived ways of making ICT policy?
- How and where are boundaries set? Who/what is considered to be inside the agglomeration of entities that produces ICT policy?
- What are ICT policy processes ‘made of’ in practice – i.e. what linguistic and non-linguistic policy- and/or process-related artefacts contribute to characterising and shaping actors’ perceptions of the policy process?
I structure this part of my discussion around *three main discourses* that have emerged from my analytical work – namely:

- **D₁**: A Cooperatively Constructed, Open and Participative Network
- **D₂**: An Elitist, Closed Network Marked by Conflict and Exclusion
- **D₃**: Dynamic, Fluid Networks Characterised by Competition

In particular, I firstly review each of these discourses based on the key analytical dimensions I derived from Parker (1992)\(^{214}\), which again I find useful to recall here:

- **discourses are about objects**: discourses constitute shared interpretations of specific objects; research should thus focus on what these objects are perceived to be and describe them;
- **discourses configure subjects**: discourses constitute some of the objects they refer to as subjects; i.e. they configure spaces “for particular types of self to step in” and say/contribute specific things in line with the discourse in question (Parker 1992: 9); analysis should therefore focus also on “specifying what types of person are talked about in a discourse (...) and speculating about what they can say” within such a discourse, i.e. what roles and “rights to speak” they are assigned within a specific discourse, and what things they are allowed, or expected to say (Parker 1992: 10);
- **discourses link to other discourses**: discourses often make reference to other discourses, either for reinforcement or for contrast, and the researcher’s job is also that of focusing on the links between specific discourses at work in a given setting;
- **discourses are historically located**: discourses have a specific temporal dimension, in that they emerge in reference to objects that are perceived as pre-existent; in other words, discourses also construct “past” objects, in

\(^{214}\) See section 3.3.2.
particular by linking to other, contemporary discourses about such objects; analysis should therefore focus on the temporal/historical linkages between discourses and the ‘past’ objects they create, as an indicator of how said discourses have undergone transformation over time - as suggested also by Finlayson more specifically in relation to interpretive research on policy networks (Finlayson 2004: 154).

I then review and discuss in some detail the nature and composition of the discourse coalitions engaged in the construction and propagation of each discourse. In doing so, I follow Hajer’s suggestion that discourse coalitions are composed not only by groups of people but also by the ‘storylines’ uttered by these people and by the practices they perform (Hajer 1993: 47): I thus investigate in particular not only who - i.e. what actor(s) or type(s) of actors - actively ‘sponsors’ and performs each discourse, but also what each discourse coalition appears to be made of, i.e. what particular types of linguistic and non-linguistic artefact amongst those identified and discussed in Part I of this chapter appear to be employed/integrated in the construction of each discourse.

On the basis of the findings presented in this section I then draw, in Part III of this chapter, a number of conclusions regarding the relationships between the key discourses identified in this study and between the discourse coalitions that are ‘responsible’ for them, paying particular attention to phenomena of discourse structuration and discourse institutionalisation as intended by Hajer (Hajer 1993, 2006a), and discussed previously in section 2.3.2.
5.3 A Cooperatively Constructed, Open and Participative Network

The first key discourse, which for practical purposes I will refer to as $D_1$ in the text, depicts ICT policy making in Uganda as the result of the work of a relatively open and participative network of governmental and non-governmental actors that has gradually grown and stabilised over time as a result of constructive and cooperative interactions between such actors.

In narrative terms, $D_1$ can be summarised as follows:

ICT policy making in Uganda emerged as a response to the existence of a variety of scattered ICT4D initiatives that needed to be streamlined.

Initially, this response was characterised by the voluntary involvement of a number of local ICT “champions” and “pioneers” working both outside and within government, and by moral and financial support from the President and progressive, forward-looking donors.

This led to the establishment of a tradition of open and participative policy making around ICTs, designed to address key national concerns in this area. As such, the Ugandan ICT policy process always has been and still is very much owned by Ugandans.

With time, the network of actors involved in ICT policy formulation has then grown in size and breadth, encompassing an ever wider and more representative selection of non-governmental actors in addition to governmental ones.

Initial uncertainties as to what parts of government should be responsible for ICT policy formulation and implementation were also eventually resolved with the creation of the MoICT, which signalled the importance of ICT and ICT policy as matters of governmental concern, and contributed to the further stabilisation and consolidation of the policy network tasked with resolving such concerns.

Ugandan ICT policy is thus the result of cooperative, constructive interactions between relevant, representative actors engaged in linear, rational policy formulation efforts over time, and the country has reached a particular stage of maturity in this respect.
D₁ is a *dominant* discourse, in that it is the one espoused most prominently by several of the actors consulted for this study and most easily detectable in the policy-related documentation I was able to analyse\(^{215}\).

In the next section I review and discuss the key elements that constitute this discourse, based on the analytical categories I derived from Parker (1992).

5.3.1 Constitutive Elements

5.3.1.1 Objects

D₁ is founded on, and at the same time constructs, two key discursive objects:

1) an open and participative policy network around ICT;
2) a linear, rational and participative ICT policy process.

*The Policy Network*

At a very simple and ‘ontological’ level, it’s easy to see how the stakeholder classification exercises described previously in this chapter (cf. section 5.1.2.1) constitute attempts to bring into discursive existence a stable and identifiable network of relationships around ICT policy making in the country.

Of particular note here however is that many such exercises, mostly undertaken by governmental entities, usually emerge in discursive contexts characterised also by positive acknowledgements or prescriptions regarding the high level of *inclusiveness* of the policy network around ICTs: they therefore represent attempts

\(^{215}\) For references to and examples of the ways in which D₁ is articulated in practice see section C-1.2 of Appendix III, with reference to the idea of the gradual coagulation of an identifiable network of actors following the existence of ‘scattered initiatives’ around ICT policy; section C-2.1, *ibidem*, with regard to the descriptions of the ICT policy process as a ‘linear’ and rational step-by-step process; section C-3.1, *ibidem*, with regard to ‘positive’ depictions of the Ugandan ICT policy process as an open and participative process. All these, and other key elements will obviously be analysed further also in the sections that follow here.
to bring into discursive existence a particularly open and participative policy network around ICT policy\textsuperscript{216}.

Discursive portrayals of the Ugandan ICT policy network as an open, participative one then sometimes make reference also to the existence, within such a network, of an ‘inner core’ of ‘primary’ stakeholders, and a wider ensemble of ‘secondary’ ones, conceptually positioned either concentrically (in visual terms) or sequentially (time-wise) to each other (cf. UCC 2004n, 2004a, 2004i and Figure IV.2 in Appendix IV – and see section 5.1.2.1.2 for a detailed discussion of this dichotomy)\textsuperscript{217}.

In this respect, it’s interesting to note how prescriptive documents produced by donors sometimes make reference to the need to always involve the whole ‘system’ (another word for network, in a sense) in ICT policy formulation, instead of relying only on the inputs of a few, selected ‘core’ stakeholders. Documents describing the IICD’s ‘round table’ methodology suggest for example that one of its aims (and one of its advantages) was that of “bring[ing] the whole system into the room” (de Jager 2005a, Moens and Broerse 2006: 36). A 2008 World Bank report on capacity building for ICT policy similarly suggested the need for capacity building efforts to reach the “broader ecosystem” of ICT policy stakeholders rather than target only governmental staff (infoDev 2008: 7). The image of an open, participative ICT PN seems to require in other words also a certain amount of discursive ‘maintenance’, or reiteration.

The PN object constructed by D1 also has an interesting historical, or \textit{diachronic} dimension. The network is for example often said to have initially been relatively small and composed mainly of local ICT champions and pioneers who volunteered

\textsuperscript{216} Notably, attempts of this kind at portraying or prescribing widely comprehensive, open ICT PNs are sometimes articulated also in visual terms - as evidenced by the diagrams included in Appendix IV, originating respectively from a policy implementation plan, an evaluation report commissioned by a donor, and a presentation made by a government official at an international event.

\textsuperscript{217} In one case a respondent also started drawing two concentric circles in front of me on a piece of paper, while responding to a question regarding the possible existence of a small network of ‘usual suspects’ regularly involved in ICT policy formulation in the country (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008). The answer given by the respondent is cited later in this section.
their time in a very cooperative and constructive fashion\textsuperscript{218}, and to have then gradually increased in size, coming to include an ever wider range of stakeholders over time.

“[The NICTPF task force members] were natural choices, charismatic characters that were already active in the sector (…). [For the sector implementation plans] we did stakeholder analysis: more stakeholders had to be identified and be brought on board. (…) So we had public forums, calling everybody who was interested” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 November 2008)

“[W]e are widening the number of people we involve in consultations, we are constantly enlarging it [the informant sketches two concentric circles and points to the inner one]… with time it will become bigger. It used to be small, but now it’s getting bigger” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008)

“[Like in other African countries] we are in a transitional phase, going from a few champions to a new generation of younger people who are more active in the sector” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 24 September 2008)

In the D\textsubscript{1} perspective, this progressive enlargement is usually said to have been accompanied also by the progressive consolidation and institutionalisation of the network, marked in particular by the creation of the MoICT, which according to some also led to increased network transparency:

“Before the Ministry of ICT was created, there was a nascent, non-structured way in which things were done. There was a coalition of actors, like the Permanent Secretaries of various Ministries, and informal policy decisions were taken through a coalition of these people” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 28 September 2008)

“Before the new Ministry was in place, different bodies were active, for example the UNCST had working groups, I am not sure how they got people on those groups, if it was advertised in the press or not. There were also not that many people active in the sector anyway (…) Now, with the Ministry of ICT, things are publicised more widely” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 February 2009)

\textsuperscript{218} ‘(…) the highly participatory and collective approach [adopted for the formulation of the NICTPF] left little room for individual ownership of the policy” (Ofir 2003a: 50).
In summary, the first key object constructed through $D_1$ in relation to ICT policy in Uganda is a progressively more open and participative policy network that has also become increasingly transparent and accountable over time, and which – perhaps even more importantly – is also a particularly *strong* one, as suggested by local ICT policy expert Francis Tusubira in a presentation given at an Acacia workshop already as early as 2003:

“[The NICTPF process] has led to internal networking and the creation of a very strong ICT lobby that cuts across civil society, the private sector and government” (Tusubira 2003b, emphasis mine)

And although its form and its workings (in particular with regard to the ‘inner core’) may not be perceived by all as clearly and transparently spelt out and formalised\(^{219}\), in a $D_1$ perspective Uganda’s national ICT PN is still generally perceived and constructed as a functional and effective entity:

“In Uganda, there is a network… never mind it’s not formal, but there is a network” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 24 September 2008)

**The Policy Process**

$D_1$ also speaks of a very open and participative ICT policy process characterised in particular by *linearity* and *rationality*.

The key traits of purportedly ‘linear’ and rational policy processes have already been discussed in section 5.1.3.2.

One thing worth noting in respect of the ‘linear process’ object constructed by $D_1$ is however its relative *immutability* in diachronic terms.

We have seen in fact how from the first efforts made to formulate the NICTPF right up to the more recent policymaking instances managed by the MoICT, the ‘linear’

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\(^{219}\) The problem is that there is an inner circle, but it’s not formalized. There is no problem in having an advisory group, but it should be formalized, so that you get proper and broader representation, and so that it is accountable” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 February 2009).
process descriptions found in documents and uttered in interviews seem to vary very little\textsuperscript{220} — so much so that I found it feasible and appropriate to summarise such descriptions with a single, symbolic diagram\textsuperscript{221}.

It also doesn’t seem to matter much whether the policy process in question is perceived as being or having been ‘top-down’, ‘bottom-up’, or – as discussed previously – a mixture of the two\textsuperscript{222}. Whatever the origin of the stimulus to make policy is said to be, the policy formulation process is often perceived to be more or less the same (draft, consult, redraft, consult, finalise, table and approve), the only variation being perhaps in the level or the amount of consultation undertaken (e.g. the number of workshops, or the number of people consulted) in order to ‘validate’ policy and make it acceptable to those concerned:

“[In top-down cases] government would tell us what it wants, they give us instructions, and then we involve stakeholders in decisions, then we take it up to Cabinet, then Cabinet patches it up with politics and approves it. (…) [A]ll you can do is to discuss how, so as to make it more popular and accepted” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008)

“The mixture [between the top-down and bottom-up stimuli that characterised the formulation of the NICTPF] lies in the fact that once we had come up with a policy following the [bottom-up] liberal economy model, we then took it to government for all the stages necessary for approval” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 November 2008)

\(D_1\) thus configures the ‘linear’ ICT policy process as a stable, immutable object that stands the tests of politics and time.

***

A key tenet of \(D_1\) is, as mentioned previously, that the level of ‘ownership’ of Ugandan ICT policy by local/national actors has always been very high, and that this is mainly due to the openness and participativeness that have traditionally characterised the Ugandan ICT policy process. In a \(D_1\) perspective, ‘ownership’ is in other words seen as having a fundamental, positive value, and ‘participativeness’ (or ‘inclusiveness’) is seen as the key way to achieve it:

\textsuperscript{220} Cf. Appendix II, section C-2.1.
\textsuperscript{221} Figure 5.2, section 5.1.3.2.
\textsuperscript{222} Cf. section 5.1.2.2.2.
“Better imperfect and owned, than perfect and spurned” (Tusubira 2003b).

“A policy as good as its ownership, thus the first primary concern is to define stakeholders” (UCC 2004e: 2)

Something quite interesting happens however if we compare the two key objects created by D₁ from a diachronic point of view.

On one hand, as seen above, the policy network object created by D₁ is in fact said to have changed or be changing over time, from a relatively small group or network of ‘ICT champions’ and ‘pioneers’, to a broader, more complex, and more inclusive ensemble of stakeholders. On the other hand, the policy process object discursively created by this discourse is perceived as having always remained more or less the same, both in terms of its form and – importantly – in terms of its openness and inclusiveness.

This interestingly suggests the existence of a fundamental decoupling in conceptual or logical terms between the nature of the policy process and the nature and the size of the ICT policy network involved in it, which tends to contradict the key tenet highlighted above: the network seems in fact to have changed in nature over time, but the process in which such network has been engaged is perceived to have always been very open and participative - meaning that changes in the nature of the network do not seem, after all, to have impacted in any particular way on the nature (and in particular the inclusiveness) of the policy process.

Comparing the two objects created by D₁ suggests in other words that the existence of causal links between network and process is therefore both stated and at the same time negated by the discourse, giving birth to a fundamental conceptual contradiction worthy of further investigation²²³.

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²²³ See the conclusions to this chapter.
5.3.1.2 Subjects

As mentioned in the introduction to this part of the chapter, *subjects* are intended here, with Parker, as entities or actors constructed and configured by discourses as having specific ‘roles’ and specific ‘rights to speak’ and ‘things to say’ that are in line with/fit into the particular discourse in question (Parker 1992: 9-10). In this perspective, it could be said that D₁ actively constructs the following subjects:

- specialist, resourceful stakeholders
- ICT champions
- active CSOs and NGOs
- responsible, receptive and ‘apolitical’ transliminal actors
- generous, disinterested donors

Details regarding what each of these subject categories actually comprise and what things each category is in a sense ‘allowed’ or ‘expected’ to say/contribute in the context of the ICT policy process are provided in Table 5.1.

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224 For what is meant by ‘transliminal actors’, cf. section 5.1.3.2.4
Table 5.1 - $D_1$-Configured Subjects and Things to Say

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Things to say</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Specialist, Resourceful Stakeholders</strong></td>
<td>Useful comments and inputs drawn from personal experience and/or based on specialist knowledge, and in particular:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Positive versions of the ‘usual suspects’, they include academics, ‘investors’, ICT specialists both within government and outside it, and members of the legal profession and of other sections of the civil society. | • Statements regarding ICT’s potential for social and economic development  
• Comprehensive ‘ensemble’ views of ICT field, including international outlook  
• Statements regarding needs and priorities of specific parts of Ugandan society  
• Statements regarding legal aspects of policy and its formulation |
| NB: also configured by $D_1$ are opposites of this category, i.e. incompetent, unreliable stakeholders with little or no meaningful contributions to make and thus no right to speak in the context of policy formulation. | |
| **ICT Champions** | • Neutral, disinterested ‘calls to arms’  
• Advocacy statements regarding the importance of ICTs and ICT policy (in a sense, champions also represent and give voice to ICTs and their complexity)  
• ‘New’ things about ICT |
| These include the President, pioneer academics specialising in ICTs, and early adopters of ICT in the public and private sectors (including visionary local entrepreneurs). | |
| **Active CSOs/NGOs** | What is not said by others (‘all else’), and in particular statements regarding the perceived ICT-related needs of disadvantaged sections of Ugandan society, such as rural populations, women and the disabled. |
| Local and national third sector organisations working in areas relating to ICT. | |
| **Responsible, Receptive and ‘Apolitical’ Transliminal actors** | • Context descriptions  
• Process descriptions  
• Statements regarding the government’s commitment to participation  
• Echoes of other actors’ statements, ‘calls to order’  
• The final word |
| These include consultants, drafters, Ministers and the Cabinet. | |
| **Generous, Disinterested Donors** | • Words of encouragement  
• Statements of commitment  
• Votes of thanks  
• Statements of neutrality  
• Technical advice |
| Members of staff in international development agencies providing support to the ICT policy process, inhabiting the ‘background’. | |

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225 See section 5.1.2.1.2.
226 E.g. the members of the Presidential Investors’ Round Table (PIRT) – cf. section 4.3.2.
227 In other words the ‘undesirable’ stakeholders mentioned in section 5.1.2.1.2.
228 “Government does things in a grand way, and some minorities are not catered for (...). Civil society was instrumental in identifying ‘all else’” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 November 2008).
5.3.1.3 Links to Other Discourses

D1’s portrayals of the Ugandan ICT policy process and related PN as particularly open and participative are sometimes contextualised and reinforced through references to the entirety of Ugandan policymaking (i.e. not just ICT policy) as actually being, having been or needing to be open and participative.

A detailed analysis of these references shows that they are built through, and represent, linkages to two other, wider political discourses:

- a donor-influenced, ‘general’ discourse emphasising the need for wide participation and consultation in development policy formulation;
- and/or a more ‘local’ discourse that refers to the National Resistance Movement’s regime as having in any case traditionally been a very participative one.

According to a number of scholars, the first discourse is espoused in particular by international donor agencies, and has been particularly vigorous, in the Ugandan context, in relation to the formulation of poverty reduction strategies such as the PEAP\(^{229}\) (Lister and Nyamugasira 2003, De Coninck 2004, Brock 2004c). De Coninck in particular suggests that the increase in donor funding received by Uganda over the past two decades “has (...) coincided with an increased acceptance of the need for participation in the development process (...) [which] has manifested itself, in the first instance, in the need for consultations whenever development policy has to be defined” (De Coninck 2004: 64-65).

Clear ‘traces’ of the ‘participatory development’ discourse are in fact certainly present in some of the ‘generic’ policy-related documents produced by the Ugandan government I was able to consult during my work in the field (e.g. Chekwoti et al. 2003, MoFPED 2004).

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The purchase gained by this discourse in Ugandan policy practice, and – more importantly – its indirect reflection in / linkage to D₁ were then revealed quite clearly to me through some of the statements made by respondents regarding stakeholder consultation in the ambit of ICT policy processes:

“[Several institutions] have a stake – we invite them to give an opinion, and the [parliamentary ICT] committee values their opinion. *It is now also part of government’s way to make policy*, by consulting with people” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 27 September 2008, emphasis mine)

“Then we organise public workshops. *The government says we must consult people when making policy, it’s a standard thing*” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 26 September 2008, emphasis mine)

The second, overall political discourse to which D₁ sometimes seems to link is then a sort of local ‘take’ on the first one, referring as it does to the NRM regime as having in any case been traditionally participative right from its ‘early days’ – meaning that the ‘participatory development’ discourse espoused by donors had in a sense found fertile ground on which to take root.

De Coninck maintains in fact in this respect that “[t]he early years of the [NRM] regime created a climate favourable to the discourse on participatory development and saw active steps being taken to put this into practice”, eventually leading to the “successful” adoption of “a discourse of ‘bottom-up development’” on the part of Museveni’s government during the 1990s (De Coninck 2004: 70).

With more specific regard to the context of our work, the linkage between D₁ and this particular discourse is exemplified very clearly in the following statement made by MoWHC Minister John Nasasira at a UCC workshop in 2000:

“This open forum where stakeholders will be discussing issues pertaining to the sector and together look for solutions and a way forward, *is in line with government policy and method of work* and is highly recommended. *I think you remember in the early days of the Movement* when we used to talk about open method of work, this is

230 For a discussion of the changes brought about by the advent of the NRM regime in Uganda see section 4.1.2.
one way, to call everybody here and openly argue, quarrel, agree, disagree so that we can move forward together” (UCC 2000).

5.3.1.4 Historical Dimension

D₁ acquires a historical dimension or location through references to / the construction of a number of objects or concepts discursively configured as pre-existing, and thus pertaining to the ‘past’.

These include:

a. The scattered initiatives said to have preceded and motivated the first systematic efforts in national ICT policy making (and in particular the NICTPF process) – configured as ‘entandikwa’ (i.e. foundations) for the policy process and the PN configured by the this specific discourse²³¹.

b. The NICTPF itself, mentioned in many of the policy-related documents that followed its approval – configured as a pre-existing object that necessarily framed subsequent policy efforts²³².

c. A small policy network made of ‘champions’ and ‘pioneers’ – references to which are found in later depictions of the ICT policy network as a wider, more inclusive one²³³.

d. The relative chaos perceived to have characterised early ICT policy efforts – a construct certainly conceptually linked also to the existence of ‘scattered initiatives’, but referring in particular to

²³¹ Cf. Section 5.1.3.1.2, and section C-1.2.2 of Appendix III – in particular with reference to the concept of ‘entandikwa’.

²³² While the existence of references to pre-existing ‘overarching’ policy frameworks in policy efforts perceived to descend from them may seem inevitable and rather obvious, it should also be remembered that in some cases actors have expressed doubts regarding the existence of the NICTPF as a legal, official document (cf. section 5.1.3.2.2) – meaning that the configuration of the NICTPF as a (pre-)existing, ‘past’ object is not absolute and should thus not be taken for granted.

²³³ Cf. 5.3.1.1.
the pre-MoICT phase, when ministerial competences in relation to ICT policy weren’t very clear\textsuperscript{234}.

As mentioned in the introduction to this part of the chapter, in the perspective adopted in this study analysing the ‘life’ of the objects or concepts configured by a discourse as ‘past’ can provide some indications as to the changes and transformations that a discourse may have undergone over time.

In this respect, objects a. and b. could be defined as chronologically ‘static’, as their perceived nature is unlikely to have varied much over time: the ‘scattered initiatives’ perceived to have been at the basis of the birth of ICT policy in Uganda appear in fact by all accounts to be ‘done and dusted’ and thus remain safely ‘anchored’ to the past, while on the other hand since its approval the NICTPF itself could also be said to conceptually remained the same over time.

Objects c. and d. are instead in a sense chronologically new, ‘dynamic’ objects, in that they arguably emerged only as ex-post constructs, in more recent versions of D\textsubscript{1}: the ‘small network’ said to have characterised early ICT policy efforts (c.) was for example most likely never portrayed as such during the early phase of ICT policy history in Uganda (if only because this would have been in contradiction with the idea consistently espoused in D\textsubscript{1} that ICT policy processes had been very consultative and participative right from the outset); along the same lines, the somewhat chaotic situation in terms of actual ministerial competence in the pre-MoICT days (d.) was also certainly not referred to as a chaotic one in D\textsubscript{1} articulations dating back to that time, but only later.

Considering these ‘past’ elements together conveys a sense in which the PN object constructed by D\textsubscript{1} has developed over time, from being portrayed simply as having originated from stable and still conceptually present foundations (a. and b.), to being portrayed, in later depictions, also as having dynamically progressed from a previous, allegedly ‘chaotic’ state, characterised by relatively limited and specialist participation, to a more ‘orderly’, present state, marked also by the

\textsuperscript{234} Ibidem.
participation of a higher number and wider range of stakeholders (respectively d., and c.).

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This concludes my review of the key components of D₁, the frequency of which in policy-related documents and in statements uttered in interviews suggests – as mentioned previously – that this discourse is a dominant discourse.

In the next section, I will look into how D₁ is in my view constructed and maintained as a dominant discourse, by focusing on the nature and workings of the discourse coalition that espouses it.

5.3.2 Discourse Coalition

As discussed previously, discourse coalitions are intended here as heterogeneous ensembles of actors and artefacts by/through which particular discourses are constructed and performed²³⁵.

In this section I will thus look not only into who appears to actively sponsor and articulate D₁, but also into how (i.e. through what linguistic artefacts), where (in/through what spaces), and through what particular material objects and acts D₁ tends to be constructed and performed.

5.3.2.1 Who

D₁ is articulated most clearly and frequently by policy actors belonging to the following three main categories:

- Government: descriptions of the ICT policy process as a linear, rational process resulting from the interactions of an open and participative PN are found most frequently in documents and statements originating from governmental sources, including

²³⁵ Cf. the introduction to this part of the chapter, and section 2.3.3.
workshop reports, policy drafts and their final, approved versions, speeches by political leaders, presentation slides and even ToR documents (see in particular UNCST 2000b, 2002b, 2001b, 2003d, 2003a, MoWHC 2003b, UCC 1999, 2000, 2004n, Masambu 2004, UCC 2005e, NPA 2005b, 2005a, 2007, MoICT 2008c, 2008f); in addition to this, instances of D₁ have also emerged quite often in interviews with government officials.

- **Donors**: D₁-related constructs are also found quite often in documents produced by staff working in or consulting for donor agencies, such as ‘background’ reports, action plans, evaluation reports, workshop reports, ToR documents, and presentation slides - and have also often characterised speeches or votes of thanks pronounced by donor representatives at specific events (Ofir 2002, 2003a, UCC 2005b, UNCST 2000b, 2002b, Uhlir 2001, UNESCO 2001, 2002, 2003, Kweku Yamuah 2005, NPA/IICD 2005b, MTTI/IICD 2005b, MoH/IICD 2005b, IICD 2008b, de Jager 2005a).

- **Civil Society (CS)**: in some, less frequent cases instances of D₁ are also found in documents authored by local CS actors (cf. Torach et al. 2007, Amuriat 2007), or have emerged in interviews with local CSO staff; the latter is particularly the case for depictions of the ICT policy process as a linear, step-wise process.

5.3.2.2 How

D₁ is constructed by the policy actors mentioned above through the employment of specific **linguistic artefacts** amongst those discussed in first part of this chapter.

**Narratives**

Central to D₁ is the ‘linear process’ narrative discussed in detail in section 5.1.3.2.
Such a narrative not only plays – quite obviously - a key role in the consolidation and the strengthening of the ‘linear process’ object constructed by D₁: it also discursively provides an appropriate, suggested ‘framing’ for public participation, by highlighting at what specific stages of the process (‘open’ stages) wider participation by relevant stakeholders is supposed to take place. The narrative also has in other words the function of suggesting or demarking specific spaces for the interventions of some of the subjects constructed by D₁, and therefore contributes significantly also to delineating the key traits of the other key object constructed by this discourse - an open and participative ICT network.

Also important in D₁ are the “minor” narratives on the origins of ICT policymaking (5.1.3.1), and the positive narrative on participation (5.1.3.3), contributing as they do to the configuration of donor agencies as having traditionally had a seemingly secondary, background role in the creation and development of Uganda’s ICT PN and in the initiation of Uganda’s ICT policy processes, and thus providing key elements not only for the construction of the Ugandan ICT PN as particularly participative and ‘owned’, but also for the configuration and consolidation of ‘generous, disinterested donors’ as one of the key subjects constructed by D₁.

Metaphors

D₁ descriptions of Ugandan ICT policymaking and of the PN involved in it are often interspersed with construction-related metaphors, making reference for example to the allegedly disparate and rather chaotic PN at work in the early years of the country’s ICT policy history as needing ‘one roof’ (and eventually finding such a roof, and the related ‘house’, with creation of the MoICT), and to policy itself (i.e. the product of the PN) as a ‘building’ made of ‘foundations’ and ‘pillars’.

Also relatively common in D₁ are metaphors relating to transport and trajectory, used in particular to enrich descriptions of the policy process as a linear process, i.e. as a trajectory between an identifiable point A (no policy) and an equally

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236 Cf. section 5.1.1.1.
identifiable point B (policy) that can be covered using particular means of transport\textsuperscript{237}.

\textit{Classifications}

$D_1$ is constructed and maintained also through the extensive and conscious use of specific classification and categorisation mechanisms.

Most common amongst these are perhaps \textit{ontological stakeholder classification} and \textit{stakeholder classification by interest}, variously employed to sketch the boundaries of the PN object constructed by the discourse and/or define its membership in detail – and thus contributing significantly to its discursive configuration and reiteration (cf. for example the stakeholder listings contained in documents relating to the NICTPF, or those contained in documents relating to the TPR)\textsuperscript{238}.

\textit{Stakeholder classification by contribution} is instead more commonly used in the construction of \textit{subjects} in $D_1$ – not surprising perhaps, as most if not all the subjects constructed by this particular discourse seem in fact to be configured as such primarily on the basis of the positive contributions they are perceived to be able to give to the policy process (cf. 5.3.1.2). Notable exceptions to this however are the inclusion of private ‘investors’ amongst the subjects allowed to speak in the context of the policy process, and that of non-ICT-related governmental bodies, which are sometimes justified more on the basis of the \textit{interests} these actors are perceived to have in ICT policy (as financial investors in the first case, and as extensive users in the second) than on the contribution they are perceived to be able to give to the policy process (i.e. both these types of subject are sometimes constructed primarily on the basis of \textit{classifications by interest} in the context of $D_1$)\textsuperscript{239}.

\textsuperscript{237} Cf. for example the reference made by a government official to consultants as ‘planes’, used to get somewhere fast if funding allows (Appendix III, section A-3).
\textsuperscript{238} See sections B-1.1 and B-1.2.1 of Appendix III.
\textsuperscript{239} Cf. section 5.1.2.1.2.
Finally, it should be noted *process classifications by stimulus and input* (e.g. distinctions between ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’, or processes based on ‘internal’ vs. ‘external’ inputs)\(^{240}\) also seem to play a significant a role in D\(_1\), as mechanisms employed by actors to further qualify and strengthen the ‘linear process’ object constructed by the discourse as being also particularly open, participative and nationally-owned (‘bottom-up’ and ‘based on internal inputs’ usually being the positive qualifiers).

5.3.2.3 Where

The work of the D\(_1\) coalition is performed mainly in official ‘governmental’ spaces, located either *within* government buildings – as is the case for example of much of the drafting and document production work undertaken by transliminal actors – or in government-managed spaces *outside* such buildings, when the government temporarily transfers its activities to ‘public’ spaces in order to undertake consultation, or engages in ‘retreats’ designed to reduce the level of potential distraction for participants associated with the holding of meetings in central Kampala.

In particular, it is mainly in government-owned or government-hired spaces that D\(_1\) subjects are constructed and enabled/allowed to act/speak. This was evidenced to me in particular by some of the responses given by interviewees when I asked how they thought non-governmental policy actors could ensure they ‘got on the list’ of people regularly invited by government to input into ICT policy formulation:

“I would say participate in *as many meetings* as you can” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 February 2009, emphasis mine)

“Being very vocal – for example there is a gentleman (…), I can’t remember his name, and he represents consumers, *he is at every forum* and he says he is representing consumers – but who knows what goes on behind, what his relationship is with consumers” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 24 September 2008, emphasis mine)

Being accepted by government as a ‘subject allowed to speak’ in relation to ICT policy seems to depend in other words at least in part also on repeated, consistent

\(^{240}\) Cf. 5.1.2.2.2 and 5.1.2.2.3.
physical presences in the government-managed ‘public consultation’ spaces in which D₁ is often performed.

In section 5.2.2.1 we also saw how most if not all the government-managed spaces associated with ICT policy activities are located within central Kampala or not far beyond. Notably, however, by portraying the ICT policy process and related PN as very representative and participative, D₁ also conceptually encompasses in a sense all other regional and national spaces in Uganda, and generally configures them as involved in, or ‘touched’ by, the ICT policy process through synecdochic participation.²⁴¹

The D₁ coalition thus appears to operate in two quite different but connected types of space: government-managed physical spaces located all very close to each other in central Kampala, and a theoretical, discursively constructed spatial dimension extending across the whole country, that is ‘brought into’ the former through synecdochic representation.

Of equal note is also, on the other hand, the relatively limited recourse made by the coalition to ‘virtual’ spaces such as electronic mailing lists and other online discussion fora for the articulation and consolidation of its discourse.

5.3.2.4 Material Elements

As suggested in 5.3.2.1, D₁ is constructed and performed first and foremost through statements and utterances conveyed via a significant quantity of written documents and reports, produced in most cases by the government, but at times also by (or with the assistance of) donor agencies, or – to a lesser extent – by local CSOs and NGOs.

These include in particular documents focusing specifically on the policy process of course (i.e. process-related textual objects such as policymaking ‘guidelines’, workshop reports, stakeholder lists, ToR documents, or evaluation reports), but also documents (or sections of documents) referring more generally to policy

²⁴¹ Cf. sections C-3.1.3.2 and E-2.4 of Appendix III.
content, such as background/reference reports or policy drafts (i.e. debate framing objects), or approved policies and action plans – all of which contain several of the linguistic artefacts highlighted in section 5.3.2.2, from stakeholder and/or process classifications and categorisations, to metaphorical constructs or narrative constructs, developed in variable levels of detail.

D₁ is however developed and reiterated also through the alignment and the employment of a significant amount of other material resources.

Both the production and – importantly - the wide distribution of the textual objects mentioned above imply for example the extensive employment of printers, computers, photocopiers, web servers and other types of ICT.

In this respect, one of the most evident indicators of the extent to which document production and distribution technologies were and are employed in support of D₁ was the fact that during my work in the field, I certainly didn’t experience any dearth of D₁-espousing documents: with a few exceptions, several of the D₁-related documents cited in this study were for example available in multiple copies in a number of institutional libraries, or freely accessible via the web - or were spontaneously offered to me in hard or electronic copy by many of the informants I spoke to.

The important role played in the construction and – importantly – the wide propagation of D₁ by textual objects and by the resources employed to produce/distribute was then evidenced to me also by the purchase and reach gained by the discourse also at international level, precisely on the basis of the distribution of D₁-related documents. During an interview, one of the international consultants who had been hired to do some work in support of the NICTPF process stated for example that judging from the reports he had been sent by the UNCST and other relevant bodies, the way in which the Ugandan government had managed consultation and participation in the ICT policy process up until that moment seemed quite impressive:

242 Such spontaneous offerings constituting in practice the basis for the heuristically very useful ‘document snowballing’ I referred to in section 3.2.1.
“I had no direct experience [of consultation workshops], but on paper it looked good. They were developing a kind of stakeholder support which is what you would expect, and which is recommended for this type of work” (Personal Interview, Skype, 12 January 2009, emphasis mine)

Further evidence of the purchase (and dominance) gained by D₁ at international level through document production and distribution was then provided to me also when I found that a number of extracts from official UNCST documents relating to the NICTPF process eventually came to be uncritically integrated word-for-word (without any quotes) also in a donor-commissioned evaluation report produced by an international consultant in relation to such process (cf. UNCST 2000b, 2002b, Ofir 2003a)²⁴³.

Finally, the structuration and reiteration of D₁ also seems to imply regular recourse to a variety of other, non-textual objects and resources, such as fuel, venues, catering and - more generally - money, employed very often to support the performance of specific acts through which D₁ is also developed and consolidated (cf. next section) – and all things which, as discussed earlier in this chapter, seem to be firmly in the hands of selected, key D₁ proponents, such as the government and/or international donors²⁴⁴.

5.3.2.5 Acts

D₁ is constructed and performed also through a number of collective acts. One of these is quite obviously the act of producing and distributing D₁-spousing documents, which as seen previously is often a collective act rather than an individual one²⁴⁵.

²⁴³ It may in fact be assumed that in her research on the subject, Ofir experienced the same ease of access to D₁-related documents (as opposed to others) that I experienced during my work in the field.
²⁴⁴ Cf. section 5.2.1.2, and section D-2.3 of Appendix III.
²⁴⁵ Policy drafts are for example often the result of collective editing by task forces, and the same applies to many process-related documents, such as stakeholder lists and process plans. See Section 5.1.2.1.1.
The act that contributes most clearly and distinctively to the consolidation and reiteration of \( D_1 \) seems to be the workshop, however.

As discussed previously, one of the aims of policy-related workshops and consultation fora seems in fact to be that of building consensus on, or validating, proposed policies\(^{246}\).

In this respect however, the report from (quite fittingly) an international workshop on ICT policy making in Uganda and other DCs organised by the APC and the IICD usefully notes that the validatory function of consultation workshops should not be taken to refer just to policy content, but also to process-related aspects such as the “acceptance of the facilitating organisation, legitimacy of the documentation that is produced in terms of breadth and extent of stakeholder involvement in the drafting, and allowing for enough time for feedback and validation of the policy” (APC/IICD 2007c: 3).

The validatory function of consultation workshops seems in other words to refer to validation of the policy process as much as policy content.

This is in a sense a logical consequence of the positive narrative on participation, based as it is on the principle that “policy is as good as its ownership” (UCC 2004e: 2)\(^{247}\). Equating the quality of policy to the quality of the process through which it is produced implies in fact that validating policy equates to validating also the process by which it was formulated, and vice versa - i.e. validating policy processes equates to validating policy content. In this perspective, whatever the object of validation is actually perceived to be, workshops are logically assumed to play a key role in (explicitly or implicitly) validating also, if not primarily, the policy process - and importantly, in practically every case the object of validation is the ‘linear’ and very participative policy process constructed by \( D_1 \), and by extension, also the openness and participativeness of the network of actors that produce(d) it.

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\(^{246}\) Cf. section 5.2.3.1, and Appendix III, section F-1.2.2.

\(^{247}\) Cf. section 5.1.3.3.1.
It is therefore not surprising that in $D_1$-related documents, workshops are sometimes referred to as key events or ‘milestones’ in the policy process\(^{248}\).

Finally, also important in the construction and consolidation of $D_1$ are ‘closing’ acts, such as policy launch events (cf. section 5.2.3.2.2), which normally feature speeches and declarations sanctioning the successful completion of the ‘linear’ process and congratulating all involved for this success (cf. UNCST 2002b: 2, 22, Stienen 2006).

### 5.3.3 Summary

In this section I have delineated and discussed the key characteristics of the first discourse on Ugandan ICT policymaking identified in this study ($D_1$), which speaks as we have seen of a cooperatively constructed, open and participative ICT policy network, engaged in linear, rational and nationally-owned policy formulation processes over time. The key components, or constitutive elements of this particular discourse are summarised in Table 5.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5.2 - Constitutive Elements of $D_1$</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objects Constructed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subjects Configured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links to Other Discourses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical Dimension (references to ‘past’ objects)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As part of this discussion I have also suggested that $D_1$ bears the characteristics of a dominant discourse, if only because of the significant number of traces I have found of the discourse in a large quantity and wide variety of statements and

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\(^{248}\) Cf. 5.2.3.1.
utterances generated through interviews with local informants, and/or contained in the policy- or process-related documents I analysed.

Analysing in some detail the nature and composition of the discourse coalition that articulates and performs $D_1$ has also enabled me however to say something more specifically regarding how $D_1$ achieves and maintains dominance, in practice, in the context under analysis. The coalition that ‘sponsors’ and propagates $D_1$ seems in fact to comprise an impressive array of human and material resources, the alignment and employment of which arguably has the effect of structuring and consolidating the discourse it proposes in a durable, publicly acceptable and in a sense ‘ubiquitous’ way.

The dominance of $D_1$ and the particular way in which this is achieved will become clearer through the investigation of a discourse that is not only alternative, but also quite critical of (or oppositional to) $D_1$, and an analysis of the coalition that sponsors it – which I undertake in the next section.

The key components of the $D_1$ coalition are summarised in Table 5.3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who</th>
<th>Government, donors and some parts of the civil society</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How</td>
<td>Narratives on the ‘linear’ process; ‘positive’ narratives on participation; narratives on the origins of ICT policy making; metaphors relating to construction and transport; stakeholder classifications through listing and naming, or by contribution.; process classifications by stimulus and input.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where</td>
<td>Government-owned or government-hired buildings and premises, mainly in Kampala or not far beyond.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>‘Official’ documents including background/reference papers, workshop reports, policy drafts, approved policy texts, process-related guidelines, stakeholder lists, presentation slides, ToR documents, strategy/action plans and evaluation reports; ICT facilities and services for document production and distribution; fuel, catering, venues, and more generally a significant amount of money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acts</td>
<td>Policy consultation workshops and other key ‘milestones’ such as policy launches and public speeches.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.4 An Elitist, Closed Network Marked by Conflict and Exclusion

The second discourse that emerged from my research (D₂) portrays ICT policy making in Uganda as the result of regular interactions between a limited number of ‘elite’ actors operating in a relatively closed environment, characterised by a certain amount of conflict. In this perspective, policy influence and input from a wide range of stakeholders and/or the general public are thus considered as very difficult, if not altogether impossible.

In narrative terms, D₂ can be summarised as follows:

Uganda started developing national ICT policy in response to a plethora of ICT-related initiatives undertaken by donors in the late Nineties, including donor support to ICT policy formulation processes.

In its early phases, ICT policy formulation was characterised by conflict and competition between different governmental institutions regarding who should be responsible for the sector, and for the budgets associated with ICT policy formulation and implementation. Conflicts regarding competence were however eventually resolved, at least in part, first through the identification of the MoWHC as the lead agency for ICTs, and then through the creation of the MoICT in 2006.

Years of conflictual and somewhat ad-hoc ICT policymaking practices, combined with pressures by large private operators, led however to the formation and progressive consolidation of a relatively closed and incestuous network of actors around ICT policy (the “usual suspects”), from which many other allegedly relevant actors have consistently been excluded.

Ugandan ICT policy has thus traditionally been the result of the work of an elite of relatively powerful actors all located very close to the government, and opportunities for wider participation have been and are rare, tokenistic or completely absent. The few actors effectively involved in ICT policy formulation also tend to follow their own interests rather than national interests, leading to the formulation of policies that do not address the country’s needs in relation to ICT.

A key characteristic of D₂ is its critical, oppositional nature, as the discourse appears in fact to emerge and function primarily as a critique to D₁. In addition to this, D₂ is also a minority discourse, not in the sense that it is espoused by an
identifiable minority group of actors, but because it is articulated more rarely (by different types of actors, including in government) than $D_1^{249}$.

The key elements that constitute $D_2$ are reviewed below.

**5.4.1 Constitutive Elements**

**5.4.1.1 Objects**

$D_2$ constructs two objects that are in some respects ‘opposites’ of those constructed by $D_1$:

1) an elitist, exclusionary and conflictual ICT policy network;
2) a linear, rational but closed and not very participative ICT policy process.

*The Policy Network*

$D_2$ speaks quite clearly of a relatively inaccessible, incestuous and elitist ICT policy network, marked by conflict and exclusion.

It does so not through explicit and systematic network descriptions like those found in $D_1$, but more generally through critical statements and comments on the history and the state of interactions between actual and potential ICT policy actors in Uganda, and on the allegedly very low level of participativeness and inclusiveness of the country’s ICT policy processes.

Of particular prominence in $D_2$ are for example the many references to the ‘infighting’ and ‘turf wars’ that allegedly characterised the early history of Ugandan ICT policymaking highlighted in section 5.1.1.2 – some of which also go as far as actually listing the main players (or fighters) involved, thereby sketching the

\[\text{\textsuperscript{249} For some examples of how $D_2$ is articulated in practice see Section A-2, Appendix III with references to the conflicts that have characterised Ugandan ICT policymaking; Section B-1.2.1.2, \textit{ibidem}, with reference to actors pursuing their own interests rather than ‘national’ interests; Section B.1.2.2.3, \textit{ibidem}, for characterisations of the ‘usual suspects’; and Sections C-2.2.1.2, C-3.1.3.3, and especially Section C-3.2, \textit{ibidem}, for critiques of the elitist nature of the Ugandan ICT policy networks and the tokenistic or non-existent nature of participation in Ugandan ICT policy process. All these elements are obviously analysed further also in the sections that follow here.}\]
perceived boundaries and the workings of such an allegedly closed and conflictual network in some detail:

The history of ICT in Uganda before was marked by territorial fights: (…) we had different institutions involved, like UNCST and Finance, the Broadcasting Council, the Ministry of Works… And when it started becoming important, there was a lot of pulling in different directions… everybody wanted to control it…” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 24 September 2008)

More importantly however, D₂ extends its critical vision of the Ugandan ICT policy network as problematic and conflictual also beyond what was in the eyes of many just a temporary phase of relative institutional turmoil in the history of ICT policy in Uganda, to comprise also what came both before and after such a phase.

Critical references are made for example also to the reasons why and the ways in which Uganda’s ICT policy network initially came about. In D₂ the ‘scattered initiatives’ that preceded the NICTPF process in the late Nineties are for example (and differently than in D₁) interpreted in rather negative terms, as having been characterised by lack of coordination and having consequently led to waste of resources, and/or as having been a tool for the exertion of significant ‘foreign’ pressures towards the introduction and development of ICTs in the country, leading in turn also to the ‘forced’ entrance of ICTs and ICT policy on to the local policy agenda - to the detriment of similar policy efforts in other sectors and the exclusion or marginalisation of the actors and stakeholders involved in them:

“(…) let’s be honest: which civil society organisation in Uganda has knowledge of ICT? ICT has been forced into civil society by the donors, otherwise we don’t really have active groups in ICT” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 February 2009)

“We wanted [ICT policy] to be a component of science and technology policy, but [IDRC] said ‘let’s have it on it’s own’. (…) Those experts felt it was important. These men and women of ICT were very powerful, and they did not want it to be encumbered, otherwise it would not start. It was the same for the Ministry, we didn’t get a Science and Technology Ministry” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 4 December 2008)

In this respect, the availability of fresh, new funding provided by donors to support ICT policy processes is in fact said to have been an additional important factor in
generating conflict and competition around ICTs and ICT policy: “every Ministry wanted to own the policy process because they knew it was popular among donors” (a local informant quoted in Waiswa Bagiire undated: 6).

Conflict and exclusion are then said by D₂ to have characterised also the more recent history of ICT policy in Uganda. In a D₂ perspective, the progressive consolidation and institutionalisation of Ugandan ICT policymaking practice and networking over time - crowned according to many by the creation of the MoICT in 2006 – is interpreted in fact also if not primarily as the consolidation and ever clearer delineation of pre-existing exclusion mechanisms and lines, with large private telecom operators and other ‘usual suspects’ confirming their foothold in Uganda’s national ICT PN²⁵⁰, and the MoICT coming to constitute a clearly identifiable, single centre of operations, to which access can be and is in fact barred much more easily than was the case when several institutions offered, in a sense, several entry points into the ICT policy process:

“Now that the Ministry of ICT has come on board, it may not be very accountable. The monitoring and evaluation of the process was done by lots of people coming forward before, including researchers like you, but now it’s more closed” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008).

“They should do public workshops, a stakeholder committee, they should not do it alone. This Ministry has driven a lot of things on its own now, they should consult with the private sector, civil society and so on” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008).

In other words, within a D₂ perspective the stabler the PN became, the more elitist and exclusionary it became too, built as it had been also through the regular iteration and ‘sedimentation’ of dedicated stakeholder mapping and categorisation exercises undertaken unilaterally by the government²⁵¹. In the words of a local informant:

“(…) it’s a cocoon. It’s the process that causes that, because when [a policymaker] is told to make a policy, he will look at his database, and

²⁵⁰ The concept of ‘usual suspect’ is discussed in detail in section 5.1.2.1.2.
²⁵¹ See in particular ‘The Composition of Lists’ in section 5.1.2.1.1.
see [names of people active in the sector] and so on, and invite these people” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 13 February 2009)

The ‘closed shop’, competitive nature of the PN object constructed by D₂ is in fact such that in one case a local informant went as far as actually negating the ‘networked’ nature of Ugandan ICT policy activity altogether:

“...It is not a network of people. They just put people there in representation, in stakeholder meetings. And then it depends on who is vocal. (...) They hire consultants first, then they ask stakeholders. Normally, issues taken by stakeholders do not get into the report” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 19 September 2008)

The Policy Process

In addition to (and in connection with) the ‘negative’ PN object discussed above, D₂ constructs a version of the ICT policy process that is – interestingly - similar in structure to the one configured by D₁ (a linear, step-wise process) but which is its opposite in terms of the level of openness and participativeness it affords to ICT stakeholders ‘at large’ and the general public.

In particular, D₂-inspired accounts of the policy process often delve into what I defined as the controversial points of the ‘linear process’ narrative, or model, such as drafting, consultation and final approval stages\(^{252}\), all perceived as points where important decisions are usually made – but alas also as points where the process is said to be typically ‘closed off’ to meaningful input and influence on the part of an ‘optimal’, wide enough range of stakeholders by forceful and inflexible transliminal actors\(^{253}\), performing too strong a ‘gatekeeping’ role.

D₂ speaks in other words (like D₁) of a fundamentally linear, rational policy process, portraying it however (differently from D₁) as inadequately managed by the government. The avenues for influencing policy outcomes ‘normally’ offered by such a process are thus said to be too few and far between\(^{254}\), and ‘real’ influence

\(^{252}\) Cf. 5.1.3.2.2.

\(^{253}\) Cf. 5.1.3.2.4.

\(^{254}\) Cf. section 5.3.3.2.
is said to be the prerogative of an elite operating mainly ‘outside’ the few official, ‘managed’ windows of opportunity for public participation offered along the process:

“I have attended the meeting with UCC and other stakeholders, concerning the way forward [for the TPR]. They were of the view that we invite other players in the sector to provide either service or infrastructure. When will this be approved so that we know what the future has for us? Our people are waiting. Obviously the two companies do not like competition” (Dr Johnson Nkuuhe MP, *Uganda Hansard*, 30 August 2005).

“It is very frustrating to waste our time for over a year, consulting stakeholders in the ICT industry, (...) only to hit a dead end. (...) How can [the Minister] just simplistically dismiss the results of a process which was painstakingly long and relied on so much good will? Are there powers that are at play behind the scenes?” (Wire Lungshabo 2005)

As such, the process object constructed by D₂ is also a highly *ritual and symbolic* one, characterised as it is by a façade of allegedly worthless and tokenistic ‘consultative’ stages, while actual decision-making happens ‘behind the scenes’, ‘elsewhere’ and ‘outside’ the policy process.

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At the end of section 5.3.1.1 I noted how the different diachronic nature of the two objects created by D₁ implied in a sense the logical suspension or negation of causal links between the nature of the PN and that of the policy process in which network actors are engaged.

In this respect, from a logical point of view D₂ does instead seem to imply the existence of causal links between the nature, or ‘quality’, of the PN and that of the process – such causality being in this case of a seemingly circular nature: an elitist, exclusionary network of actors manipulates the policy process in negative, undemocratic ways, and the reiteration of this ‘negative’ or exclusionary version of the policy process over time contributes to consolidating and strengthening such
an elitist network. I will return to a reflection on this aspect in section 5.6.1.1 in this chapter, when I compare the way in which the three discourses identified in this study appear to theorise the relationship between the nature of policy networks and the nature of the processes in which network actors are engaged.

5.4.1.2 Subjects

The subjects configured by D₂ - intended as illustrated previously as actors discursively configured as playing specific roles in the context of the ICT policy process, and allowed or expected to say particular things in such a context - are primarily the following ones:

- Ambitious, directive governmental actors
- Powerful private sector operators and foreign interests
- Interested, influential donors
- Manipulative, dishonest transliminal actors
- The ‘usual suspects’
- Silenced and excluded subjects

Details regarding who/what each of these subject categories actually comprise and what members of each category are/aren’t allowed/expected to say are provided in Table 5.4.

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²⁵⁵ As encapsulated very effectively in one of the quotes already cited above: “(...) it’s a cocoon. It’s the process that causes that (...)” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 13 February 2009)
### Table 5.4 - D<sub>2</sub>-Configured Subjects and Things to Say

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Things to say</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ambitious, directive governmental actors</strong></td>
<td>• ‘Territorial claims’, i.e. claims for competence on ICT policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• ‘False’ claims and statements regarding the level of participation and ownership of ICT policy processes&lt;sup&gt;257&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Naming of ‘desirable’ and ‘undesirable’ stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• In the case of politicians, the ‘final word’ on policy matters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In particular, civil servants and politicians perceived to be in a position to manage and shape the policy process and its outcomes according to personal and/or institutional convenience&lt;sup&gt;256&lt;/sup&gt;. In historical terms, this category includes those who won the initial ‘turf wars’ over competence for ICT policy and eventually came to be key players in the sector, gaining the prerogative to select non-governmental stakeholders for participation in policy formulation - but also those who lost such wars (as ‘failed’ members of the category).</td>
<td>(continues overleaf)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Powerful private sector operators and foreign interests</strong></td>
<td>• Strong statements regarding own interests, expressed not publicly but through lobbying activities undertaken ‘behind the scenes’, aimed directly at government&lt;sup&gt;258&lt;/sup&gt;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>These mainly include large telecom operators but also other types of foreign-owned businesses, such as large software and hardware providers and distributors.</td>
<td>(continues overleaf)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interested, influential donors</strong></td>
<td>• Exhortations to government to produce ICT policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Expressions of own interests regarding specific aspects of policy content, or stakeholder selection – usually ‘behind the scenes’ directly to government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In particular donors who have been and are directly involved in supporting ICT policy formulation in Uganda – but also those perceived to stay or have stayed on the sides&lt;sup&gt;259&lt;/sup&gt;.</td>
<td>• Prescriptions regarding the policy process&lt;sup&gt;260&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>256</sup> See for example Section A-2.1, Appendix III with regard to claims for ‘territory; Section C-3.2, *ibidem*, for critiques on how government actors select ‘stakeholders’ and for allegations of dishonesty regarding the participative nature of the policy process; and Sections C-2.4.3, *ibidem*, with regard to the prerogative of politicians to have the ‘final word’.

<sup>257</sup> It is in fact notable how in several cases D<sub>2</sub>-related statements are also constructed around, or contain, explicit refutations or denials of claims made by others, built on the basis of an argumentative or logical structure that could be schematically summarised as ‘They say X, but in reality it’s Y’, something to which I will return later in the text (see section 5.4.2.2).

<sup>258</sup> Cf. for example Section B-1.2.1.2, Appendix III, and the quotes reported in n.121 in section 4.3.3.

<sup>259</sup> In this respect, Waiswa Bagiire maintains for example that USAID decided to adopt a cautious attitude in relation to participation in the NICTPF process, but at the same time lobbied the Presidency directly for ‘access to information’ to be included in it (Waiswa Bagiire undated: 7).

<sup>260</sup> Cf. for example Section C-1.3.3, Appendix II with reference to donors ‘pushing’ for specific processes or projects, Section C-3.1.3.3, *ibidem*, with regard to the motivation of some donors to participate in / support ICT policy processes, and Section D-1.2.1, *ibidem*, regarding the provision by donors of materials designed to inform the policy process.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects (cont.)</th>
<th>Things to say (cont.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Manipulative, dishonest transliminal actors | • (Unfulfilled) promises to take into account inputs gathered from consultation activities  
• Statements on timing of consultation processes |
| These include government officials and/or consultants who manage policy drafting and consultation activities, and the politicians entrusted with final policy decisions. |
| The ‘usual suspects’ | • Non-controversial statements regarding policy content, functional to the expectations of government officials and of those who count. |
| The ‘regulars’ of ICT policy processes, hailing from the private sector, civil society and academia. | |
| The silenced and excluded | • Requests for meaningful involvement of self and others in ICT policy formulation  
• (in potentia) Relevant, helpful suggestions regarding ICT policy content |
| All those said to be unable to access the ICT policy process due to the way this is organised and administered, or because they are actively prevented from doing so. Depending on the point of view these may include rural populations, local small and medium entrepreneurs, women, the ICT-illiterate and/or the poor. |

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261 Cf. Section C-2.4, Appendix III.  
262 Cf. Section B.1.2.2.3, Appendix III.  
263 “If you have the usual suspects, you have convergence, they all end up agreeing, because if you know the others and see them regularly, you don’t really want to antagonise each other…” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 13 February 2009).  
264 See in particular some of the quotes in Section C-3.1.3.2 of Appendix III.
5.4.1.3 Links to Other Discourses

As a critical, oppositional discourse, D₂ draws at times from (and in turn contributes to) two more general, critical discourses:

- a **political** discourse criticising the NRM government’s attitude to governance and policymaking, and more generally Uganda’s contemporary political setup
- a more **cultural** discourse (self-)portraying Ugandan people as “selfish”

With regard to the first of these discourses, it is for example notable how in some instances of D₂ low levels of public participation in ICT policymaking are put down also to an allegedly widespread attitude of despondency and resignation regarding the influence ‘ordinary’ citizen can actually have on political decision making:

“There are (...) sections of society who feel that their views may not change anything, hence the apathy. There’s an attitude in this country, that these policies are predetermined, so there is apathy” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 5 December 2008)

“We as individuals, we should take a more proactive role, we forget that government is us (...). But we as Ugandans are often resigned to the fact that they have already decided” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 13 February 2009)

Views like these seem to echo quite clearly relatively well-established local critiques of the NRM regime’s attitude to public participation in politics and policymaking. As early as 1992 Omara-Otunnu argued for example that years of ‘no-party’ democracy and executive decision-making by the Movement regime had reduced large sections of the Ugandan population to mere “spectators of politics” (Omara-Otunnu 1992: 461). Ten years later Haroub and Nassali similarly noted that “the enthusiasm and the promise of fundamental change [caused by the advent of the NRM] have faded”, and that “representative groups no longer influence policy in any significant manner nor act to reinforce the citizen’s participation and guarantee the exercise of human rights but use threat to influence political choices” (Haroub and Nassali 2002: 33).
Besides ‘despondency’ and ‘resignation’, other key components or constructs of D$_2$ that seem to echo more general negative depictions of Uganda’s contemporary political setup are:

- The idea that Uganda’s national ICT PN is the object of capture by an elite of powerful players such as government officials, private lobbyists and selected CSO actors, seeking and consolidating non-controversial consensus and agreement around policy matters. In this respect, Brock maintains for example (in a book published and widely available in urban Uganda) that the same seems to happen in relation to Ugandan policymaking on poverty reduction, where a “small, specialised sub-division of civil society has emerged, often closely linked to international NGOs and increasingly capable of meeting the demands of invited consultation (…)”, and where the focus of policy consultation work is “negotiated consensus rather than ideological conflict, and episodes of consultation have a technical rather than political flavour” (Brock 2004b: 48). In the same book, long-time Ugandan resident John De Coninck similarly notes that in Uganda “civil society (…) does not seriously threaten the space currently occupied by the political elite; quite the contrary, it can be seen to provide it with the legitimacy that allows its perpetuation” (De Coninck 2004: 64).

- Mentions of donors as ‘interested’ parties in policymaking, acting also in the interest of private multinationals. In this respect, Haroub and Nassali maintain for example that Uganda’s Sixth and Seventh Parliaments “have substantially devoted their energies to enacting laws in the interest of multinational institutions, and large resources have been provided by the donor countries to strengthen the commercial sector” – something that contributed to making donors also “more inclined to render strong support” to Museveni’s regime (Haroub and Nassali 2002: 48). Similar critiques are made also by other local observers (cf. for example Mwenda 2006).

- The alleged existence of ‘manipulative’, dishonest transliminal actors. Particularly telling in this respect is this extract from a statement made in
Parliament by Hon Alintuma Nsambu MP, who was later to become Minister of State in the new MoICT:

“The only problem [at the Ministry of Education] – and I think it is even the same in other Ministries – [is that Ministers find] strong structures (…) that tie their hands so tight that they can hardly make decisions of their own. Even when they make decisions, eventually they are overturned by the so-called technocrats (…). The truth is (…) we have also to check out the performance and the rigidity and the colonial-styled type of work that the so-called technicians are doing for the ministers” (*Uganda Hansard*, 15 December 2004).

The second, more general discourse to which D₂ seems at times to link is as mentioned a ‘cultural’ discourse referring to the allegedly self-interested and/or rent-seeking nature of Ugandans as a people: in this case, we are dealing with a strong critique of what some perceive to be a characteristic trait of Ugandan culture *tout court*, said to affect among other things also political leadership and policymaking.

The ‘infighting’ that apparently characterised the early history of ICT policy in Uganda was for example once literally said by local observer Waiswa Bagiire to have been due to the “‘selfish’ nature of Ugandans” as a people (Waiswa Bagiire undated: 6) – a problem apparently experienced also in high places and later on, at least judging by the following statement made by MoWHC Minister John Nasasira to opposition MPs during a parliamentary debate on the motion sanctioning the creation of the new MoICT:

“I want to appeal to Members of the Opposition, do not oppose this motion because you think you have no interest in it or maybe you are not partners in it” (*Uganda Hansard*, 19 May 2006).

More importantly and controversially, in its strongest articulations the ‘selfish nature’ discourse refers quite explicitly also to the alleged existence of corruption around ICTs and ICT policy - something that several local observers (not to mention international ones such as the World Bank and bilateral cooperation agencies) argue is a characteristic trait of the Ugandan polity as a whole (cf. for example Tangri and Mwenda 2003, Tangri and Mwenda 2006):
“Our concern is that the Ministry of ICT is driven very much by commercial interests, and they may be derailed by private companies. (...) For example in the war between open source and proprietary systems (...) we think the Ministry is leaning more towards Microsoft. (...) Microsoft is very aggressive in its marketing, they take people on trips and so on – this couldn’t happen in... are you from Britain?” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008)

“These companies, there is a lot of underhand dealing... it’s difficult to get evidence of this, but it wouldn’t be uncommon if someone had made some money out of that. What would 200,000 dollars be, for a company that makes 15 million dollars a year – to prolong the duopoly for a year” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 13 February 2009)

5.4.1.4 Historical Dimension

As illustrated in section 5.4.1.1, D₂’s critique of Ugandan ICT policy practice is an all-encompassing and deep one, which portrays the problems connected with ICT policymaking as a traditional, permanent state of affairs that hasn’t changed much over time. It is therefore not particularly surprising that D₂’s construction of and reliance on ‘past’ objects seems to be relatively limited.

It is possible however to identify the following ‘pre-existing’ objects which D₂ appears to construct and draw from:

a. A particularly conflictual ICT policy network, characterising the early history of ICT policy formulation in Uganda; in many respects this is similar to the ‘chaotic network’ past object created by D₁ - and as in D₁ this object is configured as ‘past’ in light of subsequent developments such as the creation of the MoICT, perceived to have brought ‘order’ and structure to Uganda’s ICT

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265 Cf. also a lengthy debate held in Parliament on 25 August 2004, during which strong allegations were made (and subsequently withdrawn) that the MoWHC and perhaps even the President had interests in telecom companies which had had an impact on decisions regarding the TPR (Uganda Hansard, 25 August 2004). It goes without saying that this study is not intended to evaluate whether ICT policymaking in Uganda is characterised among other things also by corruption: all I do here is report on how specific political arguments are linked together in overall discourses regarding ICT policy making in the context under analysis.
PN; differently from D₁ however, in D₂ such developments are not necessarily interpreted positively: as we have seen in fact the advent of the MoICT in particular is perceived in some cases to actually have worsened the exclusionary nature of the country’s ICT PN (cf. 5.4.1.1);

b. The process of economic liberalisation and privatisation of the telecom sector, which allegedly led foreign-owned private operators to gain powerful positions in both the Ugandan telecom/ICT market and the related policy arena, and which in fact did predate the first ICT policy efforts in Uganda; references to this pre-existing state of affairs are quite common in D₂, as in a D₂ perspective the dominance of private operators is usually said to be one of the key problems that have traditionally affected Ugandan ICT policymaking.

c. policy formulation work that predated the first official ICT policy efforts, including the ‘scattered initiatives’ configured as past objects also in D₁, but also policies not strictly related just to ICTs, such as science and technology (S+T) policy, which as we have seen had apparently been the object of discussion prior to 1997, and then allegedly set aside to make space for policy on ICT (cf. 5.4.1.1).

In terms of how these ‘past’ objects have changed and/or emerged anew over time, it’s interesting to note that while the first of them (a conflictual ICT policy network) is – as in D₁ – likely to have emerged only post-facto (i.e. in the latter phase of the history of ICT policymaking in Uganda), the other two (b. and c.) tend instead to be configured as relatively timeless and permanent (i.e. their value, interpretation and problematic nature do not seem to have changed very much

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266 See in particular the comprehensive version of the chronology of Ugandan ICT policy events contained in Appendix II, and cf. also (Wakabi 2009).
267 Cf. the following interview extract: “For telecommunications, there was no policy, there was just a general policy of liberalization, and the Telecom Policy came only in 1996, with the Telecommunications Act in 1997-98. And the regulations came in around 2001 – but because the private sector was very vibrant, things were already on. In that process MTN fixed the rules in their favour, a 5-year duopoly was set but there was no idea of when those five years started, it was a loophole so big that an elephant could go through it” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008).
over time), further attesting in a sense to the all-encompassing, broad nature of D$_2$’s critique of Ugandan ICT policymaking as a whole.

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In summary, D$_2$ is a relatively well-formed and identifiable *oppositional* discourse, that seems to emerge and develop in particular as a critique to D$_1$. In the next section I will look into how this discourse is constructed by examining the discourse coalition that espouses it.

5.4.2 Discourse Coalition

Similarly to what we did in relation to D$_1$, in this section we will review the key elements composing the discourse coalition that constructs and diffuses D$_2$, looking in particular at who appears to actively sponsor and articulate D$_2$; how the D$_2$ coalition constructs its discourse; where such a coalition performs its discourse; what such a coalition is made of in material terms; and through what acts it performs and develops D$_2$.

5.4.2.1 Who

D$_2$ is articulated most clearly in documents and statements produced by the following key categories of actors:

- *Local private sector operators*, who seem to be by far the most vocal proponents of D$_2$, and whose articulation of this discourse seems to take place mostly in reaction to the allegedly overbearing power of large foreign-owned operators and vendors (e.g. Wire Lunghabo 2005, Muwanga 2005a and personal interviews).

- *Civil society organisations*, who - as seen in 5.1.3.3.2 - often express critiques regarding the level and quality of participation in ICT policy making, in particular in relation to the exclusion of women from the policy process and the insensitivity of ICT policy to gender issues, but also in relation more generally to the exclusion of ‘end users’ from ICT
policy formulation activities, and in particular end users hailing from rural areas (UWCI 2004, APC/IICD 2007a and personal interviews).

- **Government**: perhaps unexpectedly, $D_2$ is sometimes articulated also by government officials, in particular in relation to aspects such as the power of large private operators, or the ‘incestuous’ character of the network.\footnote{Cf. the following extracts from interviews with government officials “[T]he private sector has interest in making profits, and this is in conflict with providing access, for example in rural areas. (...) [The private sector] is (...) also arrogant. Often they say they don’t see the role of government”; “Yes, we are quite an incestuous community, but even at [ICT-related international conference recently held in Kampala] you will see the same players, but we’re a growing family, even in IT, people like Microsoft, HP and so on they will all at some point cross your path”.

- **Parliamentarians**, who like local private sector operators and government officials often lament the allegedly phenomenal power and policy influence of large private operators, but also criticise more generally the exclusionary nature of Uganda’s ICT PN (sometimes going as far as asking the government to explain and/or modify stakeholder listings – as seen in Republic of Uganda 2008b: 2, 2008a).\footnote{See for example Uganda Hansard, 30 August 2005 - quoted previously in section 5.4.1.1.}

5.4.2.2 How

Like $D_1$, also $D_2$ is constructed by the actors who espouse it through the employment of some of the linguistic artefacts analysed previously in this chapter, which I review below.

\footnote{In this respect, it’s notable how also in the realm of ICT policy the Parliament seems to work along the lines of the ‘parliament as opposition’ model that according to Keating characterises contemporary parliamentary work in Uganda (Keating 2008) – a model or function apparently particularly appreciated by donors, as suggested by a respondent operating in the parliamentary environment: “Donors are interested in committees that put government to task” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 February 2009).}
Narratives

As an oppositional discourse, $D_2$ often makes reference to/builds on the same narratives that contribute to the dominance of $D_1$, interpreting them however in negative, oppositional terms.

The clearest evidence of this dynamic is provided by discursive instances in which dominant $D_1$-related narratives are acknowledged and immediately negated or refuted, following an argumentative or logical structure that could be summarised as “They/we say/do X but in reality it’s Y”. For example:

“[At the workshop] they said it was for input, but really it was just presented” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 24 September 2008)

“They always say consultation has taken place, but I don’t really know about any meetings upcountry…” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 27 September 2008)

“They invited for consultations, but it wasn’t consultation, they were just there to tell us what they had decided” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 13 February 2009)

Along the same lines, when it comes more generally to the ‘linear process’ (LP) narrative$^{271}$ $D_2$-espousing actors often seem to acknowledge the step-wise, rational and highly participative policy formulation process at the centre of the narrative as a theoretical (and desirable) possibility, which never turns into reality - mainly due to the incompetence or dishonesty of transliminal actors and other powerful players, who treat various process stages (consultation stages in particular) as merely symbolic or formulaic, or actively reject or reverse the outcomes of policy processes and/or fail to complete them as they should have been (as was perceived to be the case respectively with the TPR and the NICTPF)$^{272}$.

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$^{271}$ Cf. section 5.1.3.2.
$^{272}$ Cf. section 5.1.2.3.2.
D₂ seems in other words to integrate/build on core elements of the LP narrative, portraying it however in most cases in opposite, negative terms, as a sort of ‘betrayed ideal’.

A similar dynamic seems to apply to the positive narrative on participation⁷⁷³ - complete with “not X but Y” logical constructs like the ones mentioned above:

“We call it participatory, but it isn’t really” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 February 2009)

“Full involvement would be with open invitations: ‘we are developing this, we invite you all to come, and everybody can come’ – but it rarely happens” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 24 September 2008)

D₂’s critique of the way in which public participation in ICT policymaking has traditionally been managed in Uganda is however much deeper and all-encompassing than that referring to the LP narrative – so much so that in this case it’s perhaps more appropriate to talk, as I have done in section 5.1.3.3.2, of the existence of a fully articulated and easily identifiable counter-narrative on participation that seems to represent a specular inversion of the positive one, on which D₂ seems to draw in significant ways.

Finally, D₂ also tends to refute the key narratives regarding the origins of ICT policymaking in Uganda. On one hand, references to the active role of the President in initiating ICT policymaking are for example practically absent from D₂ utterances and statements; on the other hand, as mentioned previously the ‘scattered initiatives’ narrative too is often referred to in negative terms – ‘scattering’ being perceived in D₂ as the consequence of competition and lack of coordination amongst donors.

The fact that D₂ seems to be constructed and strengthened through the development of what could be defined as discursive ‘thorns’ in the sides of dominant ICT policy-related narratives confirms in my view its speculatively critical, oppositional nature in respect of D₁.

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⁷⁷³ Cf. section 5.1.3.1.1.
Metaphors

The ‘conflictual ICT PN’ object constructed by D₂ is undoubtedly characterised and strengthened as such also through the relatively liberal use by D₂ coalition actors of metaphors relating to competition and conflict.²⁷⁴

The shift in the object of conflict-related metaphors noted in section 5.1.1.2 from relations within government to struggles between government and non-governmental stakeholders then arguably plays a key role in maintaining the discursive ‘continuity’ of such an object as a (perennially) conflictual one (cf. 5.4.1.1) - the only change having ostensibly occurred, in a D₂ perspective, in the locus of conflict, from intra-governmental relationships to relationships between the government and what lies outside it.

Classifications

The classification mechanisms employed to construct and sustain D₂ seem to be less complex and extensive than those employed in the construction of D₁, and seem to be organised primarily around explicitly oppositional ‘us vs. them’ dichotomies.

Stakeholder classifications by interest or by contribution are for example employed primarily to populate two opposite, somewhat manichaean categories of stakeholder: ‘included’ stakeholders vs. ‘excluded’ ones.

‘Included’ stakeholders usually comprise, in a D₂ perspective, actors whose interests are perceived to be ‘selfish’ and ‘unpatriotic’ and/or whose contribution to the policy process is negative (or even non-existent, as the third quote below suggests), such as (nearly exclusively in fact) large private sector operators.

‘Excluded’ stakeholders normally comprise instead actors whose interests are perceived to be ‘genuine’ and ‘patriotic’, and/or whose contribution to the policy...
would be precious, if only they were allowed to participate, such as local, small private sector operators, or individuals hailing from other underrepresented categories.

The following interview extracts illustrate the way in which these dichotomies are operated in practice (members of opposite categories highlighted in italic):

“In 2003, we had big boys like MTN etc., but you don’t want to block out other smaller ones too” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 17 September 2008)

“The issues of [local companies] are different from those of MTN or UTL. (…) MTN and UTL are all owned by foreigners, and their interests are different” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 13 February 2009) (local vs. multinational companies)

Government also didn’t leave many spaces for civil society on committees, often just one. (…) [E]ven though MTN and UTL were not present at meetings, they were on the committee” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 27 September 2008)

“...I am not happy with the situation where the lucky few who are known in the ICT sector are invited to input into the process. There are many young people out there who could contribute, there are also many old people who could contribute, and there are many people in the diaspora who could also contribute” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 13 February 2009)275

In addition to this, D₂’s critique of Ugandan ICT policy practice is constructed also on the basis of process classifications by stimulus and input, again employed in a somewhat manichaean manner, mainly to distinguish between good processes vs. bad processes, where good processes include ‘bottom-up’ processes and/or processes based mainly on ‘internal’ inputs, and bad processes comprise ‘top-down’ processes or processes based primarily on ‘external’ inputs (e.g. by consultants and/or donors).

275 For more examples of the characterisation of ‘patriotic’ vs. ‘selfish’ stakeholders, and of the ‘included’ as useless vs. the ‘excluded’ as useful, see respectively sections B-1.2.1.2 and C-3.2.2 of Appendix III.
For example, coding A for ‘good’ and B for ‘bad’:

“How do you get people to participate? You inform them, give the basics, it’s like teaching, you give the tools, then you open a discussion [A]. When you go to a lecture theatre, you don’t start by discussing [B]. When you have a jury system, the jury first listens to the case, then makes a decision [A]. But you cannot make policy through a 2-hour consultation [B]. You can’t make policy by blindly selecting people and copying things [B]” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 2 December 2008).

“I have always hated consultants, external consultants I mean, for example once there was one (…) who had been engaged for one million dollars to develop a framework for UCC, and at the initial workshop, it was clear that they just took the FCC and scaled it down, and it wasn’t appropriate [B]. So when we did the TPR, it was all done internally [A]” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 24 September 2008)

“To a large extent, the [NICTPF] is what the name says it is, i.e. a national process, because (…) for example all meetings were convened by local actors and so on [A]. This cannot be said of the Rwandan policy for example, which was developed by AISI in collaboration with [donors]: it is a good and comprehensive document, but is it really theirs [B]?” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 May 2008)

5.4.2.3 Where

$D_2$ seems to be performed primarily outside the ‘official’ spaces of ICT policymaking, which as seen previously (section 5.4.2.3) are instead ‘occupied’ mainly by $D_1$. In most cases, however, the spaces where $D_2$ is articulated and performed are actually located on the fringes of ‘official’, $D_1$-related ones.

$D_2$ is for example frequently uttered in the context of CSO-hosted public events held in central Kampala, and quite often in the same places where official policy activities also take place at other times: it is the case for example of the ‘dialogues’ periodically hosted by CSOs like WOUGNET or I-Network, which are often held in central Kampala hotels such as Grand Imperial or Africana. In other cases, such meetings take place directly in CSO offices, usually also located on the fringes of central Kampala.\textsuperscript{276}

\textsuperscript{276} Cf. section 5.2.1, and the maps included in section E-2.1 of Appendix III.
As one of the categories of actors who perform D₂ is that of parliamentarians, another key space where D₂ is often performed is Parliament, also located in central Kampala and very close to other ICT policy-related governmental buildings.

Most D₂-related utterances seem to be articulated however in virtual spaces, such as email discussion lists²⁷⁷, or the media – the latter often relaying concerns expressed in Parliament and/or in mailing lists as part of their reporting work²⁷⁸.

Finally, extranational spaces such as those hosting international ICT policy-related conferences also seem to have a role in constructing and strengthening D₂, as they offer opportunities for the criticisms expressed by civil society actors on Ugandan ICT policymaking practice to gain traction in the national context:

“(…) some people said WSIS was a waste of time, but for us it was good to establish credibility with government officials, because we were also going to the summit, from Uganda, but with our own resources, so our credibility increased” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 February 2009).

5.4.2.4 Material Elements

Compared to those employed for the construction of D₁, the resources available to and employed by actors in the construction and performance of D₂ are relatively scarce.

D₂ is for example hardly ever articulated in an explicit manner in ‘official’ reports by non-governmental actors, with the exception perhaps of reports focusing specifically on gender-related aspects of Ugandan ICT policy and policymaking, which often configure the alleged exclusion of women from ICT policy processes

²⁷⁷ Cf. for example the I-Network email discussion list, the archives of which are available at http://bit.ly/hcUguf (last visited 7 February 2011). For an example of the critiques expressed by list members regarding the work of the MoICT see the extracts of emails regarding the formation of the NITA board published at: http://bit.ly/eR3JMA (last visited 7 February 2011).

²⁷⁸ This is particularly the case for national daily newspapers such as the Daily Monitor and the New Vision (see for example Musoke 2003, Muwanga 2005a, Karugaba 2008, Musa Ladu 2008, Ssekalo 2009).
as a problem that needs to be resolved (see for example WOUGNET 2002, 2006c). This means amongst other things that the amount of document (re)production resources employed for the construction of D₂ is significantly lower than is the case for D₁.

Also worth noting is that in most cases the resources available to non-governmental actors for the production and distribution of documents and reports - including those that in some way criticise the government’s work in relation to ICT policymaking - are available mainly thanks to funding provided by international donor agencies²⁷⁹. This means – importantly - that donors are involved in resourcing the construction and performance of both D₁ and D₂. The same applies also to the resources necessary to support meetings and workshops in which civil society actors discuss ICT policy-related issues, which often lead in turn also to the production of the reports mentioned above.

As D₂ is also constructed and performed through parliamentary work, and in particular the work of the Parliament’s ICT committee, the discourse exists also thanks to the resources employed to support the work of parliamentarians (and in particular ICT committee members), which include for example stationery, fuel, accommodation, venue hire, catering, air tickets, rapporteuring and monetary allowances, necessary to support for example fact finding missions and/or the organisation of workshops and other events outside parliamentary buildings in expenditure associated with day to day administration of course (Republic of Uganda 2008c)²⁸⁰.

Besides these examples, which refer to the production of the relatively few ‘official’ (i.e. written) D₂-related utterances and statements I have come across during my

²⁷⁹ Since its inception, WOUGNET has for example been the recipient of funding from a variety of international donor agencies, including the APC, HIVOS, the FAO and the UNDP (see http://www.wougnet.org/cms/content/view/20/33/). I-Network has on the other hand been traditionally funded mainly by the IIID (see http://www.i-network.or.ug/partners.html).

²⁸⁰ As an indication, the proposed budget to cover all the expenses incurred by the Parliamentary ICT committee for 2009/10 totalled just over 213 million Ugandan shillings - approximately GBP 68’000 at that time’s exchange rate (Republic of Uganda 2008c). Obviously the resources available to the committee aren’t employed exclusively in the construction of D₂, but as noted previously, Parliament seems to be a key centre for the construction and maintenance of this discourse.
research, it has to be said that much of D₂ is in fact performed through oral statements (such as the ones generated through the interviews I carried out while in the field), or through relatively informal means of expression, such as emails to mailing lists. In the case of the latter, the resources employed are mainly of an electronic nature, and are usually accessible thanks to either private funding (in the case of individuals who are not attached to CSOs), or donor funding (in the case of those who are).

Finally, as mentioned above, D₂ is constructed also through the relaying of D₂-related statements through the media, which presupposes the availability of journalists’ time, and of the means necessary to produce and publish newspapers and media websites.

The main point to note here in my view is that in all the cases mentioned above most of the resources employed for the construction of D₂ seem to be available primarily thanks to donor funding or private funding, while government seems to have a much less pronounced role in this respect²⁸¹.

5.4.2.5 Acts

D₂ is also constructed and performed through a number of individual or collective acts.

Acts of an individual nature include in particular the sending of critical messages to electronic mailing lists such as I-Network and WOUGNET’s email distribution lists.

Collective acts include instead primarily ‘peripheral’ acts such as those discussed in section 5.2.3.3, e.g.:

²⁸¹ With the exception perhaps of the budgets made available to Parliament and to its ICT committee – but according to a respondent, these are not sufficient alone to support all the activities the committee would like to engage in, and the expectation is in fact that also in this case, donors support would help: “[The ICT committee] has not attracted money from donors, so [it has] a little budget, and [MPs] can’t go on trips, for example to Sweden, to see how things work there. Donors are interested in committees that put government to task” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 February 2009).
• public campaigns and lobbying for the inclusion of a wider number of stakeholders in ICT policy process, in particular in relation to gender;
• workshops and ‘dialogues’ organised by CSOs, often providing the basis for the successive production of reports that are critical of government’s work (cf. also previous section);
• sessions of the ICT parliamentary committee, in which Parliament fulfils its ‘challenging’ function in respect of government work.

It should be noted however that in several cases D$_2$ emerges in a sense also as a consequence of policy actors’ participation in ‘official’ ICT policy-related collective acts and activities – i.e. D$_2$’s critiques often seem to draw particular impetus from individuals’ direct experiences of the way in which policy consultation is organised and managed, as a critical reflexion on such activities$^{282}$. In this respect, it could be argued that D$_2$ attributes to workshops and other types of consultation activities the same kind of validatory function attributed to these types of event by D$_1$ (cf. section 5.3.2.5) - the important difference being however that in a D$_2$ perspective the validatory aims of events of this kind are often perceived not to have been reached.

5.4.3 Summary

In summary, D$_2$ speaks of an inaccessible, conflictual and elitist policy network, engaged in ‘linear’ policy processes that are relatively impermeable to inputs by the general public, and in particular by what are perceived as ‘genuine’, legitimate local stakeholders, said to be consistently excluded from policy formulation work.

In discourse-analytical terms, a key characteristic of this discourse is also its reactive, oppositional nature, in that it often seems to emerge primarily as a response to (and critique, or refutation of) D$_1$ - as attested for example also by the frequent recourse made by D$_2$-espousing actors to the ‘they say X (D$_1$), but in

$^{282}$ Cf. for example some of the critiques relating to the TPR, which as seen previously in some cases make explicit reference to policy consultation activities whose results were subsequently allegedly ignored (see for example Wire Lunghabo 2005).
reality it’s Y’ argumentative structure identified in section 5.4.2.2. The key components, or constitutive elements, of D₂ are summarised in Table 5.5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5.5 - Constitutive Elements of D₂</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objects Constructed</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subjects Configured</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Links to Other Discourses</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Historical Dimension</strong> (references to ‘past’ objects)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As noted previously, D₂ is also a minority discourse, not in the sense that it is espoused by an identifiable minority group of actors, but because it is articulated more rarely (by different types of actors, including in government) than D₁.

Analysing the nature and composition of the discourse coalition that formulates and ‘sponsors’ D₂ has enabled me however to go some way in explaining also why D₂ seems to have remained a minority discourse all along the history of ICT policymaking in Uganda. The coalition that constructs and propagates D₂ seems in fact to be significantly less resourced, and thus in a sense ‘weaker’ than that behind D₁: it should therefore not come as a surprise that D₂ has remained a minority, non-dominant discourse in respect of an apparently well-resourced (and thus powerful) discourse such as D₁.

The main components of the D₂ coalition are summarised in Table 5.6.
Table 5.6 - Key Components of the D₂ Coalition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who</th>
<th>Local private sector operators; civil society organisations; government officials; parliamentarians.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How</td>
<td>Reversals or refutations of the ‘positive’ narratives on the policy process and on participation; conflict-related metaphors; binary classifications (us vs. them; the excluded vs. the included; top-down vs. bottom-up processes).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where</td>
<td>Spaces located on the fringes of ‘official’ ICT policy spaces; Parliament; virtual spaces e.g. mailing lists; extranational spaces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>Civil society reports; parliamentary reports and documents; mailing lists, media articles – and the resources necessary to produce/maintain the above, incl. ICT, logistics, catering and money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acts</td>
<td>Individual expressions through mailing lists, sometimes also relayed by the media; public campaigns and lobbying; workshops and ‘dialogues’ organised by CSOs; sessions of the ICT parliamentary committee.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the next section I will review the key characteristics of a third, alternative discourse on Ugandan ICT policymaking, and review the nature and composition of the coalition that performs it.

I will then proceed, in Part III of this chapter, to a more detailed comparative analysis of the discourses and discourse coalitions identified in the course of my research.
5.5 Dynamic, Fluid Networks Characterised by Competition

The third and last key discourse identified in the course of my research (D₃) differs from those analysed previously in that it doesn’t construct the image of a single, identifiable and relatively stable ICT policy network as is the case with D₁ and D₂, speaking instead of the existence of fluid and temporary constellations of relationships with ‘variable geometry’ or configuration depending on the task at hand and on contextual/historical conditions. In this context, access to the network (or networks) is characterised/regulated primarily by constant competition between actors²⁸³.

In narrative terms, D₃ can be summarised as follows:

In Uganda ICT policy formulation originated from the efforts of a limited number of local ‘champions’ and ‘pioneers’, aided by donors acting in a catalytic role.

The government’s first policy initiatives in this area were characterised by lack of clarity with regard to responsibilities and roles and by a high level of competition for positions of influence in and on the policy process, among both governmental and non-governmental actors and entities.

This level of competition then continued to characterise also subsequent phases of the history of Ugandan ICT policymaking practice: as a consequence, some actors emerged and consolidated their role and policy influence over time, while others left the scene or ended up being excluded from it (not necessarily permanently) - depending on their success or interest in the perennial competition for access that characterises ICT policymaking in the country.

While the creation of the MoICT certainly increased clarity and brought more order to (and a central point of reference for) relationships and negotiations around ICT policy, the composition of Uganda’s ICT policy network, or – better - networks, has thus been traditionally quite fluid, with temporary constellations of relationships regularly emerging around specific policy issues or processes in an ad hoc, unsystematic manner, and always with a certain level of improvisation, in particular on the government’s part.

In this sense, Uganda could be said to still be ‘finding its feet’ in relation to ICT policymaking, and the consolidation of a single, stable and easily identifiable policy network around ICTs is probably still some way off – if it will ever (or should ever) be attained.

²⁸³ Of a decidedly less conflictual nature than is the case in D₂, as we will see.
Similarly to \( D_2 \), \( D_3 \) is a minority discourse, in that it is practised more rarely and by a more limited number of actors than dominant discourse \( D_1 \).

The key constitutive elements of this discourse are reviewed below.

### 5.5.1 Constitutive Elements

#### 5.5.1.1 Objects

The ‘network’ and ‘process’ objects constructed by \( D_3 \) are somewhat different from those constructed in other discourses, in that they are relatively complex and multidimensional. In particular, \( D_3 \) configures:

1. in network terms, different constellations of relationships around specific ICT policy issues at specific points in time;
2. in process terms, not one but several actual or possible ways to make ICT policy, i.e. different types of policy process, access to which is invariably quite competitive and thus dependent on the competitive abilities of different actors in specific contexts.

**The Policy Network**

As suggested above, \( D_3 \) doesn’t seem to make reference to the existence of a single, identifiable policy network around ICTs (however this may change or have developed over time), constructing instead a landscape made of multiple, ad hoc networks coagulating around different policy issues at specific moments in time.

We are in other words far both from the image of an all-comprehensive, open and participative ICT policy network constructed by \( D_1 \) and from the opposite image

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284 For some examples how \( D_3 \) is articulated in practice see Section C-1.2.1, Appendix III with reference to the role of early ICT ‘champions’ and pioneers; and Section B-2.2, *ibidem*, with reference to the coexistence of different ways of making ICT policy in Uganda and to the idea that the country is still ‘finding its feet’ (with regard to the latter see also Section C-3.1.3.1, *ibidem*). The discourse is also articulated more generally in quasi-academic reports on the status of ICTs in Uganda and in other documents originating from an academic environment (e.g. Shirley *et al.* 2002, Tusubira 2003a, 2003b, Tusubira *et al.* 2007, infoDev 2008).
constructed in $D_2$ of a network (and still a single one) characterised by closure and elitism: in the context of $D_3$, the actors engaged in relationships around ICT policy come and go depending on the issue at stake and on various contextual/historical factors, ranging from the perceived existence and strength of the institutions tasked with formulating ICT policy at a specific moment in time, to the existence of specific political and economic interests around specific policy issues, and/or the nature of individual relationships between specific actors – to name but a few.

In a $D_3$ perspective the perceived centrality in the early years of ICT policy in Uganda of institutions like the UNCST and of the people involved in its work (including staff from donor agencies such as the IDRC) is for example often put down to factors such as ‘first mover advantage’, the availability of fresh funding, or the UNCST’s political clout, rather than (just) to the existence of specialist expertise on ICTs within and around the institution, and/or an official request by the President that UNCST produce ICT policy as is the case in $D_1$ and $D_2$.

“[T]he [NICTPF] process was owned primarily by UNCST, as it had first mover advantage, also thanks to an already existing relationship with IDRC, who had funded telecentre projects with UNCST, and was now funding the policy process” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 September 2008)

“You have to have a lead agency, to bring stakeholders together. Because MoFPED had the muscle, and UNCST was within it, they took the lead” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 12 November 2008).

In this respect, Ofir also noted that in the early years of Uganda’s ICT policy history “many of the role players [involved across different policy initiatives] were the same or interacted during various [other] consultative processes” in relation to ICTs (Ofir 2003a: 52) – suggesting the existence already at a very early stage of a sort of ‘meta-network’ comprising various sub-networks or groups involved in policy formulation around specific issues (e.g. telecom policy, or ICT in education, or agriculture) in addition to being involved in the development of the NICTPF, and also suggesting that membership across such different networks could in some cases overlap.
In addition to this, D₃'s PNs also seem to emerge and dissolve on a continuous basis, again depending mostly on historical/contextual factors. The temporary emergence around 2004 of the NPA (and the network around it) as a key player in relation to ICT policy was for example due according to some also, if not principally, to the absence at that time of an identifiable alternative institutional infrastructure explicitly tasked with the implementation of the NICTPF.

“So we have the [NICTPF] in place, and the UCC is spearheading. UCS was being transformed into a kind of National Information Technology Authority, and Mulira, the current Minister of ICT [at the time of the interview], was appointed to do that. But there was still a problem of institutional framework, people would say ‘I’m in charge’, ‘I’m in charge’. [The NPA] knew ICT needed a plan and a framework, so [it] took the opportunity and instituted the Inter-Agency ICT National Planning Team” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 12 November 2008).

The historical conditions temporarily existed in other words for a new agency and network to take on a policy task, and the NPA ‘spontaneously’ did so up until the creation of the MoICT (at which point the agency and the network around it very much retreated to the background as far as ICT policy was concerned).

Thirdly, the ICT PN(s) constructed by D₃ are also characterised by the coexistence of diachronic continuity and discontinuity in relation to membership. Some informants stressed for example that in their view, while the institutional composition of Uganda’s ICT PN had changed over time (first with the UNCST leading, then the MoWHC, the NPA, and finally the MoICT), many of the individuals involved and occupying leading positions had actually remained the same throughout (while others had dropped out):

“Some of the past actors are still involved, e.g. in task forces currently managed by MoICT (…), while others are not part of the policy process anymore” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 September 2008).

“After the [NICTPF] had been developed, policy work continued, with the same people, less some” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 19 September 2008).

In this respect, Tusubira et al. also noted relatively recently that “even when the sectors were under different political guidance [as was the case particularly in the
early stages of the history of ICT policymaking in Uganda], the players established informal, semi-formal, and sometimes formal methods of collaboration” (Tusubira et al. 2007: 17) – i.e. the network(s) coagulating around ICT policy issues appeared to have been only partially based or dependent on institutional setups, having been equally (if not primarily) shaped also by the tenor and nature of existing and developing relationships between individuals who for various reasons were active in the sector.

In summary, within a D₃ perspective there is thus no single, identifiable ICT PN, but a multiplicity of ad hoc, synchronic and diachronic relationship assemblages around ICT policy, the configuration of which depends on a variety of contextual factors, ranging from the individual to the historical.

There is however one key common trait to the network(s) portrayed by D₃: access to it/them is configured as a particularly competitive business, both for governmental and non-governmental actors and institutions.

Competition within government is perceived in particular to have existed not only in the early years of Ugandan ICT policy history, but also in more recent times:

“People [were] eager to own parts of the [NICTPF] process, because if you make policy, then you are also likely to implement it, which means you gain resources, including through the creation of spinoffs owned by government officials” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 May 2008).

“[The] rivalry [between those who are responsible for ICT and those who are responsible for information] continued until today, for example the Broadcasting Council, it was run by the Ministry of Information, since it dealt with content, but it was an issue to decide where it should be” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 2 December 2008)

“For broadcasting, the broadcasters want their own regulator, for instance, and they’ve been able to convince the Prime Minister that ‘those who want a single regulator are trying to wither your power’, but they are just defending their interests” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 12 February 2009)

285 The reference to the Prime Minister is owed to the fact that the Ministry of Information was at the time a department of the OPM.
A similar dynamic is then said to have traditionally applied also to relationships between non-governmental actors, perceived as competitively vying between them for access to ICT PNs and for influence on policy processes - their success depending on their ability to be ubiquitous, vocal, ‘noisy’ and/or perceived as relevant and worth listening to:

“[The] NGOs [that were consulted as part of the NICTPF process] were those who’d come out prominently, like the Uganda Computer Society” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 4 December 2008)

“[You have to] be very noisy, keep talking and pushing. [Be] very vocal” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 24 September 2008)

“(...) no one else will issue [academics] an invitation to the table. We must go for the places” (Tusubira 2003a: 22).

In this respect, D₃’s PNs are somewhat similar to the ones configured by D₂ (e.g. with reference to competition for resources, or the importance of being vocal) – the difference being however that in D₃, competition for access is not perceived as being as conflictual as is the case in D₂:

“There was some lack of clarity at the beginning as to who should own the process and the policy – but this never generated any serious frictions anyway: it was just debate” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 May 2008, emphasis mine).

Finally, it is notable how D₃’s vision of non-governmental actors as perennially competing for influence on and access to ICT policymaking also applies to international donors:

“Having IDRC was seen by other foreign players as domineering. Although it was liberal in dealing with us, other foreign players saw IDRC as taking all the credit for the project and were reluctant to offer advice and even contribute to its funding” (Waiswa Bagiire undated: 7).

“Each donor wants to be visible, he wants to account to those that provide the money, so he has to push for policies and for the ideals of those who support it. [So] if you have more than one donor in a sector, you have a problem, because it’s hard to get them to agree. It becomes an issue of how to coordinate them. For example you may ask them to put all the money in a common basket, or there can be what is called ‘donor division of labour’: for example if the Dutch have
ICT programmes, either other donors decide that the Dutch are the leaders of the area, and they work with them, or they will go to other areas” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 5 December 2008).

The Policy Process

$D_3$ speaks not only of different PNs but also of different ways in which ICT policy can be and is made in Uganda – i.e. of different types of ICT policy process.

While the ‘linear process’ model seems to retain a certain centrality as a standard, if not an ideal process also in this discourse$^{286}$, $D_3$ is in fact also the discourse in which the existence of different possible types of policy process (e.g. top down vs. bottom up, or fully linear vs. ‘rushed’, e.g. the emanation of directives or ‘guidelines’) is configured and articulated more clearly and explicitly compared to the other discourses that have emerged from my analysis.

And as is the case with networks, in $D_3$ the reasons for the existence and the employment by government of different ways or methods to produce ICT policy are usually indicated as lying primarily in the combined influence of a variety of historical or ‘contextual’ factors.

The following comments by a senior UCC official regarding the ‘failure’ of the TPR and the subsequent emanation of ministerial guidelines derived from it are a case in point:

“The exigencies of a situation may require that policy principles are derived from consultation even though the full process is not followed. Of course the Minister has been criticised that now we are operating the sector through guidelines instead of policy, but this was important so that the sector would not stop” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 5 December 2008, emphasis mine).

As we will recall, the ‘situation’ the official is referring to is in fact constituted on one hand by the stalling of the TPR process, due according to some informants to

$^{286}$ Many informants who appeared to espouse $D_3$ started for example their descriptions of the ICT policy process by illustrating the ‘linear’ model, focusing only later on other possible policymaking modes.
factors such as the imminence of elections and/or the lack of political will at Cabinet level to change the way the market had been set up\textsuperscript{287}; and on the other hand by the subsequent change in leadership brought about by the creation of the MoICT, combined with growing public perceptions about the reform of the telecom market being overdue\textsuperscript{288}. A number of historical, political and more generally ‘environmental’ factors and events are in other words perceived to have led in this case to a transition from a full, ‘linear’ policy process like the TPR was supposed to have been, to the ‘rushed’ emanation of brief and simple ministerial guidelines designed to achieve one of the key goals of the reform, i.e. the liberalisation of the telecom market.

Other contextual factors perceived by D\textsuperscript{3}\textsuperscript{-espousing actors to lead or have led policy processes to take particular ‘shapes’ or be approached in different ways variously include the amount of \textit{time} available to produce policy, the availability and form of \textit{donor support}, and/or the presence of \textit{external pressures} such as the comparative progress made in other countries:

“We always don’t give as much time as we wish to the policy process. It’s always been that policy comes up when we want to solve a problem, and problems are always time-bound, so we have not had time to consult and consider things fully” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008).

“[It] was a challenge to the team in terms of making the time, we had little time to work on it and had to drive this at marathon pace” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 2 December 2008).

“[The role of donors is] to provide guidance, and support, financial support – because ICT policy in [developing] countries is not a priority, so there would be little or no government funding for it” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 26 September 2008).

“[The regional ICT policy harmonisation process] was all organised in Arusha by the EAC. And it is a regional support programme, part of COMESA, paid for by the European Union, with staff appointed by Danish Management [a private consultancy]. Control by government on

\textsuperscript{287} See ‘Ministers and the Cabinet’ in Section 5.1.3.2.4, and section C-2.4.3.2 in Appendix III.
\textsuperscript{288} Tusubira \textit{et al.} maintain for example that emanation of the 2006 telecom policy guidelines by the new Minister of ICT had been “driven by a public outcry” (Tusubira \textit{et al.} 2007: 17).
this process is maybe 40%, not more. When the consultants go to Arusha, they will be briefed there about their work” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 12 November 2008).

“We heard about what Rwanda was doing only after having approved the [NICTPF], and it was on a comparative basis, so as to put pressure on countries to now implement policies” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 19 September 2008).

One common aspect to many D3 descriptions of ICT policy processes in Uganda is however their perceived ‘messiness’, variously put down to competition for access, lack of coordination, or in some cases even simple incompetence and ‘disorganisation’:

“[The NICTPF process] became a little messy at some point: it suffered from several people wanting to own it (...).The ‘messiness’ (...) came from the fact that many actors were involved and there was lack of coordination: if there had been a Ministry of ICT as there is now, things would be different” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 September 2008).

“The end result was not clear, because it was initiated by many people, and the vision was missing (...) [A]nother challenge was how to identify champions, the owners of the process. (...) As we had many consultants, there was also an issue of understanding where the process started and ended, and this had an impact on who would take it forward, it was unclear” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008).

“Sometimes what the process came up with was very rudimentary information, with no tangibles to move on to the next stage. The tangibles as actual documents were rudimentary, but people then moved on the next stage based on this rudimentary information” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 19 September 2008)

“Basically again that thing was presented to us not yet finished, the night before the meeting. (...) They are disorganised. Their intentions are good, but they are disorganised” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 2 December 2008)

“If the Ministry is the one drafting the policy, they should have a framework within which to collect and organise ideas, so that when the information comes in, they know what to do with it, and which bit goes where. But they don’t have the resources, either that or somebody is not doing their job” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 February 2009)

“At one meeting there were a lot of whispers, on whether some things had been taken care of [by the steering committee]. (...) [T]hey said
they had been, and that it was in the main document, but (...) it was
difficult to understand where in the document they had been addressed
(...) [M]any of the staff are from the previous Ministry – they just need
to get their act together. They’ll eventually get there” (Personal
Interview, Kampala, 2 December 2008)

In summary, D₃ constructs not one but several coexisting types or ‘models’ of
policy process, all characterised however by a significant level of competition for
access, and by a certain level of ‘messiness’ and disorganisation on the part of
governmental actors.

***

As with the previous two discourses, it’s useful to look briefly into the conceptual
status within D₃ of possible causal links between ‘network’ and ‘process’.

In this respect, some of the respondents quoted arguably highlight such links quite
explicitly, portraying as they do the nature of the ICT policy process as being quite
directly affected by the (apparently fluid and somewhat chaotic) nature of the
network of actors engaged in it.

On the other hand, in a D₃ perspective the actual workings of such a linkage seem
to remain relatively unclear however, in that while causal links are perhaps
hypothesised, there doesn’t seem to be an implicit causal ‘model’ saying for
example that the existence of an open (or closed) network will lead to a
participative, linear process, or vice versa, as is the case instead in D₁ and D₂.

Rather, within a D₃ perspective the nature of possible causal links between
networks and processes is configured as being very much dependent first and
foremost on the contingent, fluid and competitive nature of the relationships
occurring between specific individuals and groups engaged in specific
policymaking efforts (as opposed to structural, systematic linkages between an
‘idea’ of network and one of process).

When asked whether there were specific individuals or groups that in his view had
traditionally exerted significant influence on the policy process, one of the
respondents I consulted replied for example: “It’s a dynamic situation, it changes
with the circumstances” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 12 February 2009), while another remarked that “national policies are supposed to be national, but are usually initiated by individuals, and individuals can leave their mark, especially if they are clever” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 17 September 2008) – meaning in other words that the individual character and ambition of specific policy actors could also be perceived as a factor that shapes ICT policy processes at least as much as the ‘structural’ aspects of the PNs around them.

Causal linkages between network and process therefore do appear to be hypothesised also in D3, but no clear ‘theory’ of the relationship between networks and processes seems to emerge from the discourse.

5.5.1.2 Subjects

The subjects configured by D3 seem to be the following ones:

- central but not always fully competent governmental officials289
- ‘others’, i.e. all those located ‘outside government’, whose access to policy processes is particularly dependent on competition
- ‘political’ actors, such as Ministers and parliamentarians

Table 5.7 summarises what each of these subject categories actually comprise and what things members of each category are (or aren’t) ‘allowed’ or ‘expected’ to say/contribute in the context of the ICT policy process.

________________________

289 Cf. the previous section with regard to the perceived incompetence of specific policy actors.
### Table 5.7 - D5-Configured Subjects and Things to Say

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Things to say</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central but not always fully competent government officials</td>
<td>• Definitions of the rules and the pace followed in specific policy processes&lt;br&gt;• Statements of commitment to openness and participation&lt;br&gt;• Identification and selection of stakeholders&lt;br&gt;• Contradictory/erroneous/vague utterances and statements due to incompetence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Others’</td>
<td>• Claims to relevance in relation to ICT policy&lt;br&gt;• Statements influenced by personal or collective interests&lt;br&gt;• Statements made in representation of others&lt;br&gt;• Claims to influence and to having had a role in ICT policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Political’ actors</td>
<td>• Strong directives/requests/guidelines&lt;br&gt;• The ‘final word’ on policy matters&lt;br&gt;• Orders to ‘block’ specific processes&lt;br&gt;• (In the case of MPs) Claims to relevance due to a ‘political’ role</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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290 Cf. some of the descriptions of how policy can be made in different ways with the involvement of different people, contained in Section B-2.2 of Appendix III, and some of the comments on the role of consultants, in Section C-2.4.2, ibidem.

291 For the latter, see in particular some of the quotes reported in the previous section.

292 See for example the references to legitimisation and performance measurement as motivations for participation in policymaking contained in section F-1.3.3 of Appendix III.

293 Cf. this extract from an interview with an MP: “I have to respond to people in villages, and see what is happening with ICT there, while for him it's enough to have hotspots in big hotels in the city, so that people like you who come from abroad can use the internet. The Minister is not preoccupied with what happens in villages. (...) That's where we differ, because I am accountable, and in 2011 I will have to ask 'how does this help me to get votes?' (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 February 2009). The role of MPs is different from that of ‘Others’ who represent specific interests or groups because as political actors MPs are perceived to be potentially in a position to also lead the policy process, as suggested by a respondent working for a local NGO: “So the question is who drives? Is it the Ministry? Is it Parliament? For now, the Ministry of ICT seems to be driving. But should it be Parliament? But our MPs are close to government, and ICT is nearly only in Kampala, so how do you know what is happening at the grassroots? That may be the job of Parliament” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 February 2009).
5.5.1.3 Links to Other Discourses

D₃’s portrayals of Uganda’s ICT PNAs as relatively fluid and unstable assemblages of actors, and its discursive configuration of variations in the ‘modes’ by which ICT policy is made in the country, sometimes draw strength from (and in turn reinforce) two wider, more general discourses on Ugandan policymaking practice.

The first of these is a discourse evoking the existence in Uganda of various ways of producing policy tout court, i.e. not just ICT policy. D₃-esposing respondents sometimes ‘contextualise’ in fact their descriptions or explanations of Ugandan ICT policy practice through references to ostensibly ‘traditional’ elements of Ugandan policymaking in general, suggesting for example how all Ugandan policymaking can be ‘top-down’ and/or ‘bottom-up’, or happen either through fully ‘linear’ policy processes or the simple, unilateral emanation of guidelines and directives:

“The policy process in Uganda is two-way. One is top-down (…). The other way is bottom-up (…). The Telecom Policy review process was of the second type” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008)

“[Normally] after a policy has been discussed, it’s submitted to Cabinet (…). After that, the Minister responsible for the policy tables it to Parliament, for discussion and enactment so that it becomes law. (…) However, there may also be policies which come as directives. (…) Those policies will not go through the process I have described before” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 5 December 2008)

“[The way in which policy is made] depends on the structural setup of the economy. On one hand, there are economies that are largely public sector-driven (…) In liberal economies, on the other hand, the scenario is different. (…). Uganda is a mixture of the two” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 November 2008)

The second wider or broader discourse to which D₃ sometimes links is then again a relatively general discourse on Ugandan policymaking ‘at large’, which highlights in this case how not only ICT policy practice, but all Ugandan policy practice seems to have traditionally been characterised by a certain level of ‘messiness’ and ‘incompetence’:

“We don’t really have rules. The policy process in Uganda has originally been ad hoc. If it needs to be inclusive, it has to have research, data, and the representation of grassroots. But the original
system of policymaking here in Uganda did not have these things” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 19 September 2008)

“Policymaking as a core function of government is something new: before it used to be just the Ministry of Planning that was responsible for much of the policymaking work, so some people now don’t know what the requirements actually are in terms of policymaking. (…) Another challenge is a general problem with documentation and data management in the public sector. (…) [The government’s current guidelines on policy formulation] are developed from rules that already exist, but which have never been formalised. We developed them also to ensure that people don’t depart from the rules, so that it is on record that things should be done in a particular way (…) [I]n general, things used to be done more ad-hoc-ly: it depended very much on how thorough a [Permanent Secretary] was in following procedures“ (Personal Interview, Kampala, 5 December 2008)

5.5.1.4 Historical Dimension

D₃’s portrayal of the way in which ICT policy is and has been made in Uganda is - similarly to D₂’s - somewhat ‘timeless’, in that in a D₃ perspective not much seems to have changed since the early years of the country’s ICT policy history: policy processes have always been and still are relatively messy and chaotic, and the networks of actors engaged in ICT policy have always been relatively ad hoc and fluid.

It is nevertheless possible to identify at least two elements discursively constructed by D₃ as pertaining to the ‘past’ in relation to the present time²⁹⁴:

• The relatively spontaneous coming together of enthusiastic (but also relatively inexperienced, in policy terms) ICT ‘pioneers’ working in tandem with institutions that had ‘first mover advantage’ in the early phases of the history of ICT policymaking in the country. The ostensible lack of structuration and institutionalisation of the network(s) of actors initially coagulating around ICT policy, combined with the relative inexperience of some - if not most - of these actors, seems in fact to discursively function in D₃ as one of the explanations why access to (and influence on) policy processes has traditionally

²⁹⁴ By which I obviously mean the time at which field research was undertaken.
been subject to a high level of competition since the very start, and why policy was and still is made in a relatively ad hoc manner. The relatively chaotic environment in which ICT policymaking first emerged seems in other words to be configured in D₃ as a sort of ‘original sin’ that influenced also all that came afterwards²⁹⁵.

- The advent of international donors following the establishment of the NRM regime, sometimes perceived in D₃ to have in the long run led to a certain ‘modernisation’ of Uganda’s policymaking practice in a direction susceptible to satisfying donors’ prescriptions and expectations in relation to the ‘transparency’ and ‘participativeness’ of policy processes²⁹⁶.

More generally, while as suggested above D₃’s portrayals of Uganda’s ICT policy networks and processes seem to be somewhat ‘timeless’, it should also be said that, thanks to its focus on the contextual/historical factors it perceives as impinging on the configuration of networks and processes at specific moments in time, D₃ reveals itself in fact as an inherently historical discourse overall, i.e. a discourse in which historical circumstances play a significant role in explaining why policy is made in a specific way and by specific groups of people.

D₃ thus differs from D₁ and D₂ in that it proposes a sort of ‘long view’ on the past and the present of ICT policymaking in Uganda, and also seems to be constructively projected towards the future in ways that D₁ and D₂ do not seem to be:

“Things have improved (…) although they could be better” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 13 February 2009)

²⁹⁵ “Initially, things were done on an ad-hoc basis, and there was no line Ministry. The Minister who was in charge, Nasasira, practically did not know much about ICT, but I am glad to see that things have improved, with the new Ministry – although they could be better” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 13 February 2009).
²⁹⁶ While this ‘past’ element is not necessarily mentioned explicitly, it is arguably what inspires statements like the one reported in the previous section, i.e. that “policymaking as a core function of government is something new”.

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“They just need to get their act together. They’ll eventually get there” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 2 December 2008).

In this sense, D₃ could thus be defined perhaps also as a mature discourse, in that it seems to flow from the accumulation of multiple and very varied experiences by selected local actors who over time have been involved to various extents in national ICT policymaking practice.

In the next sections I will look into who these actors are, and how they combine various discursive and material elements to articulate and substantiate their discourse.

### 5.5.2 Discourse Coalition

#### 5.5.2.1 Who

D₃ is articulated mainly by the following key categories of actors:

- *Academics*, as part of their application of an ostensibly ‘detached’ and analytical point of view on ICT policymaking practices and events in the country;

- *Donors*, in particular through the (direct or commissioned) elaboration and production of ‘reflexive’, analytical reports on policymaking practices and experiences in Uganda (cf. in particular Ofir 2003a, APC/IICD 2007b, 2007c, 2007a);

- ‘*Policy specialists*’, i.e. people occupying positions that imply the possession of relatively advanced policy analysis skills, be it within or outside government (e.g. officials in the UCC, which by virtue of its mandate has traditionally provided first the MoWHC and then the MoICT with specialist support and advice for the formulation of ICT-
related policies\textsuperscript{297}; or policy analysts working in central government departments or in the private sector);

- \textit{Private sector} actors who \textit{entered and exited} ICT policy processes at specific points in time and thus experienced policymaking from both the ‘inside’ and the ‘outside’ (in other words, those who had a ‘brush with power’)\textsuperscript{298}.

5.5.2.2 How

\(D_3\) is constructed through the employment of, amongst other things, the following process-related linguistic artefacts.

\textit{Narratives}

\(D_3\)-espousing actors sometimes make references to some of the narratives reviewed in section 5.1.3, employing them however in an analytical or ‘critical’ manner. In most cases these narratives are in fact ‘qualified’ and contextualised, rather than accepted or rejected at face value as is the case in \(D_1\) and \(D_2\).

Dominant narratives on the \textit{origins} of Ugandan ICT policymaking tend for example to be acknowledged in \(D_3\) but at the same time put into perspective through references to ‘other’, concurrent contextual factors that tend to diminish their explanatory capacity and scope:

“So yes, I used to say the President was on board, but that really only happened recently” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 24 September 2008)

“At the beginning (…) there was only a very broad concept of ICT policy, (…) there was some pressure from donors (…) [which] led to several fragmented efforts [or ‘scattered initiatives’] (…). The [MoWHC] started gathering information on these efforts, but yet no one really

\textsuperscript{297} Tusubira \textit{et al.} consider for example the fact that the MoWHC had asked the UCC to conduct the TPR an “explicit recognition of the capacity limitation within the Ministry, which is responsible for policy, to carry out a review” (Tusubira \textit{et al.} 2007: 16).

\textsuperscript{298} This is particularly the case of some small local private sector operators.
said ‘let’s have an ICT policy’ (...) - there was no intention to have a policy yet” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 19 September 2008).

Notably, D₃ is also the discourse in which the ‘minor’ narratives about the catalytic role of donors in respect of ICT policy discussed in section 5.1.3.1.3 feature more prominently, taken again however with a ‘realist’ pinch of salt:

“There was a lot of participation of foreign players. In addition to IDRC who were the main movers of the process, there was also IICD, USAID and UNDP (...). Their role was both good and bad for the process (...). Some (...) foreign players delayed the process because [they] wanted it to follow their interests. (...) Others did not know the details of the policy and the context in which the policy was going to operate” (Waiswa Bagiire undated: 6-7, emphasis mine).

“UNDP had been supporting several African countries with their policy processes. (...) [W]e had worked on information and communication (...), and then they came and said ‘why don’t you merge things, other countries are merging things’. And they supported the process financially” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 17 November 2008)

Something similar happens also with narratives on the process: in this respect, as seen above the ‘monopoly’ of the linear process narrative that characterises D₁ and D₂ is in fact conceptually ‘broken’ in D₃ by the many references to other possible ways of making ICT policy that punctuate the discourse.

Finally, narratives on participation are also taken critically and ‘qualified’. Wide participation often tends for example to be presented as an ideal goal rather than a fact, and as something that is quite difficult to attain, or which is in any case subject to ‘conditions’ (e.g. the ability to succeed in the ‘competition’ for policy influence through coordinated lobbying and advocacy):

“Wider participation is difficult to manage, but it will enrich the output, it will enrich the quality because it creates more ownership” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 5 December 2008).

“Now, with the Ministry of ICT, things are publicised more widely, but (...) at these open meetings there is no organisation, you just go from topic to topic and 70-80 people can comment in various ways. We should get more organised as a lobby group, to ensure you can say ‘here is our position on this’, with a position paper” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 February 2009).
Similarly, conclusions on the level of participativeness and openness of Ugandan ICT policymaking are also rarely general; references are made instead to what happened in specific cases or with specific types of policy process:

“In the TPR, [rural populations were not represented] at all. For the RCDP, there were focus groups and pilots” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 24 September 2008).

“[The NICTPF process] was new to many people, so the level of participation was not as high as that of other policies. [It] was higher than for (...) other policies, [but] there were (...) not many people who contributed (...) due to failure to understand some of the issues being discussed” (Waiswa Bagiire undated: 19).

Metaphors

Metaphors are employed less liberally in D₃ than in other discourses, and unsurprisingly, the few that are used refer to concepts like competition and markets – for example:

“[Policymaking is like] marketing: every idea, including policy, needs good salespersons” (Nkuuhe 2007),

“[In order to participate in ICT policy processes] you have to promote yourself as someone with something to say” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 February 2009).

Classifications

D₃-espousing actors discursively construct the co-existence of different types of policy process also through the employment of process classifications - in particular on the basis of ‘stimulus and input’ (cf. section 5.1.2.2.2).

This is particularly the case of distinctions between ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ policy processes, which as we have seen are quite central to D₃ - but also of distinctions operated between policy processes built on external vs. internal inputs, and especially external inputs provided by international donors, the impact of which is like other things in D₃ ‘qualified’, rather than monolithically theorised as
either ‘good’/neutral’ or ‘bad’/‘invasive’ as happens instead respectively in D₁ and D₂.

5.5.2.3 Where, With What and Through What Acts

For reasons that will become clear as I proceed, I review the spaces, materials and acts that compose the D₃ coalition in a combined sub-section.

I’ll start with ‘what’, i.e. with the materials through which D₃ is given substance and propagated.

In strictly material terms, D₃ is articulated mainly through a relatively limited number of soft and hard copy academic or quasi-academic papers, reports and texts, ranging from donor-commissioned reports aimed at evaluating donors’ policy influence and/or informing further policy advocacy and capacity building work (cf. for example Ofir 2003b, 2003a, APC/IICD 2007b, 2007c, 2007a, Anon 2007a, Waiswa Bagiire undated), to more general, periodic ‘state-of-affairs’ papers reviewing progress in the Ugandan ICT sector (also often commissioned by donors), that usually contain sections covering progress also in relation to ICT policy and policymaking (e.g. Shirley et al. 2002, Tusubira et al. 2003, Tusubira et al. 2007).

In other words, and to partially touch also on what acts contribute to the construction of the discourse, D₃ seems to find tangible articulation mainly through acts/pieces of research – the realisation of which also presupposes the availability of ‘supporting’ material resources such as ICT equipment, stationery or

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299 Cf. for example Waiswa Bagiire (undated:6), cited also above, characterising the presence of donors as “both good and bad”, or a respondent who similarly noted that “Of course [donor support can have an impact on the policy process], both positively and negatively” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 5 December 2008).

300 Including, in theory, pieces of research like the present one: due to its focus on the different ways in which ICT policy and policymaking are intended and interpreted in Uganda, this piece of research could in fact also be seen by local actors as material that is potentially useful for the strengthening of D₃.
fuel (to name but a few), and of the funding necessary to procure them (which as in the case of D₁ and D₂ is often provided by international donors)³⁰¹.

The reader may also have noticed however that apart from the few references to the written reports mentioned above, the great majority of the utterances reported here as pertaining to and constructing D₃ are taken from interviews I conducted in the field.

In this respect, my research suggests that besides the few documents cited above, D₃ seems in fact to be performed first and foremost through informal conversations and opinion exchanges³⁰², rather than through tangible, ‘formal’ documentary (re)sources – and this has important consequences in the context of this study.

The fact that D₃ is most often constructed and performed through acts of reflection, conversation and research makes it quite difficult for example to pinpoint the spaces in which this particular discourse is articulated, as acts of this kind are often ‘distributed’, i.e. not tied to specific locations³⁰³.

Besides the locations where specific pieces of research may actually have been produced (which in this case would include offices located on the University of Makerere’s campus or on other campuses, consultants’ offices in central Kampala, and/or donor premises located in Uganda or elsewhere), D₃ seems in fact to be relatively location-independent, i.e. not linked to any particular spatial ambits (other than, perhaps, symbolic ‘backrooms’, including the ones created through the

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³⁰¹ Just like – to continue the reflexive parallel introduced in the previous footnote – also this piece of research has required the employment of a sizeable array of resources, to cater for logistical aspects such as transport, accommodation, subsistence, ICT support and so on. I estimate the cost of the entire operation as having been just under £20’000 – that is excluding PhD registration fees (for which interestingly I too had my own donor, as the institution I am attached to kindly offered to waive the fees for my course).

³⁰² Certainly the conversations I witnessed happened because I facilitated them through the use of field interviews – but there is no reason to exclude that conversations of this kind may have happened or be happening also on other occasions, with or without the intervention of a researcher.

³⁰³ In the case of the interviews I undertook, for example, there was no particularly significant common denominator or trait to the spaces in which actors articulated D₃ utterances – they were simply the offices of respondents, dotted around central Kampala like the offices of all other respondents.
confidentiality and anonymity guarantees I was able to offer to informants). Spatial dimensions do not seem in other words to be particularly relevant or important in the construction of this discourse coalition, as D₃ can in a sense exist also without identifiable spatial ‘anchors’, other perhaps than virtual ones (e.g. the internet, where both discussions and document distribution can take place).

Interestingly, this relative lack of spatiality seems to tie in quite adequately with the sort of ‘detached’, critical outlook that characterises the ‘long view’ proposed by D₃: in this sense, D₃ could also be seen in fact as inhabiting a sort of ‘third’ space, located or distributed ‘around’ that occupied by D₁ and D₂, from which D₃ proponents observe and somewhat detachedly contextualise or critique D₁ and D₂. I will return to this particular analytical suggestion and develop it further in Part III of this chapter.

In addition to this, and with more specific regard to collective acts this time, as mentioned above D₃ seems to emerge primarily as the result of actors’ engagement in occasions for collective analysis and reflection, ranging from workshops convened by donors to discuss ICT policy making and advocacy activities, to simple acts of conversation and opinion exchange, the nature and workings of which are also relatively difficult to establish (let alone model or predict, as some may wish to do).

In other words, besides ‘organised’ and ‘managed’ ways to create and facilitate discussion and reflection, such as the convening of workshops or the commissioning of pieces of research (or even the realisation of interviews as was the case for this research), D₃ is likely to emerge also, if not primarily perhaps, in ‘spontaneous’, relatively non-structured ways – meaning that the coalition that constructs D₃ is somewhat ‘looser’ or less ‘systematic’, containing as it does more elements of ‘randomness’ than those behind D₁ and D₂.

The coalition behind D₃ thus seems to be particularly ‘light’ and distributed, and also to have a relatively limited ‘baseline’ or ‘footprint’ as far as material resources

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³₀⁴ And again there is no reason to exclude that other ‘backrooms’ may exist in which D₃ is articulated, be it across government or outside it.
are concerned. It’s thus no wonder that the discourse it develops and maintains is much less prominent in public discussions and portrayals of ICT policy and policymaking in Uganda than D₁ and D₂.

With this in mind, in the next section I summarise the key characteristics of D₃ and of the coalition that constructs it, and then go on, in the third part of this chapter, to draw some overall analytical conclusions on the reciprocal relationships between all the three discourses and discourse coalitions investigated so far.

5.5.3 Summary

D₃ is different from the two discourses analysed previously in that instead of constructing a univocal and somewhat timeless ‘version’ of the ICT policy process and the network around it, it configures the co-existence in the context under analysis of different, alternative ways to make ICT policy in Uganda and of different ways in which actors coalesce around specific ICT policy issues and processes.

In other words, D₃ positions itself as a possibilist discourse, configuring policymaking arrangements as relatively temporary and fragile, and portraying access to policymaking processes and the networks around them as the result of constant fluctuation and negotiation, which are dependent among other things also on historical/political/contextual factors in a much more pronounced way than is the case with D₁ and D₂.

The contingency-aware, ‘historical’ nature of D₃ is denoted quite clearly not only by the objects it constructs but also by other key components that constitute it, which together with objects are summarised in Table 5.8.
In the introduction to this section I also suggested that $D_3$ is, like $D_2$, a *minority* discourse, not in the sense that it is espoused by an identifiable minority group of actors, but because it is articulated more rarely (by different types of actors, including in government) than not only $D_1$ but also $D_2$.

In this respect, reviewing the nature and composition of the discourse coalition ‘responsible’ for constructing and propagating this particular discourse has offered some indications as to *why* $D_3$ seems to have remained a minority discourse in the Ugandan context: the coalition in question seems in fact not to have particularly strong spatial and/or material dimensions or connotations, and to be instead loosely ‘distributed’, and performed through relatively ‘atomistic’ acts of reflection, conversation and/or research. It is thus significantly ‘lighter’, or ‘weaker’ than those behind $D_1$ and $D_2$. The key elements that compose this coalition are summarised in Table 5.9.
### Table 5.9 - Key Components of the D₃ Coalition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who</th>
<th>Academics, donors, policy specialists; some non-governmental actors who entered and exited ICT policy processes at specific points in time.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How</td>
<td>Critical/‘qualified’ references to dominant narratives on the origins of ICT policy, on process and on participation, and to ‘minor’ narratives about donors; metaphors relating to competition and markets; classifications of policy processes on the basis of stimulus and input.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where</td>
<td>Not particularly location-dependent: ‘distributed’ across spaces where research and reflection take place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>Academic or quasi-academic papers, reports and texts, and the materials/funding necessary to produce them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acts</td>
<td>Workshops, acts of research, conversations, and more generally ‘occasions for reflection’.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

***

In the next part of this chapter I proceed to a further, conclusive analysis of the relationships between the different discourses identified in this study and between the coalitions that construct and propagate them, based on a systematic, side-by-side comparison of their constitutive elements.
Part III – Interplay and Relative Positioning

As discussed in section 2.3.2, argumentative discourse analysis (ADA) serves to understand the relative and reciprocal positioning of actors in relation to policy issues through the practice of discourse, with the ultimate objective of understanding the socio-political practices through which policy-related social constructs develop and emerge (Hajer 2002, Hajer and Waagenar 2003). To achieve this aim, this particular brand of discourse analysis focuses not only on the content of discourses but also, if not especially, on: 1) the ‘relational’ or ‘logical’ aspect of discourses, meant as the interplay and juxtaposition of different discourses in specific social settings; 2) the practices through which discourses are constructed, and in particular the different practices employed by discourse coalitions in the construction of their discourse (Gasper and Apthorpe 1996, Apthorpe 1996b, Hajer 1993, 2006a).

In this section I complete my analysis in this sense, with specific reference to discourse on ICT policymaking in the Ugandan context. I do so firstly by undertaking a ‘side-by-side’ comparison of the three discourses on Ugandan ICT policymaking discussed above, and by drawing, on this basis, a number of conclusions regarding discursive interplay and relative positioning in the context at the centre of this research (section 5.6). I then operate a similar (and connected) comparison between the discourse coalitions that develop and propagate each discourse, focusing in particular on their composition and the way in which they do their work, drawing in this case conclusions regarding coalition interplay and relative positioning that can help us better understand the practices through which Ugandan discourse on ICT policymaking is constructed and performed (section 5.7).

The conclusions drawn in this section, together with the findings outlined previously in this chapter, provide the basis for the eventual formulation, in Chapter 6, of answers to the key research questions that have oriented this study.
5.6 Comparative Analysis of Discourses

I first operate a comparison between the different constitutive elements of each discourse (5.6.1), and then discuss the interplay and relative positioning between the three discourses as a whole (5.6.2).

5.6.1 Constitutive Elements

5.6.1.1 Objects Constructed

The first thing emerging quite clearly from a comparison of the objects constructed by each discourse is that the ‘network’ objects constructed by D₁ and D₂ are in a sense specular opposites: on one hand we have a very open, participative network, while on the other hand an ‘inverse’ image is constructed of a closed, elitist network.

Interestingly, however, when it comes to ‘process’ objects the specularity of the opposition between D₁ and D₂ only extends to the perceived level of participativeness/openness of the ICT policy process, while the actual or ideal ‘form’ of such a process (a ‘linear’ process) remains the same in both discourses (e.g. there are no significant references in D₂ to the existence or the desirability of ‘non-linear’ processes).

This suggests that the opposition between D₁ and D₂ relates in particular to the level of participativeness of policy processes, rather than to the actual form or shape ICT policy processes should take.

As seen in section 5.5.1.1, D₃ defines instead both network and process objects more ‘loosely’, as multiple or multifaceted rather than single or unique. At the same time, however, a sort of ‘preference’ seems to be expressed also in D₃ for fully formed, ‘bottom-up’ linear processes as opposed for example to the emanation of

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305 Summarised in tabular format in Table 5.10.
directives and guidelines—meaning that in all three discourses the ‘linear’, step-wise and rational policy process is constructed as a desirable, ideal model.

When looking at the objects constructed by the three discourses I also briefly dwelled on whether and how each discourse implicitly or explicitly theorised possible causal relations between the nature of ICT PNs and the nature (and in particular the relative openness/participativeness) of the policy processes in which network actors are engaged, and found that each discourse does indeed theorise the existence of causal links between networks and processes, but in different ways. I summarise these differences and commonalities below in the form of possible schematic answers that each discourse may in a sense give to a question like ‘Does the nature of the policy network affect the nature of the policy process in which network actors are engaged?’:

- **D₁**: *Yes* - purportedly, but contradicted by the idea that processes have always been very participative even when the network was initially small (so in a sense, also *No*)
- **D₂**: *Yes* – and very clearly, as demonstrated by the fact that a closed network makes for impermeable and non-participative policy processes
- **D₃**: *Yes* – but causal relationships are unclear or there is at least no clear ‘model’ or ‘theory’ of causality, if only because factors like individual relationships and ambitions and historical/political context also have an important role.

So all three discourses ‘publicly’ theorise the existence of causal links between the workings of policy networks and the workings of the policy processes in which network actors are engaged, and there seems to be fundamental agreement.

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306 “In top-down processes, government has already decided what it will do – it just needs to decide how to do it. It’s usually on narrow and focused subjects (...). *The other way is richer*” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008, emphasis mine). “We were all aware [the 2006 Ministerial directives] would be a *stopgap measure*, and that this should not stop what should come later, the policy, and this is recognized and it’s being done” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 5 December 2009, emphasis mine).

307 I say ‘publicly’ because D₁ then implicitly contradicts such an assumption.

308 Of a ‘qualified’ nature however – as usual – in D₃.
across all three that the more ‘open’ and participative the network is, the more participative the policy process will be – something that is, importantly, considered as a positive outcome from all three points of view.

5.6.1.2 Subjects Constructed

The specular opposition between $D_1$ and $D_2$ highlighted above in relation to objects is denoted also by the existence in $D_1$ and $D_2$ of opposite interpretations of some of the subject categories constructed by the two discourses, and in particular:

- **transliminal actors**, who are portrayed as ‘neutral’ and receptive in $D_1$ and, on the contrary, as manipulative and unhelpful in $D_2$;
- **specialist, resourceful stakeholders**, portrayed in $D_1$ as always being fully and legitimately involved in ICT policy processes, and belonging instead implicitly to the category of ‘silenced and excluded subjects’ in $D_2$;
- **donors**, presented as disinterested and ‘neutral’ in $D_1$ and on the contrary as ‘interested’ and (often negatively) influential in $D_2$.

This inverted specularity sometimes extends in quite crystalline manner also to the ‘things’ that specific, similar subjects are supposed/allowed to say within $D_1$ and $D_2$: in the case of donors, for example, the ‘words of encouragement’ donors are expected/reported to say in $D_1$ become in $D_2$ actual ‘exhortations’ to produce ICT policy; along the same lines, donors’ declarations of ‘neutrality’ become overt or covert expressions of their interests, and pieces of ‘technical advice’ become ‘prescriptions’ regarding the policy process.

Also in relation to ‘things subjects can/do say’, it is notable how in $D_1$ saying the ‘final word’ on policy matters and the policy process is configured as the prerogative of ‘apolitical’ transliminal actors, and thus presented as a ‘technical’ act that is simply functional to the optimal running of the policy process, while not only $D_2$ but also $D_3$ perceive the ‘final word’ to be instead the prerogative of ‘political’ subjects, such as ministers, the President or ambitious and directive governmental actors.
Government, in its executive role, thus remains at the centre of ICT policymaking in all three discourses, but in D₁ it is constructed mainly as a ‘technical’ or ‘technocratic’ and thus relatively apolitical subject, while D₂ and D₃ configure it more strongly as an exquisitely ‘political’ actor.

Specular opposition in terms of ‘things to say’ also characterises D₁ and D₂ statements regarding the government’s commitment to participation, perceived to be honest and realistic in D₁, and interpreted instead as ‘false’ in D₂. Also in relation to participation, it is notable how constructions of the category of the (rightly or wrongly) ‘excluded’ differ quite significantly across the three discourses at the centre or our analysis: in D₁, the excluded are in a sense the ‘useless’, i.e. all those perceived not to be in a position to contribute meaningfully to policy formulation; in D₂ they are instead – again through specular opposition - the (potentially) ‘useful’, i.e. people who would have interesting and useful things to say but who are intentionally locked out from the process; in D₃, the excluded are instead more generally the ‘incapable’ (incapable of winning access to the policymaking process).

Such discrepancies in the perception and construction of the ‘excluded’ would seem to suggest that in the context under analysis ‘participation’ is not a stable or agreed concept, but the object of significant debate, the only common denominator to the three discourses being perhaps – importantly - that exclusion from participation is perceived to exist, while there is fundamental disagreement on the reasons why, and on who is actually excluded from policymaking.

Finally, it is notable how local CSOs and development NGOs seem to be constructed as a separate subject with specific things to say and contribute only in D₁, while in D₂ they are subsumed within the category of the ‘usual suspects’, and in D₃ they are part of the general category of ‘others’, together with other different types of non-governmental actor.

This seems to be consistent with some of the findings of research focusing more generally on the role of development NGOs as a whole in relation to policymaking in Uganda, which suggest that dominant discourses on development and
policymaking somewhat unilaterally ‘sketch’ and attribute specific, ‘ideal’ roles to NGOs in the policy process, and in particular the role of ‘invited contributors’ (Lister and Nyamugasira 2003: 98, Chekwoti et al. 2003): a role that seems to be clearly constructed and laid out also in dominant discourses in relation to ICT policymaking.

In conclusion, comparing and linking the different subject categories constructed by the three discourses investigated suggests that:

- *government* is configured as central in all three discourses, be it respectively ‘technocratic’, ‘undemocratic’, or ‘incompetent’
- *donors* are also omnipresent as subjects in Ugandan ICT policy discourse, albeit with variable roles (respectively ‘partners’, ‘influencers’, and ‘competitors’)
- the category of the ‘excluded’ is also present in all three discourses, configured respectively as the ‘useless’, the ‘useful’, and the ‘incapable’
- *CSOs and NGOs* emerge as a prominent and distinct actor only in dominant discourse D1.

### 5.6.1.3 Links to Other Discourses

The first thing to note in relation to linkages between the three discourses identified here and other, wider discourses around politics and policymaking is that – somewhat contrary to expectations perhaps - the donor-influenced discourse on the need for *all* policy activities to be participative to which D1 makes reference is *not* contested in D2, as is the case instead with other elements of D1.

Here, the opposition between D1 and D2 happens instead at the more specific level of ‘local’ interpretations regarding the traditionally participative character of the NRM regime: in this respect, D1 links in fact to a ‘positive’ discourse that portrays the Movement as a traditionally participative and democratic political actor (and therefore also quite ‘compatible’ with the donor-influenced discourse on participation mentioned above), while D2 links to an ‘oppositional’ discourse of
disillusion and despondency regarding precisely the participative character of the NRM government, accused instead of having reduced citizens to mere “spectators of politics” (Omara-Otunnu 1992: 461) over time.

As a testimony to its more ‘detached’ and ‘historical’ take on developments in ICT policy practice in Uganda, $D_3$ makes instead reference more generally to discourses that configure the existence of multiple ‘ongoing’ traditions of Ugandan policymaking as a whole (the co-existence of top-down and bottom-up approaches; the traditional ‘messiness’ and ad-hoc-ness of policy activity), thereby capturing and reinforcing an overall sense of time and transition that is not particularly present in $D_1$ and $D_2$, occupied as they are in defending or criticising the present state of affairs.

More generally, the many references found in all three discourses to broader discourses on Ugandan politics and policymaking as a whole suggest that political histories and ‘traditions’ seem to play an important (and contentious) role in discussions on ICT policymaking in the context under analysis - and thus that ICT policymaking in a sense ‘reflects’ politics in ways that are not commonly highlighted and integrated in ‘mainstream’ ICT-policy-and-development literature$^{309}$.

5.6.1.4 Historical Dimension

Differences between the three discourses also exist in relation to constructions and interpretations of the past, and again the opposition between $D_1$ and $D_2$ in this respect is notable.

Both $D_1$ and $D_2$ construct for example the ‘scattered initiatives’ prior to the formulation of the NICTPF as a ‘past’ object, but while in $D_1$ such initiatives are seen in a rational continuum as ‘foundations’ for the NICTPF and/or as policymaking instances or ‘drives’ that were eventually integrated in the policy

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$^{309}$ The reader may have noticed for example that ‘politics’ is in fact more or less absent from the several factors perceived to impinge on the way in which ICT policy is (successfully or unsuccessfully) formulated in DCs found in the bodies of literature on the subject reviewed in Chapter 1.
framework, in D₂ they are generally configured as useful efforts that were interrupted or silenced by the ‘forced’ entrance of ICTs on the policy agenda due to pressures from donors.

The same applies to perceptions and interpretations of what, with time, became another ‘past’ object in both discourses, i.e. the initial, relatively small policy network that formed around ICTs and ICT policy with the formulation of the NICTPF, which in both D₁ and D₂ is seen as relatively chaotic, but which in D₁ is portrayed mainly as ‘cooperative’, while D₂ constructs it as heavily conflictual.

As outlined previously, due to its ‘long view’ nature D₃ seems instead to propose a more ‘detached’ take on past events, configuring them as part of an historical continuum characterised by constant competition for access, and refraining from expressing relatively strong value judgements like D₁ and D₂ do (with the exception perhaps of references to the relative incompetence of governmental actors in the initial phases of ICT policy formulation in the country).

The above differences and oppositions notwithstanding, it is also possible to identify two important commonalities in relation to the construction of ‘past’ objects across all three discourses.

The first of these is the discursive construction of a trajectory from a small network in the initial phases of ICT policymaking in Uganda to a ‘bigger’ network in later phases, which is present in all three discourses, albeit with different values and underlying reasons.

The second is the perceived influence of ‘contextual’, historical developments not strictly related to ICTs on the way ICT policy is or has been made in Uganda: the advent of the NRM regime in D₁, the advent of economic liberalisation in D₂ (arguably the basis of the liberalisation of the telecom sector), and the advent of international donors in D₃ – all of which are arguably coeval in that they all happened in the decade or so running up to the initiation of ICT policy processes in the country.
This again suggests, as mentioned in the previous section, that historical/political context is perceived to play an important role in Ugandan ICT policy discourse.
Table 5.10 - Constitutive Elements of $D_1$, $D_2$ and $D_3$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objects Constructed</th>
<th>$D_1$</th>
<th>$D_2$</th>
<th>$D_3$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open and participative policy network</td>
<td>Inaccessible, incestuous and elitist ICT policy network</td>
<td>Variable constellations of relationships around specific ICT policy issues at specific points in time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Linear’ policy process</td>
<td>‘Linear’ but highly ritual and symbolic policy process, impermeable to external inputs</td>
<td>Different types of policy process, access to which is rather competitive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects Constructed</th>
<th>$D_1$</th>
<th>$D_2$</th>
<th>$D_3$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specialist, resourceful stakeholders</td>
<td>Ambitious, directive governmental actors</td>
<td>Central but not always fully competent governmental officials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT champions</td>
<td>Powerful private sector operators and foreign interests</td>
<td>All ‘others’, i.e. all those located ‘outside government’ and competing for access</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active CSOs and NGOs</td>
<td>Interested, influential donors</td>
<td>‘Political’ actors, such as Ministers and parliamentarians, having the final word</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsible, receptive and ‘apolitical’ transliminal actors</td>
<td>Manipulative, dishonest transliminal actors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generous, disinterested donors</td>
<td>The ‘usual suspects’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Silenced and excluded subjects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Links to Discourses</th>
<th>$D_1$</th>
<th>$D_2$</th>
<th>$D_3$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donor-influenced discourse on need for consultation in policymaking</td>
<td>‘Oppositional’ discourse of despondency and disillusion re: politics in Uganda</td>
<td>‘Historical’ discourse on traditional existence of different ways to make policy in Uganda</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Local’ take on such a discourse referring to participative character of NRM regime</td>
<td>‘Cultural’/political discourse on allegedly ‘selfish’ nature of Ugandans</td>
<td>‘Historical’ discourse on traditional ‘messiness’ of policymaking and policy activities in Uganda</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Historical / Past Elements</th>
<th>$D_1$</th>
<th>$D_2$</th>
<th>$D_3$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-NICTPF scattered initiatives on ICT and ICT policy;</td>
<td>Initially very conflictual ICT policy network</td>
<td>Coming together of enthusiastic/inexperienced ICT policy ‘pioneers’ in the early days of ICT policy;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A small policy network made of ‘champions’ and ‘pioneers’ + relative chaos in early history of ICT policy making in Uganda</td>
<td>Liberalisation and privatisation of the telecommunication sector</td>
<td>Advent of the NRM regime and turn to ‘democracy’ as what led to significant changes in the way policy is made in Uganda</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The NICTPF as a framework for subsequent policy efforts</td>
<td>Pre-NICTPF policy formulation efforts (e.g. S+T)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advent of the NRM regime and turn to ‘democracy’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.6.2 Discursive Interplay and Relative Positioning

The comparative analysis undertaken above permits us to draw a number of conclusions regarding the interplay and relative positioning of the three discourses at the centre of this study.

The first conclusion in this respect is that \( D_1 \) and \( D_2 \) are positioned quite clearly in opposition to each other: in particular, \( D_2 \) seems to emerge and be performed mainly as a sort of ‘reactive’ answer to \( D_1 \) and to its dominance. So where network and process are open and participative in \( D_1 \), they are elitist and closed in \( D_2 \); where stakeholders like transliminal actors and donors have a positive, non-controversial role in \( D_1 \), they have a negative, overly influential role in \( D_2 \); and where the excluded are the ‘useless’ in \( D_1 \), they are the ‘useful’ in \( D_2 \). In fact, as noted previously, \( D_2 \) often appears to be constructed on an explicitly ‘oppositional’ argumentative structure along the lines of “they say X, but in reality it’s Y” (cf. section 5.4.2.2). It follows that \( D_2 \) is in a sense ‘dependent’ on \( D_1 \), and probably wouldn’t exist (at least in the form found through this study) in the absence of a dominant discourse like \( D_1 \).

Due to its apparently more ‘detached’ and relatively non-judgemental take on the history and the present of ICT policy activity in Uganda, it would then be tempting to define/locate \( D_3 \) as a sort of ‘middle ground’ synthesis, or compromise between \( D_1 \) and \( D_2 \), i.e. as a ‘moderate’ discourse that integrates instances of \( D_1 \) and \( D_2 \) and constructs a ‘mediated’ version of events and roles in relation to ICT policy practice in Uganda.

However, on some key points \( D_3 \) doesn’t seem to ‘integrate’ aspects of \( D_1 \) and/or \( D_2 \) in any particular way. For example, \( D_3 \) does not share with the other two discourses the idea of the existence of a single and identifiable PN, and not even the existence of a simple dichotomy between and co-existence of the two types of network constructed by \( D_1 \) and \( D_2 \) (open and elitist) - configuring instead a sort of ‘third alternative’ (or third construct) made of contingent and variable conglomerations of relationships, the form of which depends on historical and/or contextual factors and on the issue at stake. Another peculiarity of \( D_3 \) is its
reference to the alleged ‘messiness’ of ICT policymaking, an idea that is not particularly present in D₁ and D₂, based as they are instead very much on an idea of ‘orderly’ process (open and participative in D₁, closed and elitist in D₂).

The second key conclusion that can be drawn here is thus that D₃ is probably more appropriately defined as a sort of ‘third party’ discourse in respect of D₁ and D₂, originating perhaps as a ‘reflection’ on (rather than a reaction to) these two discourses, and positioning itself in a ‘third space’ that lies not in the middle or in between D₁ and D₂, but that is distributed around them - and clear of the oppositional line that links D₁ and D₂.

So if by virtue of its dominance we visually pictured D₁ as inhabiting (and in a sense defining) the core of the discursive space or ‘universe’ in which Ugandan ICT policymaking is variously constructed, the overall relationships and interplay between the three discourses could be portrayed as follows (Figure 5.3):

Fig. 5.3 - Visual Representation of Reciprocal Positioning of D₁, D₂ and D₃
The analysis of the interplay between local interpretations of ICT policy practice undertaken here wouldn’t be complete however if it didn’t also give some consideration to what actually holds these interpretations together, i.e. to what constitutes and circumscribes the ‘universe’ or ‘frame’ (Rein and Schön 1993) within which all three discourses situate themselves (in visual terms, the double line that delimits Figure 5.3).

In this respect, it is my contention that the coordinates of such a universe are provided by a broader, donor-sponsored dominant discourse that speaks of policy and policymaking as necessarily participative - as I will illustrate in the next section.

5.6.2.1 “There is Only One Sun in the Solar System”, or the Dominance of ‘Participation’ as the Organising Principle of Ugandan ICT Policy Discourse

A distinctive element of the three discourses analysed here is that they all revolve around the idea that ICT policy should be participative: D₁ says that it is, and it has always been so; D₂ says it should be, but it is not; and D₃ says that the level of participation varies depending on the circumstances, but in any case retains participation as desirable (‘richer’), and configures competition for spaces in participatory processes as ‘natural’ and a given.

All three discourses thus seem to situate themselves in very similar (broadly receptive and accepting) positions in relation to the broader, donor-influenced ‘participation’ discourse I referred to when I analysed the constitutive elements of D₁: a discourse which, as we have seen, emphasises the need for all national policy processes to be highly participative, and which according to some has gained significant traction in overall Ugandan political discourse in recent years.""
nevertheless fundamental linkages to such a dominant discourse also in D₂ and D₃.

As noted previously, for example, while the three discourses in question differ from each other in terms of their interpretation of the level of participativeness of Ugandan ICT policy processes, all of them appear to elect the ‘linear’ model of policymaking as the ideal one. In this respect, Cleaver suggests that one of the basic tenets of ‘mainstream’ participatory development approaches is the idea that the success of such approaches depends primarily on ‘getting the techniques right’ (Cleaver 2001: 36): in this case, the agreed ‘technique’ seems to be the linear process, and the differences between the three discourses revolve primarily if not exclusively on how well or how badly the ‘linear’ process is managed, or in other words, on how well or how badly the agreed ‘technique’ is applied in support of ‘participation’ (well in D₁; badly and in an exclusionary manner in D₂; incompetently and messily in D₃).

Another key tenet of participatory approaches according to Cleaver is the idea that considerations of power and politics should be avoided because they are divisive and obstructive (ibidem). In the context under analysis, this is transparently reflected in the fact that, as the reader may have noticed, politics and politicians are virtually absent (one could say elided) from the categories of subject constructed by D₁, and configured on the other hand as relatively negative subjects in D₂ and D₃ (unfair and elitist ‘gatekeepers’ or ambitious ‘fighters’ in D₂; introducers of an element of ‘randomness’ and ‘arbitrariness’ in D₃).

In section 5.6.2.1 I also noted how, when it comes to the construction of subjects, government appears to be central in all three discourses. In this respect, Mosse suggests that the reality of ‘mainstream’ participatory development approaches is that “people participate in agency programmes [or in our case, policy processes] and not the other way round” (Mosse 2004: 22): in other words, the concept of ‘participation’ is philosophically based on the assumed existence and legitimacy of a ‘centrally-organised’ activity, in which subjects on the peripheries are then invited to participate (as opposed for example to initiating such an activity, or managing it):
the centrality of government as a subject\textsuperscript{311} in all the discourses analysed here would seem to suggest that a similar kind of logic pervades all three discourses in a significant manner.

Kothari similarly suggests that participatory methodologies are based on an overall conceptual framework where “the margins [are set] against the centre, the local against the elite, and the powerless against the powerful”: mainstream participatory approaches are in other words based on the notion that the “sites of social power and control are to be found solely at (...) central levels”, and that those who wield power are located exclusively in institutional centres (Kothari 2001: 140). Again also in this case such a conceptual framework seems to inspire also the three discourses analysed here, not only because of the assumed centrality of government as the ‘manager’ of and ‘inviter’ to the policy process as seen above, but also because all other subjects across the three discourses are arguably constructed as inhabiting a periphery in relation to government, and are differentiated almost exclusively on the basis of how they are perceived, supposed and/or allowed to contribute to (or not contribute to) and participate in (or be excluded from) a decision-making activity that is clearly configured as being controlled primarily from a ‘centre of power’.

All three discourses seem in other words to be in one way or another quite significantly linked to / inspired by a contemporary and broader donor-influenced dominant discourse that prescribes ‘participation’ as a key strategy to achieve socio-economic development (be it through programmes or policy), and could in fact be said to represent different facets of a single, all-encompassing ‘local’ discourse that configures participation in ICT policymaking as an obligation, or dogma.

Hajer talks in this sense of discursive affinity, whereby different discourses and arguments around a specific subject may vary in origin (e.g. here a governmental ‘managerial’ view, civil society’s ‘for the people’ view, or the policy specialists’

\textsuperscript{311} And in particular - as seen in section 5.1.2.1.1 - as a ‘stakeholder’, a definition that has the advantage of legitimising the government’s role and at the same time ‘downplaying’ it by presenting it as ‘first among equals’.
‘expert’ view) but still have “similar ways of conceptualizing the world” (Hajer 2006a: 71) - the world being, in our case, the ICT policy process, defined as necessarily participative.

So in terms of overall relative positioning, it could be concluded that the three discourses analysed here position themselves in a sense in similar, concentric ways in relation to a broader, all-encompassing donor-driven dominant discourse that stresses the need for participation in policymaking in general - which at this point could be said to effectively provide or constitute the ‘context’, or ‘universe’ within which all discourses on ICT policymaking in Uganda are articulated, similarly to the way in which a sun, or star, defines through gravity the context and the boundaries of a solar system (Figure 5.4).

Figure 5.4 - ‘Participation’ as the Sun Around Which All Discourses on ICT Policy Practice in Uganda Revolve

Further evidence of the centrality of mainstream ‘participatory policymaking’ discourse as the organising principle of Ugandan discourses on ICT policy practice is provided also by the apparent absence, in all the three discourses analysed here, of any significant references, however fleeting, to the possibility or the desirability of alternative models of decision-making in relation to ICT policy that are not based primarily on participation – similarly to what Cooke and Kothari suggest is the case with the intervention of participatory ‘facilitators’ in development projects, which has a tendency to override possible pre-existing and
legitimate decision-making processes\textsuperscript{312} (Cooke and Kothari 2001a: 7). And such an absence is quite peculiar in the Ugandan context, considering that according to some, in some cases in Uganda decisions can be taken in quite an executive manner by the State\textsuperscript{313} - not to mention the possibility of the existence of alternative and more informal decision-making practices based on ‘local’ traditions (which in Uganda could be, like everywhere else, ethnically-based, gender-based, class-based etc.), in which participation may not necessarily be a key principle, or dogma.

The significant influence that dominant discourses on participatory policymaking as a whole have on local discourse on ICT policy practice should not come as a complete surprise, however. From a historical point of view in fact, ICT policy could in a sense only be the ‘daughter’ of ‘participatory’ policy, as the emergence of ICTs as a policy matter is historically coeval to the emergence and propagation of donor-driven dominant discourses on participation in policymaking, as suggested in part also in D\textsubscript{3}. It’s safe to say in fact that there has never actually been a time in Uganda (but perhaps also elsewhere, especially in the developing world) when ICT policy was conceptualised and developed in the absence of such a dominant discourse. Ugandan discourses on ICT policymaking are thus in a sense very much a ‘sign of the times’ - times characterised, as we have seen, by the overall dominance of dogmatic prescriptions that all policymaking be participative.

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\textsuperscript{312} This is not to say that the possibility of non-participative decision-making on ICTs is entirely excluded: in one case, for example, a D\textsubscript{3}-espousing respondent, responding to a question on the emanation of ministerial guidelines said: “The Minister can produce guidelines, for example he could also ban the use of mobile phones if he wanted” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008). It is telling however that in this case such a possibility is hypothesized as an extreme example, and an example in which it is actually the power of government that is configured in extreme terms, thus reconfirming in a sense one of the key logics of the ‘participation’ discourse, which attributes centrality and power exclusively to central institutions.

\textsuperscript{313} For example the decision taken in 2006 to extend the limit of presidential mandates beyond the two terms allowed by the Constitution: “Some things are done very fast in this country, for example when it came to changing the Constitution to allow the President to do a third term, it was done very quickly” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 February 2009). It is interesting how this comment was made however strictly in relation to the timing of decisions, and no linkage was made by the respondent to issues of participation.
In the next section I will conclude my investigation by comparing the different elements that constitute the coalitions that construct and propagate each of the discourses analysed in this study, illustrating not only through what particular socio-political practices Ugandan discourses on ICT policymaking are constructed and maintained, but also how, in this context, an extraordinary amount of resources seems to be dedicated precisely to putting into practice the prescription that ICT policy, like all policy, be participative.

5.7 Comparative Analysis of Discourse Coalitions

As I have done with discourses, I will first operate a comparison between the different constitutive elements of each discourse coalition\textsuperscript{314} (5.7.1), and then draw some overall conclusion on the interplay and relative positioning between the three discourse coalitions as a whole (5.7.2).

5.7.1 Constitutive Elements

5.7.1.1 Who

A comparative analysis of what actors or types of actor speak particular discourses reveals in the first place that some categories of actor espouse/pronounce more than one discourse, thus populating/contributing to more than one discourse coalition.

Figure 5.5 presents a schematic diagram outlining, through overlaps, what categories of actor pronounce and reproduce each discourse.

A first element of note emerging from the diagram is that governmental actors, as a whole, seem to contribute in some form or other to all three of the discourses and discourse coalitions identified in this study. In other words, and again confirming its centrality in Ugandan ICT policy discourse, government as an entity is able to speak all three discourses, simultaneously adopting/proposing therefore

\textsuperscript{314} Summarised in tabular format in Table 5.11.
three quite different points of view on Ugandan ICT policy practice, articulated specifically by different types of actor – namely:

a) an ‘official’ point of view, or official line, put forward in particular by Ministers, government officials and politicians - but at times also by policy analysts/specialists in central government or in the regulatory authority (UCC) - through the use of D$_1$;

b) a ‘critical’ point of view, articulated through instances of D$_2$ formulated mainly in ‘confidential’ contexts (e.g. the interviews conducted as part of this study) and centred in particular on the alleged influence of large private operators; also in this case, this is pronounced by more than one type of governmental actor –in particular government officials and staff at the UCC

c) through instances of D$_3$, government as an entity can then also adopt/propose an eminently ‘analytical’ point of view - usually offered as part of a ‘specialist’ discourse practiced by government officials occupying particular positions or, again, by policy analysts and/or staff at the UCC.

One conclusion that can be drawn in this respect is thus that in the context under analysis, government in a sense actually ‘encompasses’ or encloses within itself most if not all the breadth and the complexity of Ugandan ICT policy discourse – i.e. different points of view or ‘takes’ on the nature of ICT policy practice are able to coexist within it (possibly in dialogue, possibly in conflict, and possibly also entirely independently from each other). In one sense, this also signals the possibility that specific, ‘partial’ discursive instances put forward by specific parts of society located outside government (see below) have gained some kind of purchase also within the ambit of government – underlying in turn the complexity, diversity and also the permeability of government as an actor/entity (and importantly, also suggesting that government does, in a sense, ‘listen’ to external stakeholders – though not necessarily through ‘official’ participation/consultation processes).

There are then a number of categories of actor that engage in the production of two different discourses, with the exclusion of a third. These are:
• **Donors** – including staff in INGOs and UN agencies, who seem to contribute explicitly only to the coalitions behind $D_1$ and $D_3$, and do not seem, on the other hand, to play a prominent, public role in the articulation of ‘oppositional’ discourses such as $D_2$.

• **Civil society** – engaged primarily in the production of $D_2$, but also capable of reiterating/reproducing $D_1$ (cf. for example Torach et al. 2007). The fact that CS actors do not engage in the production of $D_3$ would seem to suggest that local civil society organisations and NGOs active in the ICT sector are not necessarily in a position to express ‘detached’ views on ICT policymaking practice - perhaps because their involvement in such practice is in some cases their primary *raison-d’être*.

• The **private sector** – comprising both local ICT entrepreneurs and large, foreign-owned telecom/ICT operators, which variously engage in the production of $D_2$ and $D_3$, but not of $D_1$. Within this category, $D_3$ is pronounced more often by large telecom operators (policy analysts in particular) than by local entrepreneurs, and vice versa – but both categories engage at least partially in the production of both discourses. In this case, the non-engagement of private sector actors in the production of $D_1$ signals perhaps the adoption of a clearly autonomous and independent stance of private sector actors from government and from its ‘official line’, in ways that do not seem to characterise, for example, the position of civil society actors.

Finally, two categories of actor seem to pronounce only, one, specific discourse. These are:

• **Parliamentarians**, and Parliament staff, who only figure prominently in the $D_2$ coalition; interestingly, the fact that Parliament seems to contribute exclusively to ‘critical’ discourses in respect of the government’s management of ICT policy processes is in line with Keating’s finding that in recent years the Ugandan Parliament has operated mainly in an

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315 This is not to say that donors don’t participate in any way to the building and development of the $D_2$ coalition, as we will see below.
‘oppositional’ mode, acting as a key voice of opposition to the government’s reform programmes (Keating 2008).

- Academics (including academics working in a consultancy role) – who only seem to contribute to the production of D_3. This is not to say that individual academics do not also utter instances of D_1 and D_2; however, when they do so they do not necessarily do it in their capacity of academic, but rather, in parallel roles, such as government/agency officials, or civil society actors (some individuals cover in fact more than one role across more than one sector). The non-engagement of academics in discourses such as D_2 and D_3, in their capacity as academics rather than in other roles (e.g. in papers, or academic discussions), would seem to confirm their adoption of a ‘detached’, analytical stance that seeks to differentiate itself from ‘involved’ stances such as D_1’s and D_2’s.

Importantly, it should be noted that, with the exception of groups that engage in the production of only one discourse, the pronunciation of specific, different discourses within a group is not necessarily the prerogative of specific, different individuals, or categories of individual: rather, specific individuals are in fact often actually capable of uttering more than one discourse, in the same role. As noted above, and as I witnessed in interviews, government officials, and sometimes even the same individual government official, can for example engage in the (re)production of D_1 on one hand, then make ‘asides’ or ‘unofficial’ comments pertaining more to D_2, and finally also ‘stand back’ from both D_1 and D_2, and picture ICT policymaking as a particularly complex, contingent and multivariate endeavour, in line with D_5: For example – from the same interview with a government official (Kampala, 26.09.2008):

“We first discuss the document internally, then go to the public, and listen to them. Then the consultant works on it, and we have a checklist to follow to check that he gets every issue, and then we finalize the draft and have a conclusive workshop. The idea is to get input into the document.” (D_1 – Linear process narrative)

“(…) the private sector has interest in making profits, and this is in conflict with providing access, for example in rural areas. [Private operators are] vocal, but also arrogant (…) - it’s selfish, they don’t
consider the country” (D₂ – Undue pressure of large private sector operators on the policy process)

“The Minister tried to get [the TPR] approved by Cabinet but didn’t succeed. And then the President [created] the Ministry of ICT, and named Dr Mulira as Minister. (...) [So] we started work, we picked up the pieces from where the other Minister had left them (...) [and] the Minister announced ministerial guidelines later that year, so even if the Telecom Policy had not come out, the guidelines were made, in order to open up the market” (D₃ – The possibility of achieving policy goals through different processes, and the adaptation of policy processes to the circumstances)

This demonstrates quite clearly how the discourses identified in this study can permeate and shape the views of individuals in various, simultaneous ways – suggesting again the importance of focusing one’s analysis primarily on how such discourses are constructed, and circulated, collectively rather than by specific individuals, or through specific lines of power (as is often presumed in much policy and/or ICT4D research).
5.7.1.2 How

Metaphors are what distinguish the three coalitions in the clearest manner: $D_1$ makes extensive use of metaphors relating to transport and construction; $D_2$ employs primarily metaphorical constructs relating to conflict and war; $D_3$ makes reference principally to metaphors relating to competition. Also notable is that the $D_3$ coalition seems to be significantly less reliant on the use of metaphors than
those behind D₁ and D₂, signalling perhaps that the level of rhetoric is higher in the first two discourses than in the third, more detached one.

As far as narratives are concerned, it is then notable how the coalitions behind D₁ and D₂ make opposite uses of the same stories and storylines. In particular, as mentioned previously, the D₂ coalition often acknowledges and at the same time refutes the narratives that characterise D₁, following a “they say X, but in reality it’s Y” argumentative structure. The D₃ coalition tends instead to integrate narratives in a more ‘reflexive’ or ‘analytical’ manner, ‘qualifying’ them on the basis of contextual or historical factors, and thus diminishing their rhetorical power.

More generally, the presence in all three coalitions of key narratives such as the ‘linear process’ story or the (positive or negative) narrative on participation suggests that these narratives and stories function in a sense as a sort of ‘common currency’ in Ugandan discourse on ICT policymaking - a currency exchanged and used to make particular points, and by doing so strengthen the discursive practices of each coalition.

Of particular note however is that the negotiation of narratives across the three coalitions leaves some key elements of these narratives ‘untouched’.

The ‘linear’ process model at the centre of the LP story retains for example a positive value across all three coalitions: the D₁ coalition employs it as a ‘presentation of self’ construct (Goffman 1959), i.e. to say in a sense “this is what we do, and this is how we do it”; the D₂ coalition constructs it as a ‘betrayed ideal’; and the D₃ coalition puts it alongside other possible process types but similarly to the D₂ coalition also constructs it as ‘ideal’.

A similar thing applies to the ‘participation’ construct at the centre of the positive and negative narratives on participation discussed in section 5.1.3.3, which in D₁ functions again as a ‘self-presentation’ concept, and in D₂ and D₃ is configured and handled as an ideal character or aspect of ICT policy practice that – alas – due to

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316 Cf. section 5.4.2.2.
a variety of reasons often seems to remain elusive. It’s easy to see how this is in line with the findings discussed in section 5.6.2 regarding the centrality of ‘participation’ in Ugandan discourses on ICT policymaking.

Finally, each coalition also seems to make significant use of process classifications by stimulus and input, employing them to structure and define what constitutes a ‘good’ policy process and what doesn’t. And again as testimony to how mainstream ‘participation’ discourse significantly shapes all the discourses analysed in this study, a number of key elements of these classifications seem to remain ‘untouched’ across coalitions in terms of their perceived value: ‘bottom-up’ is generally preferable to ‘top-down’, and ‘nationally owned’ is preferable to ‘hetero-directed’ – the difference lying only in what processes or policy instances each coalition then ‘puts’ into each category.

5.7.1.3 Where

In spatial terms, it could be said that the D₁ and D₂ coalitions are concentric: the D₁ coalition inhabits and in a sense occupies all ‘official’ government-owned or government-hired spaces where ICT policy is discussed and produced, and the D₂ coalition operates mostly in spaces located ‘on the fringes’ of D₁ spaces.

In some cases, the former physically coincide with the latter, for example when D₂ utterances are formulated in workshops taking place in the same hotel conference rooms where ‘official’ policymaking activities often take place at other times. This physical coincidence suggests that the D₂ coalition often seeks to ‘play’, in a sense, at the same level as the one behind D₁, by shrouding its deliberations in the ‘officialdom’ denoted by the spaces usually employed for the construction of D₁. Something similar could be said to apply also to the ‘forays’ made by D₂ coalition actors into extranational spaces such as international conferences and symposia – which as we have seen contribute according to some to enhancing the credibility of the D₂ coalition in the eyes of D₁ coalition actors.³¹⁷

³¹⁷ Cf. section 5.4.2.3.
In other cases, the D₂ coalition also creates and inhabits independent, ‘alternative’ spaces – e.g. the ‘virtual’ spaces constituted by mailing lists and web discussion fora.

The coalition responsible for D₃ is on the contrary not particularly location-dependent, inhabiting as it does ‘distributed’ and not easily identifiable spaces where studies are produced, for example, and/or conversations held.

There is however also an important element of commonality to the spaces in which the three coalitions operate: many of them are accessible to coalition actors also, if not primarily, thanks to funding provided by donors, be this provided for general purposes (as is the case of governmental budget support, or support designed to cover the administration costs of local NGOs), or more specifically for this particular purpose (e.g. in the case of events or processes officially supported by donors, or of the participation of local CSO/NGO actors in extranational meetings and events).

5.7.1.4 Materials

This is where the disparities in terms of the constitution and resourcing of each coalition are most pronounced.

As noted previously, the D₁ coalition comprises in fact an extraordinary amount of material resources, ranging from the plethora of textual objects through which D₁ is firmly ‘written into existence’ to the resources necessary to produce and distribute these objects, and the material and financial resources necessary to organise and run workshops, meetings, fact finding missions and other activities that in one way or another fit into and give solidity to the ‘linear’ processes perceived in D₁ to be at the basis of ICT policymaking in Uganda.

The coalitions behind D₂ and D₃ comprise on the contrary a much smaller amount of material resources – which as argued previously would seem to explain at least in part why D₁ is a particularly strong and dominant discourse in relation to D₂ and D₃.
Of particular note in this respect is however that, as is the case with spaces, many of the resources in question are, across all three coalitions, available also thanks to donor support. This is particularly the case of the resources employed by the coalitions behind D₂ and D₃ of course (donors often fund for example NGOs to foster consultations across civil society, either offline or online, or the hiring of consultants and academic researchers to produce evaluation reports and studies). But as noted previously, it also applies to many of the resources employed in the construction of D₁, which are also often provided by donors, or made available through donor funding.

So while donors may not seem to be explicitly participating in the work of all three coalitions (cf. 5.6.2.1), in reality they do contribute to the articulation of all three discourses - through the provision of many of the means by which they are articulated and strengthened.

5.7.1.5 Acts

All three coalitions recur to specific acts and practices in order to develop and propagate their discourse: most prominent amongst these however is the holding of (or participation in) workshops.

A sizeable amount of the work of the D₁ coalition seems in fact to happen in the context of workshops and other types of consultation fora, whose main purpose appears as we have seen to be very often that of validating the objects and subjects constructed by D₁, and therefore validate in a sense also the coalition’s practices.

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318 This was certainly the case of the NICTPF, for example, but also of processes supported by the IICD - cf. sections 5.3.2.4, 5.2.1.2, and section D-2.3 of Appendix III.
319 It can happen for example that over a number of years the same donor provides direct support to a specific ICT policy process, provides funding to an organisation that fosters critical debate within civil society on how ICT policy is made and on the performance of the MoICT, and commissions ‘analytical’ evaluation surveys and reports on how specific policy processes unravelled, in search of ‘lessons’ to be learnt, contributing in a sense respectively to D₁, D₂ and D₃ (NPA/IICD 2005c, IICD 2005a, APC/IICD 2007c, IICD/I-Network 2007 and personal interviews).
320 Cf. section 5.3.2.5.
In its specularly ‘oppositional’ role, the D₂ coalition tends on the other hand to contest the validatory function of these particular acts (and/or any other functions they may have in fact), but then quite tellingly often articulates its work also through similar, collective acts: it is the case for example of the various workshops and ‘dialogues’ organised by local CSOs or NGOs, in which D₂ coalition actors are ‘allowed’ to form points of view that are alternative to D₁, that may then be distilled into ‘position papers’ that are in turn tabled at workshops held as part of the practices that construct D₁. The D₂ coalition thus appears to ‘mimic’, in a sense, some of the mechanisms of the D₁ coalition, but under an inverse or ‘oppositional’ sign.

This signals in particular that both the D₁ and the D₂ coalition seem to consider the physical getting together of people as an important element in the construction and development of their discourse.

The reasons why this is the case then become all the more clear if we also consider that, as discussed previously, ‘workshops’ also seem to have a number of secondary or ‘unofficial’ network-related aims, such as ‘networking’ or self-legitимisation, the existence and attainment of which enhances the ritual character of activities of this type. In this respect, it could be argued that workshops seem to function in D₁ and D₂ not only as rituals for the confirmation of particular discourses, but also, if not especially, as rituals designed to (re)confirm and strengthen also the coalitions that propose them.

The same could be said also of other acts that characterise the work of the coalitions behind D₁ and D₂. As noted previously, the D₁ coalition ‘celebrates’ itself for example also through ‘official launches’ at the beginning or the end of policy processes, while the D₂ coalition often pronounces its discourse through similarly ‘public’ expressions of discontent or disagreement in virtual fora (e.g. mailing lists, or the media), and/or through participation (by MPs) or testimony (by external invitees) at sessions of the parliamentary committee on ICTs - and in both cases we are again in presence of acts based primarily on the public ‘getting together’ of

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321 Cf. section 5.2.3.1.
people (physically or virtually), which undoubtedly also offer opportunities to achieve secondary network-related aims such as networking and self-legitimisation, and which therefore, like workshops, also have a somewhat ‘ritual’ character\textsuperscript{322}.

It's notable on the other hand how the D\textsubscript{3} coalition seems instead to engage much less in 'public' interactive practices, with the exception perhaps of rare workshops convened with the specific aim of evaluating policymaking activities and drawing 'lessons' designed to inform further policy formulation work. D\textsubscript{3} seems in fact to be articulated primarily through more ‘indirect’ or ‘private’ acts, such as acts of individual reflection, or collective (but still relatively atomistic) acts of research - as opposed to ‘ritual’ acts such as those practised to construct and support D\textsubscript{1} and D\textsubscript{2}. This could be interpreted to mean that this particular coalition doesn’t feel the need to seek ‘public’ (re)confirmations of itself in any particular way\textsuperscript{323}.

\textsuperscript{322} A good example of how ‘networking’ can happen also through ‘virtual’ means was provided to me by one of the informants I interviewed: “Once the Minister responded very badly to some arguments I had made, by sending an email to the discussion list, and everybody saw that and wondered what I had done to upset him so much... but now we are friends, I scratched him and now we are friends, and I am invited to things...” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 13 February 2009).

\textsuperscript{323} This is not to say that D\textsubscript{3} proponents do not participate in the rituals through which the other two coalitions are strengthened and (re)confirmed. Many of those who articulated this particular discourse in my presence or did so in writings also espoused in fact elements of either D\textsubscript{1} or D\textsubscript{2}, and were in some cases even key protagonists of the D\textsubscript{1} or the D\textsubscript{2} coalition, taking part in and at times even hosting some of their rituals. They just didn’t seem to employ or wish to employ public events as rituals for the (re)confirmation of D\textsubscript{3} and the coalition behind it – nor did I find significant traces of instances of this kind in my research.
Table 5.11 - Composition of the Discourse Coalitions ‘Responsible’ for \( D_1 \), \( D_2 \) and \( D_3 \)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>( D_1 )</th>
<th>( D_2 )</th>
<th>( D_3 )</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Who</strong></td>
<td>• Government</td>
<td>• Local private sector operators</td>
<td>• Academics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Donors</td>
<td>• Civil society organisations</td>
<td>• Donors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Some parts of civil society</td>
<td>• Government officials</td>
<td>• Policy specialists (govt. or private)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Parliamentarians</td>
<td>• Private sector actors who entered and exited ICT policy processes at specific points in time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How</strong></td>
<td>• Narratives on the ‘linear’ process’</td>
<td>• Reversals or refutations of the narratives employed by the ( D_1 ) coalition</td>
<td>• Critical/qualified references to dominant narratives on the origins of ICT policy, on process and on participation, and to ‘minor’ narratives about donors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• ‘Positive’ narratives on participation</td>
<td>• Conflict-related metaphors</td>
<td>• Metaphors relating to competition and markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Narratives on the origins of ICT policy making</td>
<td>• Binary process and stakeholder classifications (us vs. them; the excluded vs. the included; top-down vs. bottom-up processes)</td>
<td>• Classifications of policy processes on the basis of stimulus and input</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Metaphors relating to construction and transport</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Stakeholder classifications (both ontological and typological)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Process classifications by stimulus and input.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Where</strong></td>
<td>• Government-owned or government-hired buildings and premises, mainly in Kampala or not far beyond</td>
<td>• Spaces located on the fringes of ‘official’ ICT policy spaces</td>
<td>• Not particularly location-dependent: ‘distributed’ across spaces where research and reflection take place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Extranational spaces</td>
<td>• Parliament</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Virtual spaces e.g. mailing lists</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Extranational spaces</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Materials</strong></td>
<td>• ‘Official’ documents incl. reference papers, workshop reports, draft and, approved policy texts, process guidelines, stakeholder lists, presentation slides, ToR documents, strategy/action plans, evaluation reports</td>
<td>• Civil society reports</td>
<td>• Academic or quasi-academic papers, reports and other types of text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• ICT facilities and services for document production and distribution</td>
<td>• Parliamentary reports and documents</td>
<td>• Pieces of research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Fuel, catering, venues, and more generally a significant amount of money</td>
<td>• Mailing lists, media articles</td>
<td>• The materials/funding necessary to produce them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• All the resources necessary to produce/maintain the above, incl. ICT, logistics, catering and money</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acts</strong></td>
<td>• Policy consultation workshops</td>
<td>• Workshops and ‘dialogues’ organised by CSOs</td>
<td>• Workshops (rare)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Other key ‘milestones’ such as process launches or policy launches</td>
<td>• Individual utterances via mailing lists / media</td>
<td>• Acts of research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Public campaigns and lobbying</td>
<td>• Conversations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Sessions of the ICT parliamentary committee</td>
<td>• ‘Acts of reflection’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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5.7.2 Coalition Interplay and Relative Positioning

Hajer suggests that a discourse coalition can be defined as ‘dominant’ if it fulfills two conditions: if the coalition manages, through its practices, to dominate discursive space, i.e. if actors in other coalitions are persuaded by, or forced to accept, the rhetorical power of its discourse (“discourse structuration”); and if the power of its discourse is reflected also in institutional practice, i.e. if policy processes (in Hajer’s case – but in our case discourses on, or definitions of, policy processes) are conducted according to the principles of its discourse (“discourse institutionalization”) (Hajer 1993: 48).

The picture we have here, strictly in relation to the interplay between the three discourse coalitions under analysis, is perhaps not so clear cut.

It is certainly clear that of all three coalitions, the one behind D1 is the most powerful, and the richest one in terms of resources: it generates and propagates strong narratives like the ones on the linear process and on participation; it accumulates stacks of documents in support of its discourse; and it occupies much of the discursive and physical space in which ICT policymaking and policy processes are conceived and discussed in Uganda.

And in terms of actual coalition dominance as defined by Hajer, it could certainly be said that the D1 coalition is dominant in respect of the one behind D2. The analysis summarised above suggests in fact that the latter emerges and acts very much in response to the former, seeking to play in a sense at the same level, or on the same field: it could thus be said that the D1 coalition does a lot of the ‘structuring’ of D2, and – importantly - also forces the D2 coalition to engage in discursive practices that are very similar to its own. This dynamic is denoted in particular by the overlaps in terms of the narratives, spaces, and acts of which the two coalitions are composed – which as we have seen are in many cases very similar or the same, interpreted/utilised however in opposite manners. In this

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\[324\] We recall in fact that while Hajer’s work has focused mainly on discourses regarding policy content, this piece of research is situated in a sense ‘one level up’, focusing as it does on discourses about processes, i.e. on how actors construct, through discourse, policy practice.
respect, the D₁ coalition seems in other words to provide a set of ‘institution-like’ boundaries for discursive practice within which the D₂ coalition accepts, in a sense, to operate. The D₁ and D₂ coalitions thus arguably form, in Hajer’s sense, a strongly coupled, dominant/minor dyad.

It would be difficult to say the same of the relationship between D₁ and D₃, however. For example, while the D₃ coalition seems to handle some of the key ‘currencies’ exchanged also between D₁ and D₂ (e.g. narratives on the origins, on the process and on participation), as we have seen it also seems to do so in arguably a more ‘detached’ and analytical way. It also seems to inhabit different spaces, or – rather – being relatively location-independent it doesn’t seem to have a particularly strong spatial dimension or attachment to particular spaces, other than being generally localised, like the other two coalitions, in or around Kampala. And importantly, the D₃ coalition does not seem to engage in the same type of acts in which the other two coalitions typically engage, such as workshops and other public ‘rituals’. The D₃ coalition thus doesn’t appear to be particularly ‘constrained’ in the articulation of its discourse by the discursive and ‘institutional’ strength, or dominance, of D₁ and of the coalition behind it.

There are no elements therefore to conclude in definitive terms that the D₁ coalition dominates all discourse on ICT policy in Uganda – and in this respect, the existence of the D₃ coalition actually signals the possibility (very much just in potentia so far) that some of its actors may develop, in the future, new, alternative discourses on ICT policymaking in Uganda. The D₃ coalition seems in other words to represent a potential, but so far relatively silent, ‘chink in the armour’ of D₁ dominance, as its relatively ‘detached’ and ‘reflective’ character could in the long run also allow the construction of discourses that are critical of D₁ in a more pronounced manner than has been the case in the period under analysis.

There is however another, perhaps more important conclusion that can be drawn from the comparative analysis of discourse coalitions undertaken above: all three coalitions are arguably subject to the dominance of the wider, ‘global’ coalition that articulates and ‘sponsors’ contemporary discourse on ‘participatory policymaking’.
A detailed analysis of the workings of this broader, ‘participation’ coalition clearly lies beyond the scope of this piece of research\textsuperscript{325}. The analysis undertaken so far allows us however to deduce the influence of some of its elements on Ugandan ICT policy discourse.

We have seen for example how all the three discourses on ICT policy practice identified and analysed in this study seem to be shaped by and revolve around a broader, dominant discourse that prescribes the need for all policy in Uganda to be participative (cf. section 5.6.2.1).

In this respect, it’s certainly possible to talk in this case of discourse structuration – the first ‘condition’ of coalition dominance as intended by Hajer. D\textsubscript{1}, D\textsubscript{2} and D\textsubscript{3} actors seem in fact to be broadly ‘in acceptance’ of contemporary discourse on ‘participatory policymaking’, and thus appear to have accepted (or succumbed to) the rhetorical power of the discourse coalition behind it.

The comparative analysis of discourse coalitions undertaken above provides evidence however also of discourse institutionalisation, intended as is the case in this study as the constraining of actors’ discursive practices within boundaries provided by a dominant discourse and the coalition behind it.

The fact that all the narratives and storylines about process and participation that circulate and are ‘available’ in Ugandan ICT policy discourse are centred around positive conceptions of ‘participation’ is for example a case in point: all three coalitions seem in fact to construct their discourse through the use of a relatively limited range of ‘assonant’ narrative materials or ‘options’, all of which are arguably ‘local replicas’ of the ‘grand’(er) narrative espoused and proposed by the global coalition of donors and governments or international institutions that sustains and propagates mainstream participatory policy discourse (Kothari 2001)\textsuperscript{326}.

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{325} A good point to start from in this respect is represented by Cooke and Kothari’s book ‘Participation: The New Tyranny?’ (Cooke and Kothari 2001b).
\textsuperscript{326} A ‘grand’ narrative to which Ugandan discourse on ICT policy practice sometimes also makes direct references to, as seen in sections 5.3.1.3 and 5.4.1.3.
\end{footnotesize}
The significant (and similar) use made by all three coalitions of process classifications by stimulus and input is also quite telling in this respect. Such classifications are in fact more often than not employed by all three coalitions to divide processes into top-down vs. bottom-up, or nationally-owned vs. hetero-directed - dyads that arguably equate after all to ‘participative’ vs. ‘non-participative’, thus signalling that when it comes to distinguishing and classifying policy processes, the categories available seem to be inspired nearly exclusively by worldviews that are compatible with, and likely to form the basis of, the work of the wider coalition responsible for mainstream discourse on participatory policymaking. In addition to this, the extensive work on stakeholder classification undertaken by all three coalitions similarly signals not only the perceived importance of ‘participation’ as a world-building construct in relation to policymaking, but also the conviction of the possibility of classifying individual entities that may differ in behaviour and background into ‘standard’ or standardised categories of actor - another world-building mechanism that arguably characterises mainstream participatory development discourse (Cleaver 2001: 47-48).

The spaces in which all three ICT policy discourse coalitions mostly operate (D₁ and D₂ in particular) are also quite similar and peculiar, in that they are often delimited and circumscribed quite clearly; they are all spaces in which people are supposed to come together and agree on things (as opposed for example to protesting and/or disagreeing); and they are all localised in central Kampala. In this respect, such spaces are very similar to the type of (metaphorical but I would say also physical) spaces that according to Brock and De Coninck generally characterise dominant participatory policy practice in Uganda: all marked and delimited very clearly, and all centralised around Kampala (Brock 2004b, De Coninck 2004). Cornwall similarly suggests, in more general terms, that the rhetoric of participatory development has a “distinct spatial dimension”, and is often built around the idea of “people coming together” to deliberate (Cornwall 2004: 77). The conceptions and uses that the three coalitions under analysis here have and make of ‘policy spaces’ thus arguably derive quite directly, and somewhat exclusively, from conceptions of space typical of mainstream participatory policy discourse.
The constraining of the work of the three coalitions analysed here within boundaries provided by ‘participatory policymaking’ discourse is then denoted also in the type and amount of material resources at the disposal of such coalitions: such resources are in fact often designed and employed either to document, affirm or negate the participativeness of policy processes (cf. the many references contained in documents and reports, but also in official policy texts, to the level of participativeness of the processes they refer to), or – in the case of materials like fuel, cars, venues and so on – to support official ‘participatory’ activities such as consultation workshops, fact finding missions and the like.

Which leads us – finally – to acts, and to the primacy of the ‘workshop’ as the act that defines ICT policymaking practice and discourse in Uganda. As noted above, the coming together of people to discuss and deliberate is again a key, obligatory feature of mainstream participatory policy practice tout court, and as noted previously ICT policy-related workshops very often seem to serve the function of validating the process (read: its participativeness) as much as the policies that are being discussed327. In this respect, Mosse usefully notes that mainstream participatory development approaches often rely principally on and are defined by the organisation and the running of ‘public’ events, during which people are invited to share their views, usually in presence of some kind of authority (Mosse 2001: 21).

In summary, the analysis of discourse coalitions undertaken suggests that the discursive practices in which all three coalitions engage seem to be based on the employment of process-related artefacts that are almost exclusively compatible with / derived from broader, contemporary participatory policy discourse, signalling that all three coalitions may in fact be under the ‘capture’ of the wider, very well organised coalition that sustains and propagates such a discourse. And crucially, such a ‘capture’ has the important effect of limiting, in a sense, the ‘options’ available to the three coalitions in terms of discursive practice to a relatively narrow horizon or frame – in a way similar to what Cornwall suggests happens in the presence of any type of dominant discourse:

327 Cf. section 5.3.2.5.
“Dominant discourses may be refracted through artefacts (...) to substantiate and legitimise the interventions of policy prescriptions [in our case: policy process prescriptions] of the powerful, or construct such an all-encompassing mediating frame that it is barely possible to imagine, let alone articulate, alternative versions.” (Cornwall 2004: 83)

It is in this sense that I talk of discourse institutionalisation, the second ‘condition’ for the dominance of discourse coalitions as defined by Hajer: the restriction – through rhetorical and ‘practical’ power - of the discursive options and practices employed by ‘minor’ or ‘secondary’ discourse coalitions to just a few, brought about in this case by a wider, ‘global’ coalition of donors and international institutions ‘responsible’ for contemporary, mainstream participatory policymaking discourse.

Let’s not forget in fact that not only the three coalitions analysed here seem to ‘trade’ the same, ‘participation’-oriented discursive currencies/artefacts, but that many of these artefacts are also often made available in practice thanks to donor support, be it in the form of financial resources, material resources, or (as is the case with external ‘facilitators’, for example) human resources – and how this means, as noted previously, that donors appear therefore to be sponsoring, or feeding, all three coalitions: the ‘dominant’ one, the ‘oppositional’ one, and the ‘analytical’ one.

The ‘sun’ around which all Ugandan discourse on ICT policy revolves doesn’t therefore only exude the powerful, warm glow of ‘participatory’ discourse: it also oozes a significant flow of material resources to support such a discourse and its articulation in practice, shaping the work of Ugandan ICT policy discourse coalitions in a significant manner.

And while donor support may generally be received and perceived quite positively as an ‘enabler’ of ICT policy practice, as Cornwall notes extensive donor intervention in support of ‘participative’ policy practice and discourse may also have negative effects:
“Tempting as it might seem for donors to fund and direct the production of [policy] spaces, doing so may domesticate their ‘radical possibility’ and possibly neutralise them (...)” (Cornwall 2004: 87)

In this respect, it could be argued that this danger doesn’t apply only to the production of policy spaces, but also to the production and propagation of other types of policy- or process-related artefact – and this study demonstrates how, through such a dynamic, the dominance of ‘participatory policy’ discourse in Uganda has effectively ‘domesticated’ the choices available to local actors with regard to the articulation of possible, alternative discourses and scenarios regarding ICT policy practice, reducing them to just a few - all having to do in one way or another with the prescription, or dogma, that ICT policy be ‘participative’, and nothing else.

5.8 Contextualisation of Findings

The findings discussed above have some bearings on, or relationships with, findings from research on contemporary development policymaking (in Uganda or more generally) on one hand, and findings from research on ICT4D on the other hand.

With regard to the first, a number of authors note for example that in Uganda, the influence of dominant ‘participatory policymaking’ (PP) discourse on local policymaking practice has been quite significant over the past few years, shaping both the nature and structure of policy processes and the networks of relationships at their basis (Lister and Nyamugasira 2003, Brock 2004b, De Coninck 2004, McGee 2004a). In this respect, the findings emerging from this research regarding how dominant PP discourse seems to shape and – importantly - curtail the options available to Ugandan policy actors for the construction of discourse around ICT policy practice, would seem to confirm the views offered by these authors, with reference to the specific ambit of ICT policy (as opposed to poverty reduction policy, for example). This study provides in other words additional corroborating evidence in respect of the conclusions drawn by these authors, and also shows in quite some detail through what mechanisms (linguistic and non-linguistic) the
influence of dominant PP discourse can take place in practice in a particular context or policy sector.

In addition to the above, recent research on policymaking in Uganda has also shown how the dominance of PP discourse in this particular context arguably derives also - if not primarily - from the significant influence that donor organisations have precisely on Ugandan policymaking practice (as opposed to project implementation, for example), and how this influence derives in turn from the Ugandan government’s traditional dependency on (often conditional) donor funding for its budget (Robinson and Friedman 2007, Brock 2004b). Again also in this case the present study would seem to confirm this thesis, by highlighting for example how a significant quantity of the material resources employed in the ‘production’ of Ugandan ICT policy processes and of discourse around them seems indeed to originate from donors, and thus how donors seem to influence and shape the work of all the three discourse coalitions under analysis (cf. section 5.7.1.4). Donors seem in other words to ‘call the shots’ also in the specific ambit of ICT policymaking.

There are then a number of resonances between the results of this study and those of research into particular aspects of development policymaking.

One such resonance refers to findings regarding relationships between actors in the policy process - and in particular relationships between the government and CSOs. Robinson and Friedman (2007) remark in fact that similarly to government, Ugandan CSOs too are significantly dependent on donor funding, and that this tends to result into the partial or total adherence of these organisations to particular donor agendas. Other authors come to similar conclusions, and additionally note that this adherence tends to take the form of CSOs and NGOs ‘slotting’ into particular roles in respect of the policy process, e.g. as ‘invited contributors’ to it, or as ‘pressurisers’ (Lister and Nyamugasira 2003) – leading also to the formation of small and relatively ‘tight’ elites of civil society organizations that have very close relationships with government and which are regularly involved in policy processes (Brock 2004c, De Coninck 2004, McGee 2004a). In this respect the findings of the present study regarding who speaks
particular discourses around ICT policy in Uganda are quite telling. As seen in section 5.7.1.1 in fact, Ugandan civil society actors seem to be engaged in contributing both to dominant, official discourses on ICT policymaking (arguably in the role of ‘invited contributors’), and to ‘critical discourses’ (arguably as ‘pressurisers’) – and never to ‘detached’ discourses such as D₃. This suggests that, similarly to what is maintained by the authors cited above, Ugandan CSOs operating in the ambit of ICT policy either adhere to dominant agendas, or fulfil a ‘critical’ role that is in fact also in line with dominant PP discourse (the role of ‘pressurisers’), and is constructed, like adherence, on the basis of a close relationship with government and its ‘official line’ discourse (we will recall in fact how D₂ is arguably a sort of ‘appendix’ of D₁, in that it emerges primarily as a refutation of it). Further confirmation of this dynamic is arguably provided also by the fact that the types of actor who, differently from government, civil society and donors, do not engage also in the production of D₁ are also actors or categories of actor that are perhaps not as dependent (or not directly dependent) from donor funding – such as private sector actors, academics and parliamentarians. This would seem to confirm that dependence on donor funding tends to lead to the adherence of those who depend on it to donors’ agendas (a government-friendly agenda, or a specularly ‘critical’ agenda – often at the same time), and the study shows how this adherence takes the practical form the performance of specific discourses (e.g. D₁ and D₂) as opposed to others (e.g. D₃).

Another key observation often made by scholars analysing the dynamics and the consequences of the dominance of PP discourses on development policymaking (in Uganda and beyond) concerns spaces. In this respect, as noted previously (cf. previous section) authors note that the dominance of PP discourse also comes with clear demarcations of particular, discrete spaces for the participation of non-governmental actors (or ‘the public’) in policy formulation, separate from decision-making spaces that are instead ‘closed’ to them (De Coninck 2004, Gaventa 2004, Cornwall 2004) – and also that the spaces that are ‘open’ to the public are usually located in the capital city of the country in question, as opposed to being distributed across the nation (Brock 2004a, Robinson and Friedman 2007). Again also in this case the findings from this research would seem to confirm this: as seen in section 5.2.2, the spaces of Ugandan ICT policy, as constructed through
discourse, do in fact seem to be located primarily in the capital city Kampala, and policymaking does indeed seem to be organised around passages, or transitions, between ‘open’ and ‘closed’ spaces. The spaces of Ugandan ICT policy thus seem to reflect the spaces of mainstream PP discourse.

Finally, another element of commonality between findings from this research and findings from research on development policymaking in general refers to the role, and in particular the centrality, attributed to government in the context of the policy process. In this respect, Kothari (2001) notes for example that dominant PP discourse tends to configure participation as implying the ‘coming’ or ‘travelling’ of those who are supposed to participate from a ‘periphery’ to a ‘centre’, occupied by a powerful subject (e.g. a donor, or the government). Chakravartty (2007) speaks of this phenomenon in slightly different terms, referring to a “vertical topography of power between the state on top versus civil society below” (300, emphasis mine). Again also in this case it is easy to see how this resonates with some of the findings that have emerged from this research: as seen in section 5.6.1.2, government is in fact constructed in all three discourses on ICT policy as central to the policy process, and as something other actors need to enter/penetrate/relate to; the constructions of policy processes as ‘top-down’ vs. ‘bottom-up’ analysed in section 5.1.2.2.2 the further corrobore Chakravartty’s thesis, as they are evidently based on ‘top’ corresponding to government, and ‘bottom’ corresponding to all else.

In summary, the findings of this study seem in other words to confirm several of the conclusions drawn from critical research on ‘participatory’ policymaking and on the dominance of PP discourse in the context of international development – and the study itself provides a detailed example of how such a dominance can find a particular articulation in a specific ambit of policymaking (ICT policy), revealing some of the mechanisms through which such a dominance can ensue.

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In addition to the above, the findings from the case study at the centre of this research then also have some resonance with findings emerging from recent
research in the ambit of *ICT4D* - and in particular with research highlighting how the nature and the outcomes of ICT4D projects are fundamentally shaped by the conceptions or philosophies of ‘development’ that underlie them.

Prakash and De’ (2007) highlight for example how the design of *Bhoomi* (an ICT4D project aimed at computerizing land records in India’s Karnataka state) seemed to be based on, and satisfy, a neo-liberal vision or conception of development as ‘economic growth’ – stressing that such a conception is but one possible conception of development (an alternative being for example Sen’s conception of development as ‘capacity building’ for the people) (Sen 2000). In their analysis of three other Indian ICT4D projects, Kuriyan and Bussell (2010) also come to similar conclusions, highlighting how the different philosophical conceptions of ‘development’ that underlay the projects in question seemed to have led to different design and implementation choices in all three projects. In the context of this study, the same could be said to apply also to the ambit of ICT4D policy processes. Ugandan interpretations and perceptions of ICT policymaking seem in fact to be significantly influenced by a particular conception of development (‘participatory development’), over other possible ones. Conceptions of ‘development’ thus seem to influence not only ICT4D projects, but also that ICT4D policy projects and processes, as they are perceived by actors. Future research on ICT4D policy practice may thus benefit from focusing in more detail also on the particular conceptions of ‘development’ shared by policy actors in given contexts.

On the other hand, the findings of this research also help put the findings of other ICT4D studies - and the theories that inform them or are derived from them - into a *critical* perspective.

Mainstream studies of ICT4D project implementation often configure for example *politics* as a stable and ‘immutable’ factor, usually acting as a (negative) constraint in the context of ICT projects (cf. amongst others Sahay *et al.* 2009, Madon *et al.* 2009). In the case analysed here, politics and political context seem instead to be used by actors as a *resource* – and more precisely as an ‘argumentative’ resource, used to substantiate particular points of view and construct/put forward particular,
and at times conflicting, discourses. In the case of Uganda, the macro-political context provided by the NRM regime is for example interpreted as a positive factor, and something that has made ‘participatory’ ICT policymaking in a sense ‘natural’ or obvious in Uganda in the context of D_1 and at the same time configured in D_2 as one of the reasons why standard Ugandan ICT policy practice is not participative as it could/should be (cf. 5.6.1.3). The situation here is in other words more complex than “politics = constraint = bad”: the meaning and value of ‘politics’ and of particular political events/trends can actually vary within a given setting, and different interpretations of politics and political events can in fact be employed/enrolled (Latour 1987) differently by different actors to construct specific, different points of view on the same subject. Furthermore, it should also be noted that according to some, the “politics=bad” equation is in fact, in itself, a key tenet of participatory development discourse (Cleaver 2001): it could thus be argued that ICT4D studies based on this key assumption, or drawing univocal conclusions about the (negative) role of politics, are as influenced by participatory development discourse as the phenomena under scrutiny in this study – while the approach adopted here allows one to take a more complex and open stance in respect of this matter.

A similar conclusion can be drawn in relation to the concept of ‘culture’. A number of ICT4D studies often conclude in fact (or assume) that local culture and cultural dispositions play an important role when it comes to ICT project implementation in DCs, and thus recommend that project or system planners, managers and implementers take specific ‘local’ cultural aspects into account, and adapt their projects/systems accordingly (see for example Walsham 2001, Diaz Andrade and Urquhart 2009, van Reijswoud 2009). However, besides a few rare exceptions (e.g. Dysart-Gale et al. 2011), also in this case ‘culture’ is often interpreted in a univocal manner, or at least interpreted to have a univocal and clear influence on project/system implementation, as a stable, immutable ‘given’. This study shows instead how, as is the case with politics, actors’ perceptions of the particular cultural features of a country or other geographical area can actually vary, and – importantly – how different variations and interpretations of ‘local culture’ can in

\[328\] Cf. also the conclusions I draw regarding the utility of the framework and approach adopted here illustrated in Chapter 6.
fact be employed by actors in different ways, to strengthen particular discourses. Witness for example how D₂ portrays Ugandans as a (cultural) whole as ‘selfish’, and how this is said to have negatively affected ICT policymaking (cf. 5.4.1.3), or how arguments regarding the alleged lack of ICT knowledge (also a form of culture, or cultural trait) amongst the rural population are used to justify (or contest) the exclusion of rural populations from ICT policymaking in D₁ (cf. 5.2.2.1): what version of culture should one take into consideration here, and why?

Notably, the issues highlighted above do not necessarily apply only in relation to conceptions of culture, or politics, but more generally in relation to how ‘context’ is often theorised in ICT4D research. ‘Appropriate technology’ (AT) approaches to ICT4D are for example arguably based on assumptions/conceptions of ‘context’ again as an ‘immutable’ factor or entity to which ICT4D projects (or, translating to the subject of this research, ICT policy initiatives) should be adapted, or adapt (again cf. van Reijswoud 2009, for example). But ‘context’ is an inherently dynamic concept (Silva and Westrup 2009), and importantly, its interpretation is negotiable. The existence of ‘scattered initiatives’ around ICT policy in Uganda is a case in point: interpreted as something firmly pertaining to the past by some, and at the same time as a problem that has never really gone away by others (cf. 5.1.3.1.2); or seen as something to which ICT policymaking has adapted to, integrated and treasured (in D₁), vs. something that has been rejected/silenced, or at least relegated into the past (in D₂). Similarly, the ‘context’ constituted by donors and by their ‘outsider’ intervention is variously experienced/perceived as an enabler (in D₁) or as a constraint (in D₂).

A key conclusion of this study is that, yes, context *is* of course particularly important (the importance of context is one of the key tenets of interpretive approaches, after all), but particularly important is also to understand ‘context’ for what it is, i.e. a dynamic, variable or ‘unstable’ factor that can in fact be interpreted and discursively ‘used’ by actors in different ways. Accepting on the contrary a particular local ‘version’ of context (or even worse, arbitrarily imposing one) over other possible ones potentially leads instead to the telling of only one part of the story, and is unlikely to lead to successful project or policy results (or – dare I say it
- to solid, useable research findings of some utility to the protagonists of a piece of research).

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The observations above conclude my discussion of the findings from the case study at the centre of this research, and contextualise such findings in relation to relevant contemporary literature on ICT4D and development policymaking.

In the next chapter I turn to answering the key research questions that have animated this study, based on these findings, and then proceed to drawing a number of conclusions regarding the viability of the framework and the methods used, and the utility of this piece of research.
6. CONCLUSIONS

In this last chapter, I summarise the conclusions that can be drawn from this study and provide answers to the research questions that inspired it.

In this respect, I wish to recall that the study was animated by two different orders, or levels, of research question:

- questions at the level of the case under analysis, i.e. questions on the existence and nature of policy networks around ICTs in Uganda
- more fundamental questions regarding how to study and understand ICT policymaking processes in DCs, and on the appropriateness of a specific analytical approach (interpretive policy network analysis) to this effect.

I address these two different sets of questions respectively in the next two sections (6.1 and 6.2), and then proceed to conclude the dissertation with some considerations regarding the utility of a study of this kind both within and beyond the academic community (6.3).

6.1 On the Existence and Nature of Networks Around ICT Policy in Uganda

The analysis of process-related artefacts, discourses and discourse coalitions summarised in Chapter 5 has allowed me answer the key research question and related sub-questions that have oriented my work in relation to ICT policymaking in Uganda, which I recall as follows (cf. my first formulation of these questions at a generic level in section 2.4.2):

**Key Research Question**

- What perceptions actors have of their relationships with other actors involved in the discussion of ICT policy? In other words is there an identifiable network of actors involved in ICT policy making in Uganda? And if so, when and where is there a network, and what defines it?
Sub-Questions

- How do actors think ICT policy is normally made, and what characterises specific perceived ways of making ICT policy?
- How and where are boundaries set? Who/what is considered to be inside the agglomeration of entities that produces ICT policy?
- What are ICT policy processes ‘made of’ – i.e. what linguistic and non-linguistic policy- and/or process-related artefacts contribute to characterising and shaping actors’ perceptions of the policy process?

Below I answer first the sub-questions and then the main research question listed above.

How do actors think policy is normally made, and what characterises specific perceived ways of making policy?

The three discourses identified and analysed in Chapter 5 define the ‘normality’ of ICT policymaking in different ways:

- D_1 portrays ICT policy as the result of cooperative, transparent interactions between a sufficiently wide range and number of actors hailing from different social and economic contexts, who participate in the policy process either directly or represented by others (through a mechanism that could be defined as synecdochic participation^{329}). Ugandan ICT policy processes are ‘linear’ and rational, and ample opportunities are provided for all categories of relevant stakeholders to have a say.

- D_2 portrays ICT policy as the result of ‘closed shop’ interactions among a very small elite of actors that is difficult to penetrate. Several potentially relevant and ‘useful’ stakeholders are excluded from policy consultation, mainly because of the malicious and non-transparent management of supposedly ‘linear’ policy processes by governmental authorities, which

^{329} I.e. the representation of many by a few – cf. section 5.3.2.3.
renders official opportunities for public ‘participation’ and ‘consultation’ merely tokenistic and symbolic, as important decisions are taken elsewhere, and usually behind closed doors. Conflicts over control of the levers of ICT policymaking abound.

- $D_3$ portrays ICT policy as normally being the result of the *interactions of a variable number and range of actors*, depending on historical context and on the issue at stake. Some policy processes are ‘linear’ and relatively participative, while others are less so, and decisions are sometimes also taken in an executive, unilateral manner by governmental actors. Access to policymaking is quite competitive and depends on actors’ abilities to make their voice heard.

So in general, in the context under analysis there is *more than one way* in which ICT policymaking is perceived to take place, and different conceptions or configurations of the ICT policy process are put into ‘dialogue’ through discursive practice.

There is however an element of *ontological commonality* to all three of these conceptions or depictions of the Ugandan ICT policy process: they all define policymaking primarily on the basis of its perceived ‘openness’ and ‘participativeness’ (cf. section 5.6.2).

| How and where are boundaries set? Who/what is considered to be inside the agglomeration of entities that produces Ugandan ICT policy? |

Answers to this question also vary.

It is safe to say that all the discourses analysed here portray *government* as a key, central actor in policymaking. In other words, according to most if not all actors, government ‘calls the shots’ in terms of how the policy process is run, and is generally seen to have, at least formally, the prerogative of defining the boundaries of the policy network and who should be inside/outside it.
D₁ then defines as legitimate participants in the policy process the ‘effective’ and the ‘affected’ - i.e. all those perceived to be able to contribute ‘effectively’ and in a meaningful manner to the policy process, and/or those perceived to particularly affected by its outcomes. Not all legitimate stakeholders thus defined participate in relevant policy processes, however - but they are all welcome to do so, and significant efforts are said to be made to include them in consultation and policy formulation. The ‘effective’ usually participate directly, while the ‘affected’ participate either directly or through synecdochic representation.

D₂ similarly defines as legitimate participants in the policy process both the ‘effective’ and the ‘affected’. However, in D₂’s perspective most such participants are actually excluded from participating in policy processes, in favour of a selected, powerful few - in particular large private sector operators. D₂ is thus characterised by a discrepancy between ‘ideal’ boundary and ‘actual’ boundary that is absent in D₁, where these two concepts tend instead to coincide. D₂ also seems to favour direct participation over synecdochic participation, alleging that in Uganda’s contemporary political context the latter is likely to lead to, or aggravate, phenomena of policy or regulatory ‘capture’ by a powerful elite.

D₃ does not seem instead to define the nature of legitimate stakeholders in any particular way. Actors succeed in participating in policy processes based on their ability to compete with others, and as success is variable, the boundaries of the policy network and of the process are also variable. The discourse also doesn’t seem to express any particular preference between direct and synecdochic participation, although it acknowledges at times that the competitiveness that characterises access to the policy process may ‘skew’ the effectiveness of synecdochic representation.

By extension, the three discourses also delineate quite clearly who/what is (rightly or wrongly) excluded from the policy process: in D₁, it’s the ‘useless’, i.e. all those perceived not to be in a position to contribute meaningfully to policy formulation; in D₂ the excluded are on the contrary the (potentially) ‘useful’, i.e. people who would have interesting and useful things to say, but who are intentionally locked out from the process by the government; in D₃, it’s the ‘incapable’, i.e. those incapable of
winning access to the policymaking process, mainly due to their inability to compete in getting their voice heard (cf. section 5.6.2).

What are ICT policy processes ‘made of’ – i.e. what linguistic and non-linguistic policy- and/or process-related artefacts contribute to characterising and shaping actors’ perceptions of the policy process?

This question is answered in detail through the review of the key linguistic and non-linguistic artefacts employed in the construction of Ugandan ICT policy discourse conducted in the first section of Chapter 5.

In general, we have seen that the different discursive versions of the ICT policy process that circulate in the Ugandan context are constructed through recourse to complex sets of discursive and material artefacts, ranging from narratives to metaphors, classifications, spaces and acts, not to mention strictly material resources such as fuel, cars, buildings, food, and money.

Then when it comes more specifically to linguistic artefacts, we have seen that besides being punctuated by different and quite distinct metaphorical constructs, D₁, D₂ and D₃ seem to make reference to the same (or similar) narratives, and to make use of similar classification/categorisation mechanisms - all of which are in some way compatible with (if not directly derived from) contemporary, dominant discourse on ‘participatory policymaking’ (cf. section 5.6.2.1).

And with reference to non-linguistic artefacts, we have seen that:

- Ugandan ICT policy processes are discursively ‘made of’ a significant array of material resources; in this respect, we saw in particular that the coalition behind D₁ is arguably particularly better resourced than those behind D₂ and D₃, and that a large quantity of the material resources available to all three coalitions are such also thanks to donor support

- Ugandan ICT policy processes are discursively ‘made of’ or ‘made in’ particular spaces, localised in particular in or around central Kampala, or
(less often) far beyond (e.g. international policy spaces) or in the ‘virtual’ dimension of mailing lists – and that also in this case access to these spaces is often made possible thanks to donor support.

- Ugandan ICT policy processes are discursively constructed through particular acts, the most common of which is the ritual ‘getting together’ of policy actors, often designed to validate not only policy content but also discourses regarding the policy process.

As illustrated previously, in the context under analysis all these different linguistic and non-linguistic artefacts are pulled together in different configurations to make up the discourse coalitions that formulate and strengthen different discourses around the ICT policy process in Uganda – and differences in the nature and composition of each coalition arguably go a significant way in explaining the relative strength and dominance of specific discourses in relation to others (in this case, the dominance of D₁ in respect of D₂, and in part, also of D₃).

In section 5.7.2 I additionally argued that the ‘toolbox’ of artefacts available to Ugandan ICT policy actors to construct their interpretations of ICT policy practice seems to have been ‘packaged’ (or at least significantly filled) by a wider, ‘global’ discourse coalition that is responsible for mainstream ‘participatory policymaking’ discourse. The importance of this finding will become all the more clear in the next section.

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I now turn to answering the key research question that animated my case study:

What perceptions do actors have of their relationships with other actors involved in the discussion of policy? In other words, is there an identifiable network of actors involved in ICT policy making in Uganda? And if so, when and where is there a network, and what defines it?

The key question here is obviously whether according to local policy actors there is, in Uganda, an identifiable network of actors involved in national ICT policy - and the answer is yes, and no.
On one hand, all the discourses I was able to identify and analyse through my research tend in fact to agree on / configure the existence (and importance) of an identifiable network of relationships between governmental and non-governmental actors as the basis on which Ugandan ICT policy is and has traditionally been formulated, however inclusive/exclusive or stable/unstable such a network may be (or more than one network in the case of D₃ – but at least one).

So the answer to this question is, from this point of view, positive: yes, there is an identifiable network of actors whose reciprocal relationships provide the basis for ICT policy formulation in Uganda (i.e. this would be the likely answer most actors would give, individually, to such a question)\(^{330}\).

There is no agreement however on what such a network is made of and who it actually comprises. Rightful, representative stakeholders or a small, exclusionary elite? Experts or incompetents? National actors only, or also international ones?

So the answer to our question on the existence of an identifiable network of actors around ICT policy is also negative: no, there is no single identifiable network around ICT policy; there are instead different interpretations of the existence and nature of the network(s) of actors engaged in the production of ICT policy in Uganda, so in a sense there are different networks, coexisting at the same time\(^{331}\).

The comparative analysis of discourses and discourse coalitions summarised in Part III of Chapter 5 allows us however to draw some conclusions on what such different interpretations, and by extension such different networks, have in common.

\(^{330}\) With the exception noted above of D₃-espousing actors, who may actually say there is one, or more, network(s).

\(^{331}\) This is different from the view constructed by D₃ - ontologically different in fact, as D₃ configures the synchronic or diachronic coexistence of different types of network around different issues or at different times. What is suggested here is instead that the same ensemble of relationships can be perceived and interpreted in different ways simultaneously, from different points of view.
As seen in section 5.6.2.1, it is safe to say that if there is one thing that ‘pools’ together the different interpretations of the Ugandan ICT policy network formulated in D₁, D₂ and D₃, it is that they are all formulated within a discursive perspective that has ‘participation’ and ‘participatory policymaking’ as its organising principle and frame: a perspective heavily influenced, as we have seen, by dominant, donor-driven contemporary discourse that emphasises the need for policy processes to be as participative as possible.

In this perspective, the conclusions drawn in section 5.6.1.1 regarding the ways in which the three discourses at the centre of this study theorise the relationship between networks and processes acquire particular meaning. As we have seen in fact, all three discourses implicitly hypothesise, in different ways, a positive correlation between the ‘openness’ and ‘participativeness’ of policy networks and the nature and outcomes of the policy process in which network actors are engaged: D₁ says that an open and participative policy network makes for appropriate and legitimate policy processes and outcomes; D₂ makes the same point but denounces the failure of government to achieve this objective; and D₃ does not put the arrow of causality in a specific direction, but still implicitly hypothesises a linkage between the nature of relationships between actors and the nature of the policy process and of its outcomes (cf. sections 5.5.1.1 and 5.5.2.2, conjunctly).

In all three cases the ‘participativeness’ of ICT policy networks seems in other words to be configured as the most important, if not the only factor that can really be said to have a clear impact on the quality of ICT policy processes and, by extension, on their outcomes: we are therefore in presence of a logic (or in a sense, a political ontology) similar to that indicated by Mosse as being characteristic of dominant participatory development discourse, whereby “the idea of ‘participation’ [becomes] a self-validating theory of the relationship between successful outputs (…) [in our case, successful policy processes and policy outcomes] and people’s involvement” (Mosse 2004: 30, emphasis mine).

This in itself is not surprising if we consider that, as mentioned above, Ugandan ICT policy discourse is heavily influenced by donor-driven, mainstream
participatory development’/‘participatory policymaking’ discourse. In other words, as suggested in section 5.8, what we are dealing with here seems to be the ‘local’ (to ICT policy) articulation of a phenomenon that according to De Coninck has characterised the recent history of Ugandan policymaking at large:

“Donor funding in Uganda has (…) coincided with an increased acceptance of the need for participation in the development process. This has manifested itself, in the first instance, in the need for consultations whenever development policy has to be defined” (De Coninck 2004: 64-65)

In sections 5.6.2.1 and 5.7.2 I also noted however more specifically that in the context under analysis the dominance of mainstream ‘participatory development’ discourse seems to have had the important overall effect of narrowing or limiting the discursive options available to Ugandan ICT policy actors for the construction of discourses regarding how they do what they do to just a few, all compatible with dominant discourses on ‘participatory policymaking’.

Now, based also on the comparison between the ‘network’ objects constructed by each discourse recalled above (see again section 5.6.1.1), it’s easy to see how in this narrow and somewhat ‘regimented’ discursive perspective, ICT policy networks are actually only perceived to exist insofar as they are participative – and no other, alternative accounts of their existence find any fertile ground on which to develop.

In this respect, Colebatch suggests that accounts of policymaking typically fall into one of three categories: “authoritative choice” accounts, where policy is perceived and narrated as being made by political leaders in positions of authority; “structured interaction” accounts, where policy is perceived mainly as a process of interaction between “stakeholders”; and “social construction” accounts, where policy is understood as the collective construction of meaning (Colebatch 2006: 39-40). Translating this to a more specific analysis of networks, the accounts of ICT policy networking analysed here fall mostly, if not exclusively, in the “structured interaction” category, and little space is left for possible “authoritative
choice” models or accounts (other than as examples of the absence of networking\textsuperscript{332}), or “social construction” accounts.

The ‘self-validating theory’ of participation mentioned above thus seems to refer not only to the validation of policy outcomes on the basis of the participativeness of the policy process, but also to the validation, on such a basis, of the actual, ontological existence of networks: in the context under analysis, ICT policy networks seem in other words to be ontologically defined as such primarily on the basis of their ‘participative’ character.

The answer to the second part of the research question discussed here (‘when and where is there a network, and what defines it?’) is thus in a sense that in the Ugandan ICT policy context there is a network when and where there is ‘participation’, and only then and there – and it is only in this sense perhaps that we can talk of one ICT policy network in Uganda: the ‘participative’ one, as ‘participativeness’ is the only core characteristic that is common to the different network objects constructed by the three discourses under analysis (be it in the form of an ideal or that of a constructed reality).

In way of conclusion, and from a broader, historical point of view, it can thus be said that the different networks of relationships discursively constructed by actors as coalescing around ICT policy in Uganda have one particular thing in common: they were all born under the aegis of ‘participation’ discourses - and they all bear the birthmarks to prove it.

### 6.2 On Method and Analytical Approach

The second order of research questions this study intended to address relates more fundamentally to method and to issues of analytical approach.

The first, fundamental question that oriented this study was in fact:

\textsuperscript{332} Witness how a respondent lamented the allegedly extremely low, if not altogether non-existent ‘participativeness’ of Ugandan ICT policy practice by saying: “It is not a network of people” (cf. section 5.4.1.1).
How to research ICT policymaking processes in DCs?  

I think this study provides a possible answer to this question, constituting as it does an initial ‘proof of concept’ of an innovative, analytically comprehensive theoretical and methodological approach for research on ICT policy practice in DCs.

The analytical approach adopted here - based on the original combination of insights from different and relatively separate strands of interpretive policy analysis (cf. sections 2.3 and 2.4) - has in fact achieved in my view the following key objectives.

Firstly, it has captured quite effectively the ‘local’ articulation of the key complexities of ICT policymaking in DCs in the specific context of Ugandan ICT policy practice, and their relative importance within such a context - which as discussed in section 1.4.5 was one of the key ‘deliverables’ expected from this piece of research.

In this respect, we have seen in particular how in the Ugandan context ‘participation’ seems to be perceived as the most important and problematic of the six dimensions of complexity of ICT policy practice identified at the outset of this study, together with the associated factor of ‘complexity in scope’ (which usually constitutes in a sense the ‘root’ of actors’ preoccupations around participation - cf. section 1.3.1). Other complexity factors discussed previously, such as complexity of fora and modes, or ‘lack of awareness/skills’ and the technical complexity of ICTs and ICT policy, did in fact also emerge as problematic in local actors’ discourses, but certainly significantly less so than references to the ‘participation’ factor (e.g. they were cited less frequently in interviews, or in the documents I analysed).

In addition to this, by focusing on the nature and the work of the different discourse coalitions active in the context of Ugandan ICT policy practice, the approach and method adopted here also provided useful insights into how the complexity or  

333 Cf. section 1.4.3.
complexities of ICT policy is/are discursively constructed - i.e. through what socio-political practices actors may construct and develop shared perceptions and interpretations of the complexity of ICT policymaking work in a given context. In this respect, the approach thus goes significantly beyond ‘standard’ ICT-policy-and-development (ICTP4D) literature - which often simply lists and/or describes ICT policy complexity factors, and normatively suggests particular solutions (cf. section 1.4.1). Importantly, the approach adopted here allows one to position themselves in a sense at a sort of ‘upper’, or ‘meta’-level in respect of this literature, at which it is possible to comment both on the local articulation of complexity factors and on the literature about them, considered within this approach as having itself a potential role in determining how complexity is perceived and experienced by ICT policy actors. In providing complex insights into the ways in which ICT policymaking is variously interpreted and constructed in a given setting, the approach also goes significantly beyond normative ‘one-size-fits-all’ theories of ICTP4D such as those proposed by scholars such as Dutton and Wilson (Dutton 2005a, 2006, Wilson 2004, and see section 2.2.2 for a discussion of these approaches).

The approach adopted for this study, and in particular its attendant data generation methodologies and techniques, have also yielded a significant amount of very rich and detailed data, leading to the formulation of a detailed and extensive account of how ICT policy is discursively constructed in the context under analysis - which was one of the expected outcomes of the application of the particular analytical framework developed as part of this study (cf. section 2.4.3).

This would arguably have been difficult if I had instead adopted a positivist and predominantly quantitative approach to PNs based on surveys, questionnaires and statistical analysis, or if I had approached the field with some of the essentialist ‘baggage’ of critical realist approaches to policy network analysis - e.g. a certain model or idea of causal linkages between networks and outcomes, or predetermined categories for the definition of what is and what is not a policy network334 (cf. Laumann et al. 1991, Schneider and Werle 1991, Dang-Nguyen et

334 To give but one example of the heuristic utility of analytical categories derived from interpretive approaches, I found for example the analysis of metaphors particularly useful

The analytical framework and method developed and applied here also yielded a number of interesting and original insights into ICT policymaking in DCs and into ICT4D more generally (also an expected or ideal outcome – cf. section 1.4.5).

These include in particular:

- Through the application of an interpretive perspective on the subject, insights into the possible coexistence of different points of view on the ICT policy process and on its complexity - and at the same time, through the comparative analysis of the discourses and discourse coalitions ‘active’ in a specific context, insights into the commonalities between these different points of view (e.g. in this case, the fact that all discourses and discourse coalitions appear to share similar ‘philosophical’ views regarding ‘participation’, explaining the latter’s centrality compared to other complexity factors and also its centrality as a key object of negotiation and debate in the context under analysis). Evaluating these findings in light of contemporary literature on development policymaking has also allowed the sketching of some of the possible causes, or origins, of these commonalities (arguably rooted in the dominance of ‘participatory policymaking’ discourse in the context under analysis), and better understand some of the forms such commonalities can take (for example a relative ‘closeness’ of CSOs to government, even when performing an ‘oppositional’ role – cf. 5.8).

- Through the detailed attention paid to the narratives that characterise ICT policy discourse, and the references made in such a discourse to ‘other’, broader discourses, insights into the linkages between ICT policy practice and political and/or cultural ‘context’ that – importantly – go beyond the simplistic prescriptions regarding the role of ‘ICT champions’, ‘political will’ and ‘conducive institutional environments’ found in much of the normative
to orient my preliminary and ‘temporary’ identification of key discourses as a basis for further analysis and research – as opposed for example to approaching the field ‘armed’ with predefined concepts of what a policy process or a policy network was.
literature on the subject (cf. APC/CRIS 2003, UNECA 2003a, 2003b). In this case, we have seen for example how broader discourses about what are perceived by some as the ‘traditions’ of policy and political practice in Uganda (such as the high or low ‘participative’ character of the NRM regime), cultural discourses about the ‘selfishness’ of Ugandan politicians and Ugandan citizens at large, and conflicting discourses around the positive/negative role of donors play a key role in shaping perceptions and experiences of Ugandan ICT policy practice, in different ways. Importantly, these insights not only extend beyond those normally provided by mainstream ICTP4D research as suggested above, but – as argued in section 5.8 – they also put into a critical perspective a number of findings and/or theories pertaining more generally to the ambit of ICT4D research (for example on the role of politics, or culture in the context of ICT4D projects).

- Through the analytical attention paid to the role of non-linguistic artefacts in the construction of ICT policy discourse, innovative insights into the material and spatial dimensions of ICT policy processes as perceived and experienced by the actors involved in them - and through attention to acts, insights into the ritual character of aspects of ICT policy practice. In this respect, we have seen here for example how discrepancies in the material resourcing of discourse coalitions can play a key role in leading particular views of ICT policy practice to become dominant in a given context, and also how the ‘provider(s)’ of such resources (in this case, very often donors) thus arguably play a key ‘background’ role in determining or countering the success of particular normative ‘takes’ on the ICT policy process. We have also seen more generally how different ‘takes’ on the subject are constructed and strengthened also through the use of particular spaces and the performance of particular acts – something to keep in mind both for future research and, importantly, also for lobbying and advocacy practice (cf. the next section). In this respect, this research also adds to critical literature on ‘participatory policymaking’, by offering a detailed, “thick description” (Geertz 1973) of the particular forms the dominance of participatory policymaking discourse can take in a specific policy ambit or sector (here: ICT policy), and highlighting some of the mechanisms by which such a dominance ensues.
The elements cited above would seem to suggest, in summary, that the analytical approach and the methodology developed and ‘tested’ as part of this study potentially constitute a significant, initial ‘step’ towards the development of a solid, heuristically useful and comprehensive approach with which to research ICT policymaking in DCs.

Further steps in the sense should include, ideally, moves to address also some of the limitations of the framework and approach as they have been developed as part of this study, such as:

- A move towards further reflection, or self-reflection, on the role of the researcher in a study of this kind. As argued previously (cf. sections 2.4.3 and 3.2.2), in an interpretive perspective “researcher bias” is not necessarily an issue, in that interpretive research accepts and in fact treasures the uniqueness of the interpretation made of specific phenomena by individual researchers, and thus also accepts the possibility that different researchers may produce different, alternative accounts of the same phenomena – the key matter being whether the accounts produced are credible and viable, as assessed by fellow academics and, more importantly by the actors involved (Bevir and Rhodes 2003, Yanow 2003, 2004). However, the mere fact of being a white, foreign male associated to a relatively prestigious university (as I was) was arguably an important (positive or negative) factor when it came to operational aspects of field research on one hand (e.g. negotiating access, capturing some of the minutiae of local meanings, and so on), and to some of the more ‘philosophical’ aspects of research of this kind (e.g. one’s personal attitude to the concept of ‘development’, to the legacies of colonialism, and so on). In this respect, it would be useful to integrate in future research of this kind also a number of elements of (self-)reflection on the relationships between the researcher’s origin, personality and political beliefs on one hand, and the methodologies and strategies employed as part of work in the field on the other hand. It would also be interesting to see how the approach would ‘fare’ if deployed within one’s own context of origin.
A move towards further, deeper ‘probing’ of the concept of exclusion in the context of the policy process(es) under analysis. In this respect, this piece of research has in fact arguably drawn very interesting findings, in particular regarding how perceptions regarding who is ‘excluded’ from policy processes can vary quite significantly within the same context (we have seen for example how in Ugandan ICT policy, the excluded are variously constructed through discourse as the ‘useless’ in D1, the ‘useful’ in D2, and the ‘incompetent’ in D3. In the case of this study, insights into these perceptions have been drawn primarily on the basis of data generated through contact (by interview or documentary analysis) with people who in one way or another have at least once been ‘included’ in policy processes, however. Importantly, this is not to say that the views of participants in the policy process regarding who is excluded are not relevant or valid: in fact, analysing the perceptions of those who are ‘inside’ a policy network regarding who is instead ‘outside’ the process is paramount to understanding how policy processes are organised and experienced in practice. However, further research in this sense may also benefit from a deeper investigation of the points of view of those who are perceived by others to have been ‘excluded’ from the policy process, precisely regarding matters of exclusion: do allegedly ‘excluded’ actors or communities feel that is the case? And what does ‘exclusion’ imply or mean for actors in this category?

And finally, a move towards investigating the feasibility of approaches of this kind within shorter or more limiting timeframes. The fact that I was able to spend nearly two years in the field arguably enabled me in fact on one hand to perform repeated cycles of data generation and analysis simultaneously, and by doing so also generate a large amount of very rich, detailed data – and on the other hand to also gain significant exposure more generally to some of the political, social and cultural realities of the ambit in which I was operating (e.g. informal dialogues with ‘ordinary’ citizens, experiences of different spaces/seasons/social events, and so on). Both these aspects were invaluable, in my experience, and constituted a
key ‘enabler’ for the type of research I set out to do. So again how would the approach ‘fare’ in different conditions – for example a shorter timeframe? And what modifications may be necessary, both in terms of methodology, and more generally in terms of descriptive/explanatory ‘ambition’, if the timeframe available for field research were shorter?

All these are aspects that, in my view, can be addressed through further research, by me or by others.

In the next section I elaborate in more detail on what such research may look like, as part of a more general discussion on the value and utility of this study both in an academic context and in the context of ICT policy practice.

6.3 On Value and Utility

There remains perhaps one key question to address at this point: what good is a study like this?

I think this study is useful and valuable both in an academic context, and in relation to policy practice, as I illustrate below.

**Academic Value**

The academic value of this study lies in my view primarily in the innovativeness of its approach, which – as mentioned previously – is the result of the original combination of insights derived from different and relatively separate strands of interpretive policy analysis.

The analytical and methodological framework developed as part of this research combines in fact inputs from ‘traditional’ interpretive approaches to the study of PNs such as Bevir and Rhodes’ (cf. Bevir and Rhodes 2002, 2003, 2004b, 2008b) with inputs from other, not necessarily network-related interpretive policy analysis approaches, such as argumentative discourse analysis (ADA), and Yanow’s work in relation to the role of linguistic and non-linguistic artefacts in the construction of

In doing so, the framework not only provides an innovative approach for the study of ICT policymaking in DCs, but also transcends some of the limitations associated with the different approaches mentioned above.

We have seen in fact for example (in section 2.3.1) how Bevir and Rhodes' interpretive approach to the study of PNs, while heuristically promising (especially due to its specific focus on interpretations of the policy process, and in particular of the network or networks of relationships at its basis) – is also in a sense ‘saddled’ by its reliance on fundamentally essentialist analytical categories such as ‘traditions’ and ‘dilemmas’, employed as *explanantes* of phenomena of network- or policy change, and is also relatively vague when it comes to indications regarding method (Bevir and Rhodes 2003, Finlayson 2004, Hay 2004b, 2004a).

The approach proposed here overcomes these limitations on one hand by adopting a thoroughly anti-essentialist stance and thus rejecting ‘traditions’ and ‘dilemmas’ as explanatory ‘black boxes’ (Latour 1987), in favour of a more general and ‘open’ focus on the interplay between discourses and discourse coalitions, derived from Hajer’s work in this sense (Hajer 1993, 2006a); and on the other hand by integrating Yanow’s very useful and detailed indications regarding possible methodologies for data generation and data analysis work (Yanow 2000, 2007).

At the same time, as seen in sections 2.3.2 and 2.3.3, both Hajer and Yanow have traditionally applied their interpretive approach to policy analysis primarily in the context of research on *policy matters, or policy content* - i.e. on discourses and interpretations regarding policy issues, rather than policy processes (cf. Hajer 1993, 2003, Hajer and Waagenar 2003, Hajer and Versteeg 2005, Hajer 2006a, Yanow 1992, 1993, 2000, 2007).

By opting to apply elements of Hajer’s and Yanow’s approaches in the context of research on *policy processes and networks* rather than policy content, this study also arguably contributes to the further enrichment and refinement of said
approaches, ‘testing’ them in relation also to research on interpretations of *policymaking*, rather than policy outcomes. In addition to this, as illustrated in section 2.3.3 the integration into my analytical framework of Yanow’s suggestions regarding the importance of non-linguistic artefacts in the construction of policy discourse (Yanow 1996, 2000) also overcomes one of the key limitations of ADA, which is its near-exclusive focus on language and linguistic artefacts (Carver 2002, Yanow 1992, 1993, 2000). This has the important effect of enriching the heuristic capacity of the concept of ‘discourse coalition’ compared to that originally formulated by Hajer (Hajer 1993, 2006a), by extending the composition of such coalitions to conceptually comprise also non-linguistic artefacts such as materials or spaces in addition to actors, narratives and acts (or ‘practices’, in Hajer’s lexicon).

In this sense, this study thus provides not only, as it had set out to do, an innovative analytical framework with which to study ICT policymaking in DCs, but also a small but significant contribution to the refinement of contemporary approaches both to the interpretive study of PNs in DCs, and to interpretive policy analysis *tout court*.

Finally, an important by-product of the ‘proof of concept’ application of the analytical framework proposed here in relation to the Ugandan case has also been the identification and elaboration, during the course of the research, of innovative and heuristically promising analytical constructs such as the concept or category of *transliminal actor*[^335], or that of *synecdochic participation*[^336], which could be likely employed with interesting results (or should at least be ‘tested’ – see below) in other analytical or case contexts.

In this respect, as argued previously (cf. previous section) employing the analytical framework proposed here arguably made a contribution also to contemporary, critical research on development policymaking, and in particular research

[^335]: An actor whose role in the policy process is also if not primarily that of enabling transitions from one phase of the process to the next, and who as such is in control of the ‘thresholds’ or boundaries between specific perceived stages or phases of the process.

[^336]: The participation of few in representation of many, and ideally all, potential participants / stakeholders, along a ‘part-for-the-whole’ logic that is characteristic of synecdoche as a figure of speech.
regarding the dominance of ‘participatory development’ discourse on policy practice in DCs (see for example Cooke and Kothari 2001b, Hickey and Mohan 2004, Brock et al. 2004) - by confirming some of its findings, and also proposing, as suggested above, a number of possible innovative concepts to be integrated into current theoretical elaboration on the subject. And also worthy of note in this respect is that this study, and the approach that underlies it, confirmed some of the findings of critical literature by other means - and in particular through the adoption of a flexible open and in a sense ‘agnostic’ stance in respect of issues around participation, as opposed to setting out for the field carrying significant, predefined and somewhat essentialist ‘critical’ baggage as seems to be common in this particular ambit of research.

Besides these general considerations regarding the originality of the analytical approach proposed, as suggested previously this study then arguably makes a number of original contributions also with more specific regard to research on ICT policymaking in DCs – for example:

- It provides, as argued previously, a number of interesting and innovative insights into the discursive construction of ICT policy processes and networks in DCs, such as the possibility of the coexistence in the same context of quite disparate interpretations of ICT policy practice, the ‘embedding’ of such interpretations into political and/or cultural ‘context’, and the role played by material, spatial and ritual artefacts in construction of such interpretations in DC contexts. In this respect, as mentioned in section 6.2, the framework goes significantly beyond the descriptive/explanatory capacities of much contemporary, mainstream ICTP4D literature, and also sheds some light on some of the potential limitations of a number of contemporary ICT4D approaches.

- To my knowledge, this piece of research is also the first, relatively extensive, ‘longitudinal’ study of national ICT policymaking in Uganda - as opposed for example to simple reviews of policy frameworks (cf. Tusubira et al. 2003, Tusubira et al. 2007), or studies focusing on single policy instances (e.g. Chibita 2006, UCC 2005b). As such, the study may provide a useful starting
point for researchers wishing to investigate Ugandan ICT policy practice more deeply, or Ugandan policy practice in other sectors (and see below for possible examples of future research).

• Through its focus on policymaking in the context of an African nation, the study represents more generally also a relatively rare application of interpretive PN analysis in a DC, non-Western context (cf. section 2.2.3) - thus going some way in addressing some of the critiques sometimes aimed at PN approaches, and saying something about the validity of such approaches also in contexts that are different from the one in which they originated.

As mentioned in section 6.2, however, this piece of research only represents an initial step, be this in relation to the development of innovative approaches for the study of ICT policy process in DCs, or – as suggested above – in relation more generally to advances in the context of interpretive policy (network) analysis tout court.

Further research in this sense may include:

• ‘Testing’ the analytical framework developed as part of this study in different DC settings, either through single case studies as was the case with this piece of research, or in a comparative perspective. The latter in particular may lead not only to interesting results, but also to the further fine tuning of the approach.

• Applying the approach adopted here in the context of one or more studies of Ugandan policy practice in sectors other than ICT, again either through a single or comparative case study perspective. This may yield interesting results particularly in relation to the importance of ‘political context’, and – perhaps more importantly – also with regard to the effects of the dominance of ‘participatory policymaking’ discourse (if any) on policymaking in other sectors.
• Integrating additional or alternative data generation methods into the approach; these may include for example the shadowing of policy actors for variable periods of time, or non-participant observation of ‘transliminal’ phases or components of the policy process (both of which I was unable to integrate in this instance of research due to logistical and/or access reasons).

• Carrying out more focused research specifically in relation to transliminal actors (e.g. through shadowing or non-participant observation as suggested above), and/or in relation to dynamics of synecdochic participation, to refine these analytical constructs further.

In the next section I conclude this dissertation with some considerations on the value and the potential utility of this study in the context of ICT policy practice.

**Value and Utility in Context**

Hajer and Laws suggest that by adopting a reflexive position that is in a sense ‘outside’ the cognitive domain of policy actors, researchers can get “analytical leverage” on how specific discourses order the way in which policy actors perceive and ‘order’ reality, and that producing plausible accounts of this ‘ordering’ activity can provide policymakers with insights into the mechanisms of policy practice in a given context, and ultimately help in finding solutions to given problems (Hajer and Laws 2006: 261, 265).

Stone and Maxwell similarly suggest that one of the possible ways in which researchers can be of aid to policy actors and policy processes in the context of international development is by acting as ‘story-tellers’, i.e. by telling stories and sketching scenarios that help policy actors make sense of the complexities and the uncertainties that mark the endeavour they are engaged in (Stone and Maxwell 2005: 7). Rhodes also makes a similar point specifically in relation to interpretive PN analysis, maintaining that short of offering unlikely ‘readymade’ solutions to policymakers, what interpretive researchers can do is to “tell the policy makers distinctive stories about their world and how it is governed” (Rhodes 2002: 413) –
and we have seen how also in the realm of ICT policy, according to Wilson policymakers need good “war” stories (Wilson 2006a).

This study does deliver some such stories – and by doing so, it arguably meets another of its key objectives: that of being of some utility to policy actors (cf. sections 1.4.5 and 2.4.3).

It tells for example of the ‘war’ between D₁ and D₂ (cf. section 5.6.2) – something that may of course be quite familiar to Ugandan policy actors, but perhaps less familiar are the particular terrains and weapons on and with which particular battles are fought, such as the different narratives, spaces or acts through which D₁ and D₂ are constructed and opposed to each other (cf. sections 5.7.1.2, 5.7.1.3 and 5.7.1.5); or it may be less clear that, in a sense, both the D₁ and D₂ coalitions derive a significant part of their ammunition from the same ‘arms dealer’ (cf. sections 5.7.1.4 and 5.7.2).

Importantly, the study also tells of what may appear at first sight to be an already ‘won’ battle or war: that of contemporary ‘participatory policymaking’ discourse over alternative discourses regarding policymaking in Uganda (cf. section 5.6.2). Again this story may be familiar to many of the actors involved in Ugandan ICT policy practice - but less familiar may be the rather peculiar long term consequences this war seems to have had on the articulation of Ugandan ICT policy discourse (see sections 5.7.2 and 6.1), or the particular dynamics by which the current state of apparent ‘peace’ is actually maintained (section 5.7.1).

The study doesn’t just contain ‘war’ stories of course. It also tells (or re-tells) for example many of the stories or narratives that characterise particular aspects of Ugandan ICT policy discourse, and highlights the particular discursive dynamics that characterised specific, ‘problematic’ instances of ICT policymaking in the country (e.g. the stop-and-start dynamics that characterised the formulation of the NICTPF, still until recently retained by some as a process that was never actually completed; or the unlucky fate of the TPR, as illustrated in section 5.1.3.2.2).
Again these stories may already be familiar to Ugandan ICT policy actors. This study tells them however in an arguably innovative and comprehensive, or ‘prismatic’ way, refracting the multiple perspectives that coexist on or about them in the same context, and thus potentially contributing - as suggested above - to helping actors make sense of their work and what they do in ways that differ from those available ‘within’ daily ICT policy practice.

Some of the findings from this study may in other words, especially if presented in digested, simplified format, provide policy actors in the context under analysis with elements for reflection, putting different existing discursive framings of / narratives on Ugandan ICT policy practice into context, and by doing so signalling perhaps also the possibility of thinking differently, in some cases, about ICT policy networks and processes in such a context.357

Here is another story. Before leaving the field in the spring of 2009, I had a chance to run (quite fittingly) a ‘workshop’ at the University of Makerere to present preliminary results from my research. The workshop was attended by some of the informants I had interviewed during the course of my research, but also by other ICT policy actors, and by a few academics. On this occasion I saw how, after an introduction regarding methods, when I eventually went on to describe the key characteristics of the discourses I had identified and analysed (D1, D2 and D3), and summarise the linguistic and non-linguistic elements of which they are composed, the level of attention and interaction at the workshop significantly increased: a first testimony of the potential value that telling ‘stories’ can have for ICT policy actors and practitioners, as suggested above. The dialogue that followed after the presentation was then also particularly lively. And the whole experience also led in turn to reflections on my part. And to modifications (but more often reconfirmations) of some of my findings.

357 I refer here for example to the possibility of raising awareness of the dominance of ‘participatory’ conceptions of policymaking in the context of Ugandan ICT policy discourse, and to the historical contextualization of such a dominance as an inevitable consequence of the coevalness of the advent in the country of both ICTs and donors from the mid 1990s onwards: are other, alternative conceptions or ‘models’ of ICT policymaking perhaps also possible / desirable / latent in the Ugandan context?
It goes without saying that now that my work is complete, I intend to engage in more dissemination and dialogue around it, where possible.

Finally, it’s important to stress that a number of more specific and detailed findings from the analysis undertaken as part of this study can also go beyond the provision of elements for reflection as suggested above, and provide also elements for action.

In his pioneering work on narratives in the context of development policy, Roe suggests for example that in presence of ‘grand’ narratives, actors probably stand a better chance of exerting influence and achieving change precisely by manipulating or modifying such grand narratives, rather than by developing counter-narratives designed to undermine the dominant ones (Roe 1991: 288).

But in order to modify/manipulate something, you first have to know what it is. In this respect, Colebatch suggests that “making (...) clear that there are different accounts in play, that they offer very different perspectives on what makes for policy, but [that] they may all be mobilised at different points in the same process, helps the learner to understand the diversity of voices encountered in the policy process” (Colebatch 2006: 47, emphasis mine). To this, I would add that when the ‘learner’ is a policy actor, the provision of an interpretive account like the present one can provide him or her not only with a better understanding of how the policy process is discursively constructed, but also with a few “handles” or avenues for intervention, along the lines suggested by Roe. In the present case, knowing about the nature of specific linguistic artefacts that circulate in and construct ICT policy discourse (e.g. specific metaphors, or narratives) may for example be helpful in the conceptualisation and the operationalisation of lobbying and advocacy activities, in that it may suggest original lines of intervention that focus precisely on the discursive aspects of policy practice, such as the modification or ‘qualification’ of existing grand, dominant narratives, or the critical examination of other linguistic...
artefacts such as metaphorical and taxonomic devices, and of the effect they have on policy practice through discourse\textsuperscript{339}.

So this study is in a sense susceptible of contributing, potentially, also to change in the particular context of Ugandan ICT policy practice.

If that were to happen, for example through further and more targeted dissemination of my findings, it would fulfil one of the additional objectives of this piece of research – an objective that matured during and after my prolonged permanence in the field: that of giving back something of use to this beautiful and rich country, and to its citizens, who welcomed me gracefully, and to which I feel I owe a lot of what I currently am.

\textsuperscript{339} I highlight lobbying and advocacy activities here specifically due to their relatively explicit objective of achieving change: this is not to say however that this study could be of help exclusively in relation to activities of this kind. Kickert and Koppenjan suggest for example that one of the ways in which policy networks can be ‘managed’ is precisely through interventions on “frames of reference and perceptions” (Kickert and Koppenjan 1999: 52): were we to accept this ‘management perspective’ on policy networks (Kickert et al. 1999), another key category of potential beneficiaries from a study like this could in fact be that of government actors, and in particular those whose responsibility or role is that of ‘structuring’ and managing ICT policy networks and the relationships at their basis.
APPENDIX I – Map of Uganda

Source: United Nations Cartographic Service
APPENDIX II

A Narrative Chronology of ICT Policy Events in Uganda 1993-2008 (Comprehensive Version)

1993  The Government receives a report by the Committee on Investment in Telecommunications (CIT) on the liberalisation and privatisation of the telecommunications sector that recommends the division of Uganda Posts and Telecommunications Corporation (UPTC) into two entities for postal and telecom services, and the privatisation of the telecoms arm (Shirley et al. 2002).

1994  On the basis of the abovementioned CIT report, the Government issues a White Paper proposing several policy options with regard to telecom reform, and Cabinet decides to opt for an initial duopoly through the awarding of a licence to a second national operator that would compete with the incumbent PTO once it had been privatised, and for minor licences to be awarded for specific services (Shirley et al. 2002).

The Uganda National Council of Science and Technology (UNCST) drafts a national science and technology policy. According to private consultants Katiti and Kakembo-Ntambi, that same year the President also asks the Council to devise strategies for the application of ICTs to facilitate private sector growth. A committee formed by the Council for this purpose recommends the formulation of a national ICT policy (UNCST 2000c).

1995  The Directorate of Information (DoI) in the Office of the President initiates studies to assess the information and communication needs of the country, designed to inform the eventual drafting a White Paper on the subject (Ofir 2003a and personal interviews).

Mobile operator Celtel starts operating in Uganda. Service is limited to
urban areas (Shirley et al. 2002).

1996 Cabinet approves the new *Telecommunications Policy* developed by the Ministry of Works, Housing and Communications (MoWHC). The policy aims to increase the level of communication services in the country through private investment rather than government support. In order to achieve this, it recommends the creation of an independent telecom regulatory authority and the institution of a period of limited competition between two major telecom providers (“the duopoly”), as per the proposals arising from the sector review undertaken in previous years (UCC 2005d).

The UNCST carries out a baseline study to identify the development communication needs of communities, supported by the IDRC (Ofir 2003a).

The *Electronic Media Act* is approved by Parliament, providing for the liberalisation of the broadcasting sector under a licensing regime administered by a Broadcasting Council (Republic of Uganda 1996).

1997 President Museveni attends the first Global Knowledge Conference in Toronto (Canada) in June, where he calls for international donor assistance for the development and promotion of ICT applications in Uganda (New Vision 1997, UNCST 2000b, Ofir 2003a). On his return, he then tasks the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) with the formulation of a national ICT policy for Uganda (UNCST 2000b, Ofir 2003a).

In August, Parliament approves the *Uganda Communications Act*, providing the legal basis for the institution of the duopoly and the establishment of the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) as the independent regulatory authority for the sector. The UPTC is split into two arms and the telecom arm is incorporated as Uganda Telecom Limited (UTL) (Republic of Uganda 1997, Shirley et al. 2002, Tusubira et al. 2003,
Ofir 2003a).

Following a national consultative forum held on 8-10 December, the UNCST and the IDRC formulate the Acacia National Strategy for Uganda (UNCST 1997, Ofir 2003a).

A Science and Technology Bill is drafted by the UNCST and submitted to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED) for further action, including tabling to Cabinet (UNCST 2000c).

1998 MTN obtains a licence in April and starts operating as the second national mobile operator in October (Shirley et al. 2002).

The IDRC funds a study on the status of ICTs in Uganda designed to eventually inform the process of formulation of a national ICT policy for the country (Ofir 2003a).

The DoI (Office of the President) undertakes a field survey on information and communication channels across the country (Ofir 2003a and personal interviews).

The Acacia National Secretariat and the National Acacia Steering Committee are established, hosted by the UNCST (Ofir 2003a).

1999 In August, the UNCST meets with the UNESCO National Commission for Uganda to discuss the process leading to the formulation of a national ICT policy. The meeting results in the recommendation to create a dedicated task force to spearhead the formulation of the policy (UNCST 2000c, 2000b). A National ICT Policy Task Force is subsequently constituted in October, composed of 11 individuals representing the public and the private sector and academia (UNCST 2000b, Ofir 2003a and personal interviews).

The DoI (Office of the President) finalises the White Paper on Information
and Communication for Development, based on the studies it commissioned in 1995. The paper contains policy recommendations for the development of the country’s information and communication systems, with a particular focus on broadcast media, the press, and public communication (Dol 1999).

2000
In February, 51% of UTL is sold to an international consortium (Shirley et al. 2002, Tusubira et al. 2003).

In August, a high-level ministerial dialogue is hosted by the UN CST and the MoWHC to discuss the development of a national ICT Policy for Uganda. A national workshop on the formulation of the policy is held under the same auspices on 28-29 September (UNCST 2000b).

The Ministry of Education embarks on the formulation of an ICT policy for the education sector, designed to systematise the application of ICTs in education, with support from Dutch NGO the International Institute of Communications and Development (IICD) (IICD 2002, 2003, Ofir 2003a).

The Big Push Strategy, developed by the Uganda Investment Authority (UIA) to attract additional foreign investment in the country based on recommendations by UNCTAD in this respect, is tabled to Cabinet. It identifies ICT as a priority area for domestic and foreign investment (UIA 2000, UNCTAD 2000).

2001
Consultations continue regarding the formulation of a national ICT policy under the auspices of UNESCO and the UN CST, resulting in the recommendation to integrate additional elements regarding content and the right of access to information into the policy document, also based on the findings of the work carried out by the DoI/Office of the President on the subject since 1995. UNESCO hires US consultant Paul Uhlir for the task, and Uhlir submits his report in June (Uhlir 2001, Ofir 2003a and personal interviews). A draft National Information and Communication Technology Policy Framework is then finalised in August and submitted to
the MoWHC in September (UNCST 2001b, Ofir 2003a). Following discussions at ministerial level it is decided that further consultation is necessary and that the DoI/Office of the President should be included in such consultations due to the work on the *White Paper on Information and Communication for Development* it had carried out in parallel to the ICT policy formulation process spearheaded by the UNCST. Two local consultants, Goretti Nassanga and Elisha Wasukira, are hired to look at the two different policy documents and come up with a synthesis (Wasukira and Nassanga 2002b, Wasukira undated, Ofir 2003a and personal interviews).

A Rural Communications Development Policy for Uganda is finalised by the UCC in July, based on the studies undertaken on the subject in 1999 (Intelecon 2000, UCC 2001).

**2002**

A revised draft of the *National ICT Policy Framework* developed by the UNCST and the MoWHC based on the work of the two consultants mentioned above is finalised in February and presented to Cabinet in May. Expectations are that it would be passed the end of the year (Kamagara 2002, Musoke 2002, Nsubuga 2002). In June UNCST holds a national consultation workshop designed to present, discuss and validate the policy (UNCST 2002b).

In November the UCC organises a brainstorming meeting in preparation for Uganda’s participation to the upcoming WSIS meeting in Geneva. The meeting recommends the creation of a national task force to prepare Uganda’s position paper for the summit (UCC 2002b).

**2003**

In January the UCC convenes a number of meetings of the newly-created WSIS National Task Force, comprised of representatives from government, the private sector, civil society and academia. The task force develops a position paper for the WSIS Prepcom meeting in February (UCC 2003a, 2003b, 2003c, 2003e).
In August, the UNDP agrees to support the development of plans to implement the country’s National ICT Policy Framework, to be realised following the AISI framework. Workshops to discuss implementation start in late September (UNCST 2003a, 2003b, 2003c).

In November, Cabinet approves the National ICT Policy Framework (Komakech 2003 and personal interviews).

In December a Ugandan delegation attends WSIS I in Geneva, where Prime Minister Apollo Nsibambi gives a speech on behalf of President Museveni that reports amongst other things the recent approval of the National ICT Policy Framework (Wakabi 2003).

2004 The UNDP-supported process of development of plans for the implementation of the ICT policy framework continues, and a number of workshops are organised in November to discuss and validate the reports of the five sector working groups created for the task (Muwanga 2004, UNCST 2004b, 2004c).

On the request of the MoWHC, in October the UCC initiates a review of the country’s 1996 Telecommunications Policy. A team composed mainly of UCC staff members is appointed, and meets several times over November and December to prepare policy recommendations in view of the end of the duopoly period planned for July of the following year (UCC 2004b, 2004c, 2004d, 2004e, 2004f, 2004h, Tusubira et al. 2007).

The first meeting of the Presidential Investors Round Table (PIRT), a World Bank-sponsored presidential initiative designed to bring together private and public sector players in discussions designed to accelerate Uganda’s economic development, is held in September in Munyonyo, Kampala and results in the identification of ICTs as a priority area for governmental action (UIA 2007).

2005 Following public consultations early in the year, the review of the country's
telecoms policy is completed by the working team set up by the UCC and recommendations are submitted to the MoWHC in the form of a report, which recommends amongst other things the full liberalisation of the telecom sector once the duopoly period has expired (Nkuuhe 2005, UCC 2005d, 2005e).

In March the MTTI and the IICD renew their collaboration, aiming to develop a strategy for the implementation of the Ministry’s ICT Policy statement using the “Round Table” (RT) model of consultation process developed and sponsored by the IICD. A RT workshop is held in December (MTTI/IICD 2005b, MTTI 2005a, 2005b).

Between March and April the National Planning Agency (NPA) forms the ICT/e-Government Inter-Agency National Planning Team, tasked with ensuring that ICTs are integrated into Uganda’s Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP). The team recommends the adoption of the RT methodology for the task, and the IICD agrees to provide support. A RT workshop is held in November (NPA 2005a, 2005b, NPA/IICD 2005b, IICD 2006b). Between July and August IICD also agrees to support the implementation process of the Ministry of Health’s ICT policy, originally developed by the Ministry with UNECA’s support (IICD 2005b, MoH/IICD 2005a, 2005b).

In April, the draft of a new Telecommunications Policy based on the work undertaken by the UCC is said by the Ministry to be ready for tabling to Cabinet, ideally before the end of the duopoly period i.e. 24 July (MoWHC 2005a).

In November the MoWHC Minister John Nasasira tells a meeting of ICT industry stakeholders that the Government has decided to put the new telecommunications policy on hold, preferring instead to focus on the

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340 More information on RT processes is provided in the next sections.
341 The PEAP is the Ugandan version of the World Bank-sponsored Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers.
further development of infrastructure based on the duopoly arrangement rather than proceed to further liberalisation of the sector (Muwanga 2005b, Biryabarema 2005).

2006 In May the MoWHC emanates a set of policy guidelines providing for the liberalisation, amongst other things, of the provision of VOIP services and the operation of IDGs and VSAT facilities (UCC 2006b).

Following the NRM's victory in the 2006 national elections, President Museveni forms a new Cabinet that includes a new ministry, the Ministry of Information and Communications Technology (MoICT). In May Parliament discusses and approves the creation of the new ministry (Uganda Hansard, 19 May 2006), and in early June the MoICT is instituted and Dr Ham-Mukasa Mulira is appointed as its Minister (Kalinaki 2006, Kisambira 2006). A Committee for ICT is formed in Parliament to monitor the work of the new Ministry (Uganda Hansard, 31 May 2006).

In August, the first draft ICT policy implementation plan for the health sector, developed by the MoH in collaboration with the IICD, is finalised, as is the MTTI’s Sector ICT Policy Implementation Programme, developed in collaboration with IICD, which is launched in September (MTTI 2006b).

In October the new MoICT emanates a set of policy guidelines providing for the full liberalisation of the telecom sector, effectively putting an end to the duopoly between UTL and MTN (Tusubira et al. 2007).

In December the NPA ICT/e-Government Task Force holds a workshop to finalise a strategy paper for the integration of ICTs into the PEAP and into the country’s national development planning framework, as a result of the RT policy development process initiated in collaboration with the IICD in 2005 (NPA 2006b).

2007 The strategy paper developed by the NPA’s task force regarding the integration of ICTs into the PEAP is finalised in January. It is formally
submitted to the NPA in December (NPA 2007).

The MoICT starts reviewing the country’s postal and telecommunication policies, and initiates a process for the development of an IT policy. Work continues also on three “cyber laws” (the Electronic Transactions Bill, the Computer Misuse Bill and the Electronic Signatures Bill) and on a bill for the establishment of a National Information Technology Authority (NITA-U Bill) (MoICT 2007, 2008d).

2008 Warid Telecom starts operating in January as Uganda’s third national telecom operator (Wafula 2008).

A consultant is hired by the MoICT to carry out a background study and develop a draft IT policy, which is then presented for discussion at public workshop in October (PIS Ltd. 2008, MoICT 2008c). Meanwhile the Ministry’s review of the country’s ICT-related postal and telecom policies continues (MoICT 2007, 2008d and personal interviews). The Ministry also appoints a “think tank” team for the development of a broadband strategy for the country (MoICT 2008f), and one for the elaboration of a Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) strategy (MoICT 2008a, 2008d). The NITA-U Bill342 is tabled in Parliament, and the Electronic Transactions Bill, Computer Misuse Bill and Electronic Signatures Bill are gazetted – the last step before submission to Parliament (MoICT 2008d, Kazooba 2008, Wamala 2008).

342 A bill providing for the creation of a National Information Technology Authority for Uganda, tasked with overseeing ICT project implementation across government and with maintaining ICT standards across the country.
APPENDIX III – Artefact Data

This appendix contains a selection of contextualised extracts of the data on which I based my analysis of the linguistic and non-linguistic artefacts employed by Ugandan policy actors to construct discourses regarding ICT policymaking.

A. Metaphors

A-1 Construction and Housing

A-1.1 “Pillars” and “Building Blocks”

“The National ICT Policy Framework has pillars, you can look at it like a bar, seated on various policies, various pillars. The framework identifies 14 objectives, so you say there is need to develop infrastructure, for example, then you go down to concentrate deeper, you go down into the pillars, and leave it to the sectors” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 17 September 2008)

“ICT policy has got some pillars. When we talked about that we thought about the 13 pillars of the policy, and that we should make it relevant to those. (...) [I ask the respondent why they are called “pillars”] They are foundations that if strongly laid would give complete strength for e-government rollout, and a strong ICT society, which would increase revenue” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008)

“I have recently been involved in a pillar process (...)” [I ask the respondent what he means by “pillar process”] “If you look at Uganda, it’s telecoms, broadcasting, and so on... postal policy did not exist before, and also IT policy... so... I don’t know whether you build the roof of the house first, or the pillars – for us we worked on the building blocks first” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 28 September 2008)

“They are called pillars because they are used to build something, to support something” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 November 2008)

“We broke it down into building blocks, and these form the total of ICT policy” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 28 September 2008)

“We have been in this boardroom many times before, working for the sector but as we said in different capacities, preparing what one would call the building blocks on which ultimately the final sector is going to be built. In this regard, I mean that our sector (...) has two predominant
pillars, that is the communication sector, or sub-sector, and the IT sub-sector (…)” (UCC 2006c)

A-1.2 “Houses”, “Buildings” and “Homes”

“Where are we? A building designed by many architects, each independent, each with other priorities (…) Each architect has engaged a different builder, focusing on self rather than national interest (…) Result – an uncoordinated building, neither pleasing to the eye nor functionally useful! (…) [We should] have a single architect – single political leadership, and a single builder: unify ICT starting at the political level down to the laws and institutional arrangements” (Tusubira 2005, commenting on the progress made on ICT policy up until then)

“(…) government [should place] ICT under one roof to ensure effective guidance and accountability” (Parliament of Uganda 2002: 17)

“(…) our sector (…) has two predominant pillars, that is the communication sector, or sub-sector, and the IT subsector. In the past these have been under different arms, and of course when we mention information we also refer to the broadcasting technologies. (…) No doubt, when you look at all these sector interventions, government, the President decided that it’s time to get a home, a common home for all these technologies (…)” (newly nominated MoICT Minister Ham-Mukasa Mulira in UCC 2006a)

“Before the Ministry of ICT was created, there was a nascent, non-structured way in which things were done. There was a coalition of actors, like the PS of various Ministries, and informal policy decisions were taken through a coalition of these people. (…) There was a need to get things started, and people wanted to start, everybody thought they had competence – it was like children without a home, like birds going out and not knowing where to come home to roost” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 28 September 2008)

A-2 Competition and Conflict

A-2.1 Conflict within Government

“(…) there was the Ministry of Works (…) and they were overseeing communications, and the UCC, and there were turf wars between them and the Ministry of Information, which had control of broadcasting, radio and television, and accreditation of journalists… there is a council that approves these things… it’s quite a powerful body. The problem was where would this thing fall?” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 4 December 2008)
“Initially, before the Ministry was created, the main problem was fighting for territory... When it came to forming NITA-U, for example, Mulira will tell you that we resisted it, we wanted it to be under the UCC. Another fight was between the UCC and the Broadcasting Council (...).” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 26 September 2008)

“The history of ICT in Uganda before was marked by territorial fights: the telecom people were alone, the ICT people were alone, the broadcasting people were alone, and we had different institutions involved, like UNCST and Finance, the Broadcasting Council, the Ministry of Works... And when it started becoming important, there was a lot of pulling in different directions... everybody wanted to control it...” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 24 September 2008)

References to “turf wars”, “struggles” and “battles” can also be found in documents as diverse as summaries of comments made at workshops, consultants’ reviews of the sector, donor reports, NGO statements, media articles and academic contributions on the subject (UCC 2004I, Tusubira et al. 2007, de Jager 2005a, WGCAR 2004, Nakkazi 2006b, 2007, Tusubira 2002, Chibita 2006).

A-2.2 Conflict Between Government and Non-Governmental Actors / Competition for Participation

These are found especially in media commentary and other non-governmental written documents.

Examples include:

- References to government and private operators having been “quietly sparring” for some time over the outcomes of the TPR and the upcoming end of the duopoly in 2005 (Nakkazi 2006b), and later on to have engaged in a “battle for the control” of the national fibre optic backbone, in which at some point MPs also “joined the fray” (Nakkazi 2007);

- Policymaking being described as akin to “marketing: every idea, including policy, needs good salespersons” (Nkuuhe 2007), meaning that in order to participate in ICT policy processes as a non-governmental actor, “you have to promote yourself as someone with something to say” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 February 2009), and “negotiate and fight”, for example in relation to the inclusion of gender considerations in ICT policy (WGCAR 2004).
A-3 Transport and Trajectory

A-3.1 The ICT Policy Process as a Trajectory

“[Uganda should] run where [its] counterparts in the developed world used to crawl” (President Museveni, referring to the need to promote ICTs through policy, Museveni 2005a).

“[The process that led to the formulation of the NICTPF was like] “a ‘relay race’, with many other agencies doing pieces of work, occasionally in concert, but most often independently” (Ofir 2003a: 73).

“This book describes how Uganda’s universal access policy has been developed (...). I am hopeful that policy-makers, politicians and decision-makers (...) will find this book of use, especially if their governments choose to follow a path similar to that which Uganda has already started” (MoWHC Minister Nasasira in his introduction to a book on the development of Uganda’s 2001 Rural Communications Development Policy, UCC 2005b: x).

“Imagine that there are different people going to Gulu, and each comes from a different direction, one comes from the South, one from the West, one from the East, there is lack of coordination, because everybody is following a different route” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 28 September 2008; the respondent was referring to the apparent lack of coordination that characterised ICT policy formulation prior to the creation of the MoICT) 343

A-3.2 Policy Process Participants as People “On Board”

“The policy had to be owned by the Ministry, so they had to be on board too. (...) In most cases, there are resource constraints, in terms of costs, and also in how to decide who to bring on board, sometimes you think such and such could be experts that we should bring on board, as it would enrich the process” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 2 December 2008)

“Another reason why Rwanda moved forward so much is because the President there bought in, he was on board (...). Here the President really started getting interested about 18 months ago, and this led to

343 Gulu is a large town located in Northern Uganda.
three things: the creation of the Ministry of ICT, the National Backbone Infrastructure as a national priority, and the National ID project. Part of this was also because Rwanda was leaving us behind, you know there is always this attitude of big brother and small brother, they were doing better than us, and it was embarrassing. So yes, I used to say the President was on board, but that really only happened recently” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 24 September 2008)

“The UNCST contacted [our organisation] to be part of the [NICTPF] task force, and at first it was our chairperson at the time (…) who took part to the meetings. Then when the process was taken over by UNDP, I came on board for the development project, representing [the issues on which the organisation is active] (…). With the broadband infrastructure thing, [a colleague] has been on board” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 19 September 2008, emphasis mine).

A-3.3 Means of Transport

“A good paradigm is critical to effective policy formulation. Keep an eye on the vision, the prime objective. Synthesize: do NOT scale down: a better hut, not a smaller mansion; a small car, not a miniature jumbo jet without wings. But beware! We need pilots…. not faster drivers” (Tusubira 2003b)344

“[In response to a question on the role of consultants in the ICT policy process] Let’s make an example… Let’s say somebody asks you, whenever you travel, ‘do you use an airplane? A car? A bicycle?’ It depends on the journey, and the timeframe. I sometimes jog at the weekends for instance, if I have the time and I am not going very far. So it depends: are you fit to walk? Do you have the money to pay for other types of transport? And so on. You must remember, however, that you are the one in the field, you are there to control, in other words you are always the best consultant. But you may not have the possibility and/or the time to do it directly. So it depends on the circumstances. Also, you want a lean structure for government, so you can’t have 100 people to do all the work internally. So using consultants and budgeting for it is preferred – it’s cheaper, and has been found to be more effective. [I ask the respondent to expand on this by asking, following the metaphor he made, what type of “vehicle” consultants are]. Consultants are the plane, you use them if you have the money and you want to get there quickly” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 17 September 2008, underlining corresponding to original verbal emphasis)

344 Note also the additional construction-related metaphor expressed through the words “hut” and “mansion”.

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B. Categories

B-1 Stakeholder Definition and Categorisation

B-1.1 Ontological Classification

B-1.1.1 Variation Within Policy Processes

B-1.1.1.1 The NICTPF Process

The very first draft of the NICTPF lists the following categories of actor as intended targets for consultation activities:

“a) Government Ministries
b) Parastatals
c) Telecom Service Providers and Regulators
d) ICT vendors
e) Private Sector/Cooperatives
f) Research and Development Institutions
g) Training Institutions
h) Professional Societies
i) Civil Society/NGOs
j) Donors” (UNCST 2000c: 4).

Notably, categories c), e) and i) represent aggregations of what could in fact be seen also as quite distinct entities; category c), for example, aggregates the regulators and the regulated (i.e. telecom service providers); similarly, “civil society” is seen as distinct but at the same time conceptually joined to “NGOs”.

Also worth noting is that an additional category of stakeholder, that of “grass root communities” [sic], is also identified separately later on in the text (UNCST 2000c: 7).

345 'Panel beating' somehow implying a vision of ICT policy as a car or other kind of vehicle.
346 According to De Coninck, the equation ‘CSO=NGO’ is quite common in Uganda, and is the result of the structural adjustment processes pushed by the Bretton Woods institutions and of subsequent pressures by international donors, which attributed to national NGOs the role of “accountability watchdogs” in relation to the work of the State (De Coninck 2004).
Modifications over time

a) Proceedings of 2000 NICTPF workshop (UNCST 2000b):

- “private sector” and “cooperatives” are disaggregated
- “civil society” is disaggregated from “NGOs”, and the latter are newly defined as “National and International NGOs”
- “Donors” become “Development partners” (possibly in line with shifts in terminology taking place in contemporary international development discourse)\(^{347}\)
- no mention is made of the “grass root communities” indicated in the preparatory document as an additional, important stakeholder (UNCST 2000b: 3).

b) Opening statement made at same workshop by MoWHC Minister John Nasasira (UNCST 2000b)

This contains a list of actors identical to the one above apart from:

- the disappearance of the “private sector” and of “cooperatives”
- the elision of “national and international” before “non-governmental organisations” (UNCST 2000b).

c) NICTPF 2002 draft (MoWHC/Office of the President/UNCST 2002)

Participants to the NICTPF process are listed as:

“government, parastatal institutions, the private sector, research and development institutions, training institutions, professional societies, NGOs and development partners”

No reference is therefore made to “telecom providers and regulators” as distinct from the “private sector” and “parastatals” (categories which could in fact be said to respectively include them in conceptual terms), nor of

\(^{347}\) For an analysis of the discursive shift from the term “donor” to that of “development partner” see – amongst others - Whitfield (2005), who suggests that such a shift is due to the emphasis put by the World Bank in the 1990s on the concept of “partnership” between donors and governments, as opposed to one mediated by conditionality and unequal power relations” (Whitfield 2005: 3). According to Whitfield, the appearance of the term ‘development partner’ in international policy discourse was accompanied by “an increase in donors’ presence in recipient countries and their representation in recipient government’s policymaking processes” (ibidem, 3). I was actually reminded of this shift in terminology also during my work in the field, when an informant responded to a question I asked on the role and the involvement of what I defined as “international donors” in the policy process as follows: “Yes, development partners, or international donors as you call them, are also part of the consultation” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 17 September 2008).
“cooperatives”. Also omitted is “civil society” (MoWHC/Office of the President/UNCST 2002: 11).

d) Final version of the NICTPF approved by Cabinet (MoWHC 2003b):

“CBOs” are added to the list mentioned above, right after NGOs – possibly suggesting the re-emergence of the “grass root communities” originally mentioned in the 2000 background document as a key stakeholder (MoWHC 2003b: 11).

B-1.1.1.2 The TPR

The following is a list of potential stakeholders contained in working document entitled “Thoughts on the Stakeholders, Their Possible Interests and When They Can Be Engaged” (UCC 2004n):

“Consumer [sic] of ICTs (Consumer Associations), ICT infrastructure providers, ICT content providers (Service providers and content developers), ICT equipment vendors (Business), ICT Secretariat, Uganda Communications Commission, Broadcasting Council, Educational Institutions, Education Curriculum bodies, [MoWHC], National Planning Authority, Uganda Institute of Professional Engineers (UIPE), Uganda Law Society (ULS), [UNCST], Development Partners, Other Government Ministries, Gender Proponents, Environmentalists” (UCC 2004n: 2-4).

Modifications Over Time

In a subsequent draft of above document (UCC 2004a), a number of government agencies and professional societies and associations are added to the list, bringing the total to 25 (UCC 2004a: 3). Notably, neither draft explicitly mentions “civil society” as a stakeholder category, preferring instead to list a number of

348 Possibly pointing once again to the CSO=NGO equation mentioned in n.347.
349 Community Based Organizations.
actors which could be perceived to belong to such a category, including “gender proponents” and “environmentalists”.

The final version of the proposed new Telecom Policy (UCC 2005e) then presents a much more simplified list, or summary, of the categories of stakeholder that had been involved in the TPR process, including “civil society”, together with “the general public (…), investors and service providers, legislators, and various government officials” (UCC 2005e: 4).

B-1.1.1.3 Example of verbal enumeration of and distinction between different categories of stakeholder

“The stakeholders we deal with are in two or three categories: there are stakeholders within the public sector, stakeholders in the private sector, and within these there are subdivisions, for example service providers, but also users, and consumers; and then there are training institutions. In the public sector, there are government ministries, then we have legislators, and Cabinet. Then we also have NGOs, and the civil society. Then there are regional and international organisations, so we have the East African Community, COMESA, the African Union, and we work to try and harmonise policy formulation in the region” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 13 February 2009)

B-1.1.2 Juxtaposition of Stakeholder Lists by Different Actors

B-1.1.2.1 Parliament vs. Government

In the minutes of a session held in October 2008 by the Parliamentary ICT Committee to discuss a bill providing for the official creation of a national information technology authority for Uganda (the “NITA-U Bill”), The Minister of ICT is reported as having informed the committee that consultations on the text of the bill had been held

“with local institutions like Uganda Communications Commission, Uganda National Bureau of Standards and others”

and that
“consultations were also extended to include similar organisations in
countries like South Africa, Mauritius, Rwanda and Nigeria” (Republic
of Uganda 2008b: 2).

The committee however resolved to carry out its own consultation effort on the
proposed bill, specifying several additional stakeholder categories or individual
institutions it wished to consult, including telecom operators, academia, the
Presidential Assistant on ICT, the Institute of Bankers, the ISP association,

B-1.1.2.2 Civil Society vs. Government

UWCI’s submission to the ICT Parliamentary committee regarding the same
process (discussion of the NITA-U Bill) further notes that when it came to the
composition of the governing board for the proposed new agency,

“[t]he majority of members of the board are commissioners from
government agencies (…), a representative of the institutions of higher
learning, representatives of private sector organisations and
associations and eminent Ugandans with expertise in ICT. As seen in
the representation it is not clear where Civil Society Organisations
(CSOs) fall. We recommend that CSOs be represented on the board to
make the case for public private partnership for people (PPPP)
stronger especially in the case of e-government, content development
services, ICT capacity building, accessibility etc.” (UWCI 2008: 3,
emphasis original).

B-1.1.3 Durability and Iterative/Choral Character of Stakeholder Lists

“[Commenting on how stakeholders for the NICTPF process were
identified] Because it was a new sector, our objectives were to develop
policy, but also to create awareness and to build consensus. So we
had public forums, calling everybody who was interested. People and
actors we didn’t know came and said they were interested. (...) Stakeholders were also identified through the studies that had been
done until then, and through other reports, for example [the DoI] had
consulted very widely in every district on information issues for its
White Paper, and consultations were also carried out as part of the
work on the 1996 Telecom Policy” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11
November 2008)351

351 It’s worth noting that the stakeholder lists compiled as part of the NICTPF process were
then apparently used also by the WSIS National Task Force convened by the UCC in
2003, which in its first meeting recommended that the list of invitees to the first public forum
“Wider consultation [on the TPR] was open to the public (...) This included end users, and other institutions that had a stake. Invitations were sent out, but it was also publicised on the newspapers with documents posted on website for review. (...) For the ISPs, we had a list of those who were licensed, and we invited them all. For the invitations to the open consultation, we had internal lists based on participants at previous UCC-organised public and closed events, and we sent them invitations” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 2 December 2008)

“Normally we identify institutions and then a letter goes to their CEOs. More generally, stakeholders include all government ministries, all operators, private companies, academic and other big institutions. The compilation of the list is a collective effort, it is started by someone and then circulated to colleagues for further suggestions, additions and so on. The size of the list depends on the time you have to run the consultation process – sometimes if time is limited you have to keep the list short” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 26 September 2008)

“when [name of government official] is told to make a policy, he will look at his database, and see [names of specific individuals] and so on, and invite these people. (...) If they had standard guidelines for involving people, it wouldn’t happen” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 13 February 2009)

B-1.1.4 Government as a Stakeholder

Governmental entities are often conceptually identified as “stakeholders” in policy documents either due to their “role in regulation and policy formulation and management” (UNCST 2002b: 80) or because they are actual or potential users of ICT as part of their work (UCC 2004n, 2004a)\textsuperscript{352}.

\textsuperscript{352} In this respect, it is interesting to note that in a Budget Framework Paper produced by the MoWHC in January 2006 (i.e. when it had become clear that the policy produced through the TPR process had not been approved by Cabinet), the approval of the new telecom policy was defined as “an issue because it involves a lot of stakeholders who must be consulted for consensus namely; the private sector, the civil society and the government itself” (MoWHC 2004a: 79, emphasis mine) – revealing how consultation could in a sense also have a reflexive character (i.e. government consulting itself) and how this could possibly also generate some problems.
Particularly notable in this respect is that several documents list quite a significant number of distinct and separate governmental entities as “stakeholders”, signalling a level of descriptive/classificatory detail that is much higher than that applied to other categories. Examples include:

- Documents relating to the NICTPF process, which enumerate distinct categories of stakeholders such as government, parastatals, the regulators and training institutions (many of which, especially at tertiary level, are public institutions in Uganda) separately from each other, while various entities constituting the business sector are subsumed into a single category (“the private sector”), or two (e.g. where “telecom providers” are mentioned) (UNCST 2000b, 2002b).

- The first draft of a document on stakeholder engagement for the TPR, which identifies eighteen entities as “stakeholders”, nine of which are governmental bodies (including “other government Ministries”); two more are added when the list is increased to twenty-five entities or categories in a successive draft (UCC 2004n, 2004a).

The inclusion of multiple governmental entities in stakeholder lists (formal or informal) is experienced by some as problematic, as it said to have a sort of ‘overcrowding’ effect in relation to other, non-governmental entities:

“[Describing how the task force mandated with the formulation of the NICTPF had been composed] We discussed who should be on it, for example the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Works, then a representative of the Ministry of Education, and so on, but we didn’t want it to become like a Cabinet [laughs]” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 4 December 2008)\(^\text{353}\)

“Government also didn’t leave many spaces for civil society on committees, often just one – so [name of organisation] was called” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 27 September 2008)

“[The approval of the new telecom policy produced through the TPR] “is an issue because it involves a lot of stakeholders who must be

\(^{353}\) The composition of the NICTPF task force was also the object of critical remarks by UNECA regional ICT advisor and ICT policy expert Lishan Adam, who recommended, at the national NICTPF workshop held in 2000, that the NICTPF task force “be strengthened and regularised” and that “[n]ew members from [the] private sector, civil society and development aid agencies (...) be incorporated [in it]” (UNCST 2000b: 23).
consulted for consensus namely; the private sector, the civil society and the government itself” (MoWHC 2004a: 79)

Official statements configuring governmental entities as stakeholders sometimes also tend to configure government as just “one of many stakeholders” interacting with the others on a relatively equal, level playing field:

“A forum like this one where stakeholders interact and discuss freely not only with the commission but also with the policy arm, that is government, I think is a very welcome innovation, or development” (UCC 2000)

“[I am glad to be at an event] where stakeholders in the communications sector have come together not only to share experiences and get feedbacks from each other but also to draw a common front for the development of the sector. This open forum where stakeholders will be discussing issues pertaining to the sector and together look for solutions and a way forward, is in line with government policy and method of work and is highly recommended (...) [I will stay until the end of the workshop] as a stakeholder to hear these views rather than get them in a report a month after” (Intervention by MoWHC Minister - ibidem)

“The fact of teamwork is also very crucial, we have on one hand the regulator, the regulator has the RCDF, the regulator also has other stakeholders, who are investors, the telecom companies, [the service providers, the infrastructure providers] (...), then ultimately we have our customer, the citizen, the other end, who is the boss we are all trying to serve. But all those different stakeholders, there has to be an element of commonality” (MoICT Minister, UCC 2006c)

B-1.2 Typological Classification

B-1.2.1 Classification by Interest

“[Stakeholders are] all parties (people or systems) who will have a legitimate interest in the outcome of the project or be affected by its outcome” (PIS Ltd. 2008: 2).

“We work with a small group at first, and we look at what institutions and groups would be affected, and based on that we select people. If

354 This last quote reveals quite transparently how consultation could in a sense be perceived to also have a reflexive character (i.e. government consulting itself) and how this could possibly also generate some problems.
it’s telecoms, it will be telecom service providers, and so on” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 13 February 2009)

“[Participants in the IICD-sponsored RT processes] were chosen because of the impact of ICTs in these institutions” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 12 November 2008).

B-1.2.1.1 “Primary” vs. “Secondary”

From a TPR-related document entitled “Engagement of Stakeholders” (UCC 2004a):

“Primary stakeholders, include members have a stake in the policy, by being directly concerned with its different facets. This could be, as implementers, key resource managers, and being in charge of producing policies. (…) They are expected to share the responsibility of developing the policy, by giving expert inputs which contribute to the direction of the policy. They are to be involved in the process from the very start, up to the end.

(…) Secondary stakeholders, include all the other members who are not in Primary stakeholder group. These essentially represent group interests and their participation is to ensure that the interests of the groups they represent are properly taken into account. This is done basing on the draft document produced by the Primary stakeholders. Their engagement (…) is mainly through consultations (…) through workshops, seminars, information sessions or written comments (…) [and] produces;

• Comments on the draft document
• Introduction of limited modifications of essentially left out issues.
• Corrections of wrong impressions, interpretations or data.

These do not participate from the start, they only come for a short period of consultation period and their views may or may not take into account all their comments. Also if the comments do not come in time, the process does not wait for them. (…)

The two phases under which this process will be carried out are: The Inception and Drafting phase, Phase 1 (…) which is attended to by Primary Stakeholders; The Discussion phase, Phase 2 (…) whose participation is both the Primary and Secondary stakeholders. Primary stakeholders are expected to play a facilitating role during Phase 2, while Secondary stakeholders are expected to make comments and fill in the missing gaps, while discussing the draft document produced by the Primary stakeholders.
Table 2: List of stakeholders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Engagement Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uganda Communications Commission</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Both Phases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Works, Housing and Communications (MoWHC)</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Both Phases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Information/Broadcasting Council</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Both Phases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT Secretariat (NITA)</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Both Phases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST)</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Both Phases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Planning Authority</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Both Phases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT Infrastructure providers</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Phase 2 only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer of ICTs (Consumer Associations)</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Phase 2 only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Partners</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Phase 2 only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Government Ministries</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Phase 2 only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Proponents</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Phase 2 only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmentalists</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Phase 2 only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda Law Society (ULS)</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Phase 2 only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda Institute of Professional Engineers (UIPE)</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Phase 2 only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Curriculum bodies</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Phase 2 only</td>
</tr>
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<td>ICT content Providers (Service providers and content developers)</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Phase 2 only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda National Bureau of Standards</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Phase 2 only</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uganda Bureau of Statistics</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Phase 2 only</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uganda National Associations of Sciences</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Phase 2 only</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uganda Society</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Phase 2 only</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uganda Computer Society</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uganda Internet Service Provider Society</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Phase 2 only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda Institute of Bankers</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Phase 2 only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(UCC 2004a: 1-3)
A previous iteration of this document attributed a set of interests to each of the different categories of stakeholders identified as pertinent to the process – citing both sector-specific interests such as “fair competition”, “fair taxation”, “usability of ICTs”, “minimum entry barriers”, and broader interests such as “poverty alleviation”, “empowering the population”, to name but a few (UCC 2004n: 2-4).

Commercial/Financial Interest = Legitimate Role as Stakeholder

“[I ask the respondent who in his opinion is particularly influential when it comes to ICT policy formulation in Uganda] That’s a very… I don’t have a direct answer to that. ‘Influential’ is a subjective term… Policies are developed to address the issues of stakeholders, so to me ideally it would be stakeholders, I say ideally but it may not be like that. So for telecoms, telecom operators should be influential, because they are those who drive development, they are the users of policy” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 13 February 2009, emphasis mine)

“The list of development partners is endless in a still developing country, like Uganda. However not all development partners are ‘directly’ interested in the development of the communication policy in Uganda. Partners with ‘direct’ interest in the development of communications in Uganda are the ones who give direct development funds to communication development, like funds to build infrastructure, funds to acquire communication equipment or carry out communication activities. On the other hand, Partners who are being considered to have ‘Indirect’ interest in communication development in Uganda, are those who, for example, are directly concerned with emancipation of poverty among women, and may use projects in communication as a tool, microfinance banks, which lend money for purposes of poverty reduction, but which (…) could be used in communication business. (…) For purposes of treatment, Development partners with direct interest will need to be engaged separately, because they help in articulating a policy which is responsive to their countries’ financing terms. On the other hand Development partners with indirect interest can be considered to be mainly users and can be treated like any other service consumers” (UCC 2004a: 3-4, emphasis mine, capitals as per original)\(^{355}\)

\(^{355}\) The document also explicitly lists the institutions belonging to each category: those with direct interest include “World Bank, IDRC, EU Commission, DFID, JICA, USAID, DANIDA, NORAD, IMF, SIDA, ADB, ITU, CTO, UNDP”, while those with indirect interest include micro-finance/small loan institutions and – interestingly – WOUGNET (UCC 2004a: 4).
B-1.2.1.2 “Patriotic” Vs. “Selfish” Stakeholders

“The private sector has interest in making profits, and this is in conflict with providing access, for example in rural areas. (...) We have something called the Kigali Protocol... sponsored by NEPAD to address the common problem of broadband in African countries. [Two telecom operators] have happened to be part of another initiative, EASSy, and it came to a conflict, because they were claiming that NEPAD was stealing their project. We as Uganda said we wouldn’t ratify the protocol until the operators are with us, and [the operators] refused the document. So it looked like Uganda was bogging down the process... and Uganda hasn’t ratified it yet. Now we have UBIST, and [name of company] still says that there are parts of the document it does not accept – it’s selfish, they don’t consider the country” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 26 September 2008)

“When it comes to national policy, they tell you ‘this time you need to think as a Ugandan’, they say ‘picture yourself as a Ugandan’, and ask you to think what would be best for the development of the country. But most of the time we are there to represent the interests of our company, so people in reality will pull the policy in different directions and angles. The first thing you think in any case is ‘what’s in it for us?’” (Personal Interview with a private sector representative, Kampala, 10 February 2009)

“Most of the donors who push developing countries like Uganda to embark on policy processes do not do so in the interest of developing the country. They have their own interests and often don’t care how the policy process goes” (Waiswa Bagiire undated: 21)

B-1.2.2 Classification By Contribution

B-1.2.2.1 “Useful” Stakeholders

“(…) you need participants from all key areas, people who are really knowledgeable. You also need people who can influence action, for example on the financing side. And people who may not be experts, but who are charismatic and champions, people who are adventurous. For example, you have to be adventurous to introduce ICTs in the public sector” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 November 2008)

356 It is unclear whether the comment is a literal quote from an interview, or the summarisation of one or more views collected by the author as part his work. Either way, the statement provides a significant indication of the chasms that can materialize between the subjective perceptions of the interests of specific actors on the part of other actors involved in policy processes.
“(…) people with expertise in diverse ICT4D issues who can provide key elements to the discussion and actions, and prepare background briefings; people who have access to politicians, media workers, official representatives, and community leaders; people who are part of existing thematic caucuses” (de Jager 2005b)

“We call upon people individually who we think have an interest and are eloquent, for example from the university, or from Parliament. (…) Eloquence is not in the presentation, but in doing research, handling statistical data, and being able to understand and depict the situation of the country. There are also people who are specialists in telecommunications, or computing. And also people who have experience in policy formulation, for example lecturers in the department that deals with community development, and political sciences (…). Then we’ll call upon people who know the trends, for example the world is becoming wireless now – and also experts on funding trends” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008)

“It was important to have people who would have multiplier knowledge. Some Ministries had already started to develop sector policies, for example Education was putting ICT into the curriculum, and we wanted to have these people” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 4 December 2008)

“(…) people [who are] very reliable, they will come to workshops when invited and so on” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 February 2008)

“(…) people who are practitioners, who have experience” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 February 2008)

“(…) [participants to task forces] must be influential, powerful, they must be ‘doers’, and there should not be too much disparity in ranking between them” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 19 September 2008)

“There also has to be an element of research: what have other countries been doing, and so on (…), you have to work with people who have this information” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 19 September 2008)

“One of the resolutions [arising from the process] was to have a Ministry of ICT. Kaliisa [the Special Presidential Assistant on ICT] was there for State House, and he took the idea to State House and it was quickly put into the NRM Manifesto. It was really useful to have him there” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 12 November 2008).

“There is a presidential advisor on ICT, Kaliisa, he advises the President, he is very influential… because if he advises him wrongly, then we’d have the wrong policy” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 February 2009).
“(…) people who are useful (…), [people who] will mobilise people from [their] side” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 26 September 2008)

B-1.2.2.2 “Undesirable” or Unhelpful Stakeholders

“Some people come to meetings and may ask why is there no water in the village, and they blame ICT for it – I am using an extreme example here, but it happens...” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 26 September 2008)

“The problem which we had in the past is that people don’t separate issues: you want to hear about policy proposals, and people talk about tariffs, or such and such operator that is not satisfying. You come with time and resources, and they come and waste your time. If you open up meetings, you know you will be derailed, and somebody will always waste your time. (…) these people can misguide you. (…) there are people we will call, and they can be useful, but there are also those who will just tell you that in the sub-county where they are from there are no phones, and who just complain about it” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008)

“The challenge is that the audience does not prepare for these things. They come with a view to listen rather than to provide information (…), even those who may have the ability to contribute may not prepare enough in advance, they do not read the documents” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 5 December 2008)

“Attendance is also a problem, with people not turning up at meetings. But you must build consensus, and in order to do so, you have to be tolerant, and understanding” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 February 2009)

B-1.2.2.3 “The Usual Suspects”

“(…) when they talk of academia, they will go to Makerere, even though the country is full of universities. When they talk of civil society, they will go to WOUGNET. When it’s the private sector, it’s the five big companies. Then it’s up to the usual suspects to consult in order to know what happens on the ground” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 27 September 2008)

“(…) well in the private sector we are very few anyway (…). But it’s true, there are more or less always the same people. I think in the Ministry they have found specific people to be very reliable, they will come to workshops when invited and so on... and it’s also easier to work with people you know. It’s also difficult to find people from the private sector, because not many people can sit there all day in a
workshop, only big organisations can, because they have the resources” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 February 2009)

“But you see the usual suspect is useful, because he has been with you, he knows the details. Some people come to meetings and may ask ‘why is there no water in the village’, and they blame ICT for it – I am using an extreme example here, but it happens…” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 26 September 2008)

“ICTs in Uganda are relatively new, all the organisations we have started up when ICT was starting up, like l-Netword, WOUGNET and CIPESA, everything was new (...). Because of this, you’ll find these are the key people who always participate. Even in the Ministry of ICT, they were part of the ICT fraternity before, and then they joined the Ministry. This is because ICTs are fairly new, five years is a short time, I think growth had been very rapid, but in a short time” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008)

“It’s not always the same people because of selection: it’s because of the knowledge available in Uganda, the knowledge is limited, and those people are involved because they are in the know. If you get just anybody from the private sector instead of a specialist, they may think it is all just about telephone calls. These people are coming in because of their knowledge” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 12 February 2009)

“There is a general trend of gender mainstreaming in ICT in Uganda, and if you ask me who is active on this, it’s WOUGNET or CEEWA. But let’s be honest: which civil society organisation in Uganda has knowledge of ICT? ICT has been forced into civil society by the donors, otherwise we don’t really have active groups in ICT. And you want people who are practitioners, who have experience, so you have I-Netword, WOUGNET and CEEWA” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 February 2009)

“The people who are interested in participating, the usual suspects, are those who will be affected by policy. Others feel they either have no role to play, or think that [government] can do proper work on policy. However, there are other sections of society who feel that their views may not change anything, hence the apathy. There’s an attitude in this country, that these policies are predetermined, so there is apathy” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 5 December 2009)

“It’s a cocoon. It’s the process that causes that, because when [name of government official] is told to make a policy, he will look at his database, and see [names of people active in the sector] and so on, and invite these people. (...) And if you have the usual suspects, you have convergence, they all end up agreeing, because if you know the
others and see them regularly, you don’t really want to antagonise each other…” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 13 February 2009)

B-2 Process Categorisation

B-2.1 Classification By Relative Positioning

B-2.1.1 ICT Policy Process vs. National Development Planning

“It is (…) important that the ICT Vision [at the basis of the NICTPF] is an integral part of the overall National Vision for the future. In the case of Uganda, the ICT vision should be part and parcel of the ‘Uganda Vision 2025’” (UNCST 2000c: ii, capitals as per original).

“most countries where [ICT] policies are being developed have different perspectives and areas of emphasis, but they all recognise the need for policies being based on and integrated into national development plans” (UNCST 2000b: 8).

“(…) the [NPA] committee should take advantage of the on-going national budgeting process to lobby and ensure that all Government institutions incorporate an ICT development budget item in their medium and annual plans” (NPA 2005a: 6).

“As you are already aware, at the beginning of this assignment, the plan was to produce a corrigendum/addendum to the PEAP that articulates the integration of ICT into 2004/5 - 2007/8 PEAP pillars. (…) It was [since] established that the PEAP review process has been ‘annualized’ and that new issues could be brought into the process through the ‘Annual PEAP Implementation Review’ – APIR. In the process we were advised that what NPA needed to do was to develop a ‘Strategy Paper’ on the subject for feeding into the APIR process that will be translated into an actionable area for implementation by various institutions spearheaded and coordinated by the Ministry of ICT. At this point it was therefore agreed that instead of a corrigendum/addendum as had been envisaged before, NPA produces a Strategy Paper that clearly articulates the role of ICT in the delivery of PEAP Strategic Objectives and ICT as an Industry for Economic Development. Hence, due to the need to quickly align the ICT integration issues with the ongoing APIR process, development of the Strategy Paper was found to be the most urgently needed output, and this has been completed and now a final draft is being submitted to you (…)” (Wasukira 2007)

“(…) we have to align [ICT policy] targets with broader development goals, for example we have a National Development Plan, and we need to look at how ICT can contribute to the development goals in it. Earlier on, we were working with the PEAP. We have documents we
need to submit to the National Planning Agency (…) by the end of this month, all sectors need to do that” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 26 September 2008)

B-2.1.2 ICT Policy Processes vs. Other Sectoral Processes

B-2.1.2.1 The “two categories” of ICT policy matching the concurrent NICTPF and DoI policy processes

“The policies affecting [ICT] are basically in two categories: those that relate to information acquisition and organization, and those that concern information communication” (IDRC 1997: 4, 21, UNCST 2000b: 32, emphasis mine)

“The tendency to separate the information and communication technological (ICT) considerations from the information content issues is not unusual. The background and focus of ICT managers are substantially different from those of information content managers. The former deal with the technological infrastructure for facilitating access to and use of information, while the latter address issues relating to the management of the information content itself. Although this dichotomy is not always a significant problem in the day-to-day work of information and communication technologists and information managers, it is a false separation in the context of a policy framework and should be resisted. (…) Together, (…) the technological infrastructure and the information content constitute a strategic national resource for development that requires a comprehensive and integrated policy framework approach” (Uhlir 2001: 2)\(^{357}\).

“There is communications policy on one hand, which seeks to provide communications services, and (…) information policy on the other hand, which is mainly concerned with the information content and the mechanism for the development of the sector. Since there is no government ICT policy yet, it is assumed that the ICT policy concerns are catered for separately under the information policy as well as under the communication policy, i.e. ICT policy lies between the two policies.” (The Manufacturer 2000, emphasis mine)\(^{358}\).

“The mandate to oversee media and information management falls under the Directorate of Information, President’s Office, and that of

\(^{357}\) Paul Uhlir was the consultant hired by UNESCO for the first attempt at integrating outcomes from the NICTPF and the DoI processes (Personal Communication).

\(^{358}\) The Manufacturer is the Uganda Manufacturers Association UMA’s newsletter; the extract quoted here is taken from a profile of the UCC featured in the newsletter in 2000.
overseeing telecommunications is under the Ministry of Works, Housing and Communications” (MoWHC 2003b: 2).

“The task [the consultant] had was to combine the information bit with the technology bit, and in the end the justification was found by identifying aspects of ICTs that touched on both, and we identified three: ICTs as an enabler, that is as a tool; ICT as an industry; and the content side of things, information as a resource for development. That categorisation came after some hard thinking, and I know it has propagated widely” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 February 2009)

“Many informants felt that [the NICTPF process had a direct or indirect influence on policy development in other sectors], especially as several policy design processes had been running concurrently with the national ICT Policy initiative. Informants believe that there was 'cross-pollination' between the various policy initiatives, as so many of the role players were the same or interacted during various consultative processes. Specific examples mentioned of policy processes influenced by the focus on a national ICT policy, are ICT initiatives in education (...), agriculture and the Rural Communications Development Fund (mutual influence in this case was confirmed).” (Ofir 2003a: 52)

B-2.1.2.2 Relationships between National ICT Policy and Sectoral/Sub-Sectoral Policies

“The ICT policy would (...) lead to a redefinition of sectoral policies, boundaries, institutions and regulations in a manner that takes account of:
- industrial policy
- telecommunications policy
- technology policy
- information policy” (UNCST 2001b)

“There is not yet a proper name for the new [telecom] policy (...) and how shall the new policy relate to the existing ICT policy?” (UCC 2004b: 3)

“Policy goals [of the new TP] should be related to the ICT policy framework at a broader level but at a lower level all other policies that emanate from the ICT policy framework such as the draft Broadcasting, IT and Postal policies should be reflected in the proposed policy goals” (UCC 2004d: 1).

“(…) we looked at the most important things, is it the computer, is it the telephone, and we encouraged each sector to do their own policy… for us the national policy was just a skeleton, an umbrella policy” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 4 December 2008)
“The consultant was requested to (...) identify and define the place and role of Health Sector ICT in the National ICT policy and plan” (MoH 2004: 11).

**B-2.1.2.3 The ‘Loose’ Relationship between ICT Policy Processes and other “Framework” Processes (Tax Legislation, Intellectual Property Rights)**

“I think [the] tax [on mobile credit] was unfortunate because this was one of the few sectors that was beginning to grow, then all of a sudden, the Ministry of Finance in its wisdom tried to throw a stone at it. Making profit is okay, but it is very important to look at the opportunities they are creating. The three companies in this sector commissioned an independent study within limits. That study showed that as a result of that increase in tax, investment in the sector was going to decrease so that the Ministry in its wisdom may not be that wise” (Johnson Nkuuhe MP – *Uganda Hansard*, 29 October 2001)

“(…) why do they say no at the Cabinet, because actually we went through the Parliament, the budget committee of the Parliament (...) and the budget committee in the last budget went to the plenary session and they tried to defend our position, because we provided studies, explanations, we hired all consultants from all over the place, and they managed to understand, but when they went to the plenary session, I think it was the, it was the Cabinet which blocked it. That’s why we are asking... it should not be the Cabinet” (CEO of large telecom operator, in an intervention regarding taxation at the first meeting between the new Minister of ICT and telecom operators, UCC 2006a)

“[Uganda should] review existing laws, taking into account other suitable or relevant laws elsewhere, and design a new legal framework that promotes and supports ICT policy objectives, while taking cognizance of major crosscutting issues like privacy, security, intellectual property rights and copyrights, without unduly restricting public access to information” (UCC 2003d: 15).

**B-2.1.3 Uganda Vs. Rwanda**

“The other weaknesses that we have noted with this Government are that they have not addressed the issue of information technology as a Government. And as a result, we are really not convinced. They are touching here and there, but there is no such a thing in the Prime Minister’s Office and co-ordination, and *Uganda is being left behind*. No matter how many times you are talking, there is no think tank on information technology. *Even the President of Rwanda and his
Ministers attended a complete course on that for a whole day but there is no co-ordinated effort here in Uganda to bring our country into the new age of the Internet. We think this is a big weakness” (Elly Karuhanga MP - Uganda Hansard, 8 September 2000, emphasis mine)

“Have you been to Rwanda? There the President said ‘we shall communicate by email’, and they did it. Here, you can be a Minister for five years without ever touching a computer” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 February 2009).

“Another reason why Rwanda moved forward so much is because the President there bought in, he was on board. Here, the President only said he was interested, but didn’t do much (...). Part of this was also because Rwanda was leaving us behind, you know there is always this attitude of big brother and small brother, they were doing better than us, and it was embarrassing” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 24 September 2008, emphasis mine)

“In his submission to the [ICT] committee, [MP] Mr Otto said Uganda embraced ICT ahead of Rwanda but Uganda is not making any meaningful strides. ‘Rwanda’s vision in ICT development is clear and where does that leave us (Uganda)?’ Mr Otto asked. The committee is seemingly frustrated by references to Rwanda as the most successful in ICT development in the region instead of Uganda” (Musa Ladu 2008, emphasis mine).

“To a large extent, the National ICT Policy Framework is what the name says it is, i.e. a national process, because of the substantial if not exclusive involvement of national actors, so for example all meetings were convened by local actors and so on. This cannot be said of the Rwandan policy for example, which was developed by AISI in collaboration with [donors]: it is a good and comprehensive document, but is it really theirs [i.e. of the Rwandan people]? Implementation too is also not in their hands” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 21 May 2008, emphasis mine)

B-2.2 Classification By Stimulus

B-2.2.1 “Top-Down” vs. “Bottom-Up”

“The policy process in Uganda is two-way. One is top-down: government would tell us what it wants, they give us instructions, and then we involve stakeholders in decisions, then we take it up to Cabinet, then Cabinet patches it up with politics and approves it. The other way is bottom-up: if the market discovers that something can only be cured by policy, they will come to us and tell us, we will discuss it, and then go to the Minister and he will approve that. The Telecom Policy review process was of the second type. There was a need in the market, and we got views through meetings, we called meetings (...
over two months. (...) *In top-down processes, government has already decided what it will do* – it just needs to decide how to do it. It’s usually on narrow and focused subjects. For example, government wants to set up a fund to help rural areas, and they have already decided that, and all you can do is to discuss how, so as to make it more popular and accepted. *The other way is richer, and it is used for overhauls of the sector*” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008, emphasis mine)

“What distinguished the process for the Rural Communications Development Policy was that the input from various stakeholders was actually captured. *For the National ICT Policy, it was all developed by technocrats, and they presented it to people, they said it was for input but really it was just presented. So it remained just a document*” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 24 September 2008, emphasis mine)

“[Normally] after a policy has been discussed, it’s submitted to Cabinet, in the form of a Cabinet memo, which highlights areas of particular attention. After that, the Minister responsible for the policy tables it to Parliament, for discussion and enactment so that it becomes law. At that level, Parliament would ask questions, like ‘does this policy have implications on finance, on budgets’, and if the answer is yes, then these implications would be looked into, and if MPs are convinced, then it will be enacted and it will become law.

However, *there may also be policies which come as directives*. For example the President may say that we want to have Universal Primary Education, for example as part of a political campaign, and that this must start in the next month. Obviously you are not going to say to the President that we first need to look into the resources required, the practical implications like the need for dedicated buildings, for teachers and so on... and Parliament will not ask if there are financial implications. Those policies will not go through the process I have described before. It’s the technical people that need to go back and look into how to do it. So sometimes policy comes from above, for the good of the country” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 5 December 2008, emphasis mine)

“[At the time of the NICTPF process] the private sector was undergoing reforms and the economy was highly liberalised, up to 80%, I would say, in the ICT sector. *Government was not used to policy and regulation in the ICT sector, so the private sector’s input was significant*, they had a strong say, and government is keen to listen to their proposals because it knows that they are the best for development (...) *Government did not have a directive role as such*” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 November 2008, emphasis mine)
B-2.2.2 “Top-Down” AND “Bottom-Up”

“The key thing is the ownership of the document, for the purposes of implementation. If a policy is seen as forced, either top-down or bottom-up, then it will not work well (...) - you’d have thought that the fact that [the TPR policy process] was bottom-up would have made it more acceptable, but it did not go like that” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 5 December 2008)

“[The way the policy process unfolds] depends on the structural setup of the economy. On one hand, there are economies that are largely public sector-driven: in these economies, policy will normally begin from up, from a ministry or a government agency, with clearly laid out steps, and a low level of participation of the private sector and of civil society. Most African countries come from this direction. So there are directives, and you know what you are supposed to do, so you consult peers across ministries, table proposals, get the go ahead, include proposals into budgets, and then you start digging deeper with implementation: you draft policy guidelines, and go to Parliament if necessary to get approval of bills, laws etc., including about implementation, and identify actors for implementation. This type of process is devoid of input from small entities and actors, those who will be affected by the policy: they will feel these effects after one full financial year at the earliest. In liberal economies, on the other hand, the scenario is different. You have a strong presence of the private sector, especially enterprise. Key policy proposals are based on the experience of the private sector, for example through direct lobbying and advocacy, or through associations. Civil society is also active. They and the private sector go directly to ministries and other bodies to suggest proposals. Uganda is a mixture of the two (...) The mixture lies in the fact that once we had come up with a policy following the liberal economy model [the TPR], we then took it to government for all the stages necessary for approval” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 November 2008)

B-2.3 Classification By Input (Internal vs. External)

“There are two ways. If you have the capacity to handle it, you have a task force, to look at documents: you choose a team that is representative of all sectors of society, the private sector, academia... and then you come up with a policy document. But it can become very sophisticated, if you need data from the field and so on, and there is no capacity to do that. For example for the IT policy we did not have much data... So the alternative is to get a consultant to do this work, to get the data and the information” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 26 September 2008, emphasis mine)
“The Chairman (...) emphasized that the level of technical capacity within [the UCC] has grown over the past five years and challenges such as [the TPR process] would help build in the building internal capacity and would be more advantageous to UCC than engaging a consultant who would end up owning the process” (UCC 2004b: 1)

“[You] use [consultants] if you have the money and you want to get there quickly. External stakeholders like them are also important, as they have ideas, sometimes very good ideas” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 17 September 2008)

“(…) the weakness (...) was having a one-size-fits-all approach. [UNECA] were involved and they provided guidance on what should be in the policy [and] also on the process, sometimes. Also, examples of other countries were brought, and the problem is that these examples are often not taken critically, you just look at what was done elsewhere and replicate it - and you can replicate success, but you can also replicate failure” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 23 September 2008).

“The choice depends on many factors. Think tank teams create buy-in, i.e. local people are included and the policies produced are agreed upon by local people. Consultants are used when time is limited: they develop a draft report, which is then in any case taken to the general public. The choice of consultants also has to undergo specific procurement processes, whereas with think tanks the advantage is that the Ministry can nominate people as it sees fit. In any case input by consultants is very often, if not always, a condition of donor funding, mainly for quality assurance purposes. And each donor has their own procurement rules, the World Bank has its own, the EU has its own, etc. – which specify also how to recruit the consultant and so on. Sometimes think tanks are a requirement too. For example, the COMESA Regional ICT Support Programme requires us to form a National Working Group as part of policy review efforts” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 17 September 2008)

“In developing countries, we have especially the issue of human resources, of human capital, in terms of expertise to facilitate the policy process. You find that you have to get wazungu like you - but now we have improved, we have people who can do it. [I ask the respondent to tell me more about the nature of this external input by expatriates] The external input was not on the motivation, it was on the process. There should be partnership, but you find that when the mzungu comes, he will lead the whole process. You would expect him to share expertise, and best practices, not just lead. [I ask the respondent whether it would be any different if the external expert were African instead of a white mzungu] It depends if they have the

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359 “Wazungu” is the plural of “mzungu” (see also later in the text), which in Bantu languages generally means “foreigner(s)”, and in particular foreigners of Western origin and/or white people.
expertise. You see, whether we like it or not, I have always said also to others that we have to follow the wazungu, because you guys are ahead. But it depends on what they [the wazungu] come with, and how they work. So we have local experts, regional experts, and international experts. Their roles should be distinctly defined. (...) But [with the review of the NICTPF that was being planned at the time] Danish Management\textsuperscript{360} and the EU approve the ToRs with the regional department of COMESA, and the consultants report to staff in the COMESA and the European Union. (...) But there should be member participation, rather than imposing things on member countries. They set up National Working Groups, but what these groups come up with is sent to COMESA, and there it is changed – they have their own interest. (...) But at times, they say a beggar has no choice… [smiles].” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 12 November 2008, emphasis mine)

C. Narratives

C-1 Foundational Narratives

C-1.1 The Presidential Visit to Canada

Elements of this narrative are found in several documents of quite disparate origin dating back to the early years of the history of ICT policymaking in Uganda, including:

- a speech made by then Minister of Planning and Economic Development Richard Kaijuka\textsuperscript{361} to open a workshop held in December 1997 to start off the IDRC’s Acacia programme in Uganda, which discussed amongst other things also the idea of developing a national ICT policy (UNCST 1997: 29);
- the UNCST’s Executive Secretary’s opening remarks made at a workshop held in 1998 to discuss the practical aspects of the Acacia programme – this time with a variant indicating that the reason for the President’s request for assistance lied in particular in the positive impressions he had had of the way in which ICTs had been applied in Canada (UNCST/Acacia 1998: 2);
- a background document prepared in 2000 by two consultants to support the UNCST’s first national workshop on the NICTPF - and the “aide memoire” originally distributed with that document (UNCST 2000c)
- the introduction to the proceedings of that same workshop (UNCST 2000b)
- a draft of the NICTPF produced in August 2001 (UNCST 2001b)
- the introduction to the proceedings of a national workshop on the NICTPF held in 2002, where reference is made more generally to a request by the

\textsuperscript{360} Danish Management is an international consultancy firm tasked by COMESA and the EU with sourcing local and international consultants to support ICT policy processes in COMESA countries. See http://www.danishmanagement.dk.

\textsuperscript{361} Who was part of the delegation that accompanied Museveni at the conference (The Monitor 1997).
President that strategies for the promotion of ICTs be developed (UNCST 2002b)

- the section on “telecommunication policies” of a comprehensive review of the government’s policies commissioned by Parliament and realised in 2003 (Chekwoti et al. 2003: 38)
- an unpublished independent report reconstructing the history of the NICTPF process from a relatively critical point of view (Waiswa Bagiire undated)
- an evaluation report on the IDRC’s policy influence in Uganda produced by an international consultant (Ofir 2003a).
- Uganda’s “Country Profile” page on the UNECA’s National Information and Communication Initiatives (NICI) website (UNECA 2005b).

A ‘nutshell’ summary of the narrative was presented to me also more recently by an informant as part of an interview:

“The President kick-started the process through a speech at the Global Knowledge for Development conference in Canada in 1997” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 26 May 2008)

C-1.1.1 The Mythical Character of the Narrative Exposed By Some of Its Own Proponents

“(…) the President only said he was interested, but didn’t do much. (...) [He] really started getting interested about 18 months ago, and this led to three things: the creation of the Ministry of ICT, the National Backbone Infrastructure as a national priority, and the National ID project. (...) So yes, I used to say the President was on board, but that really only happened recently” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 24 September 2008, emphasis mine)

“The President eventually realised the importance of the sector (...) and formed the Ministry of ICT... may I correct that ‘eventually’, because it’s been a long gestation period which has grown, and it’s due to the efforts and achievements in the last (...) [few] years, I think, with the telecom policy in 1997” (Comment made by the Minister of ICT during a workshop in 2006, emphasis mine)

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362 As seen previously and also here in relation to Rwanda, it seems that comparisons with other contexts often elicit the strongest reactions - as demonstrated also by the following interview extract: “In Malaysia and Singapore, the top leadership has taken so much interest, and so the required legislation gets through quickly if necessary. [I ask whether the respondent means that in Uganda the President is therefore not as much of an ICT champion as he is often said to be] Absolutely. Some things are done very fast in this country, for example when it came to changing the Constitution to allow the President to do a third term, it was done very quickly” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 February 2009).
"The process started around 1998-1999. In that period there were scattered initiatives to develop policy, guidelines and regulation in the area of ICTs. These were largely fuelled by the restructuring of the telecom sector undertaken by government in 1995-96... there was the Telecom Policy, the unbundling of the monopoly, the creation of UCC and so on. Those reforms were the initial catalyst for the ICT policy process. (...) These were various initiatives by academia, regulators, operators and so on. For example, there were studies made by academia, sometimes in collaboration with government, and there were development projects, like Acacia, and infoDev studies. (...) So from these initiatives, and from continuous assessments made by the Ministry of Works, or by the UCC, which were monitoring trends, gaps were identified and other developments were noted, such as the proliferation of ICT initiatives, the emergence of the duopoly etc., and concerns about these were specified and raised at various forums. On this basis, UNCST took up the challenge to start dialogues on ICT policy." (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 November 2008, emphasis mine)

"Where the final government policy on the information agenda for the country is concerned, we think we have some sort of vacuum. The coordination between the two is missing. There are pilot projects under UNCST, like Acacia, in so many different places" (UCC 1999).

"As a country, there is need for a coherent policy on how e-commerce should be addressed. I am aware that the Ministry of Trade and Industry is doing a number of things, but whilst they are doing that, just like ICT policy, I am aware that is an issue that needs to be addressed in a broader forum... a broader perspective" (UCC 2000)

"It has also been inferred that [in Uganda] there are several projects covering the formulation of IT policy and strategy. There is no central repository covering all these projects and little, if any, coordination among them. This is unfortunate since there will undoubtedly be duplication, a lack of resource sharing and no coordinated strategy. As a result, many of these projects will operate in a vacuum and their sustainability is questionable. It is recommended to create a task force to coordinate ICT policy and strategy." (ITU 2001: 43).

"[Heading] The emergence of disparate, uncoordinated initiatives across sectors. [Main Body] As awareness of ICTs became more prevalent, various Ministries started to develop sectoral ICT policies and strategies. Proposed initiatives were usually based within a specific sector, each with different strategies in various areas of ICT use and application. (...) These and other initiatives, as well as activities of the private sector (...) soon made it clear that regulation as well as harmonization across the sectors were urgently required. This
was to prevent fragmented developments and give a stronger voice to calls for reform in areas touching on ICTs.” (Ofir 2003a: 31)

C-1.2.1 The Contradictory Existence of “Scattered Initiatives” Prior to the Visit to Canada

“I was [a member of the] Uganda Computer Society, and we started clamouring that we wanted a policy. It was a process started by IT people, but we were just a society, you know, we were limping along… but we even produced a document and sent it to the UNCST. They saw it as a policy matter, especially the Ministry of Planning, they saw it as a matter of planning so they took it up. That's really the history of the thing” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 4 December 2008)\textsuperscript{363}.

“When science became very prominent, [the UNCST started working] to have a science and technology policy, that was 1985, and of course that policy is there now. (…) The leaders of that were the people in the science and technology committee of the National Commission of UNESCO, [who] worked with the UNCST. (…) [T]hat was the mother of the ICT policy” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008)

It is also notable that the DoI’s work on the information and communication needs of the country, which eventually led to the formulation of a White Paper on the subject, had also begun in 1995, i.e. prior to the President’s visit to Canada (DoI 1999).

C-1.2.2 The ‘Happy Ending(s)’ Constituted by the Bringing of Order, Accompanied by the Acknowledgement of the Importance of Previous Initiatives

“The adoption of [the NICTPF and other ICT-related policies] is a major milestone in Uganda’s development. Prior to the formulation and development of these policies every department involved with information usage had its own way of operation with no central, focal policies from which to derive legitimacy. Now that policies to govern the usage of ICTs and information are in place and are subject to amendment in order to suit the e-information demands, the following will be achieved: [there follows a list of policy aims relating specifically to e-information]” (UNCST 2004a: 14)

\textsuperscript{363} The circumstance the respondent refers can be dated back to 1990, as confirmed in a document prepared in support a NICTPF workshop held in 2000 (UNCST 2000c: 5).
“Prior to the creation of the Ministry of ICT, I think the process was more haphazard, you had the Ministry of Finance driving it, especially on IT policy, within communications you had the Ministry of Works, and UCC also drove a lot of that process. The UNCST, which was also under the Ministry of Finance, also had a policy organ. The UIA was also a key player in the sector, as ICT was attracting investment. Also the NPA was involved. All these people would be on various committees. The Ministry of ICT has made it more clear” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 28 September 2008)

“Before we used to have components, in the Ministry of Works, Housing and Communications, the Ministry of Finance, the Office of the President, the components were all scattered, so we thought ‘let’s bring it under one project’, and the Ministry was created. So now we also have a Minister, and we have an ICT community.” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 1 December 2008)

“I would also like to thank individuals, institutions and other organisations in the country, whose work will be ‘entandikwa’ to [the NICTPF]” (UNCST 2000b: 31)364.

The importance of acknowledging previous “scattered initiatives” as the ‘foundations’ of the NICTPF (thereby also declaring them as defunct, or at least superseded by current events) is attested also by reiterated mentions of many of these initiatives in various successive documents relating to the formulation to the NICTPF (UNCST 2000c, 2000b, 2001a, 2002b), and in their inclusion (interestingly, as “stakeholders”) also in the final version of the policy framework approved in 2003:

364 “Entandikwa” means “foundation” (or “something to start off”) in Luganda and neighbouring Bantu languages (Uganda Hansard, 22 August 2002). The use of the term in this context is likely to derive from the existence a small loan / micro-credit scheme administered directly by the NRM government in the same years when the NICTPF was being developed, called precisely “Entandikwa” (ibidem). An analysis of transcripts of the Ugandan Parliament’s sessions in which the Entandikwa scheme was discussed reveals how the scheme was in fact a rather controversial one, mainly due to the fact that it was not administered as originally intended, leading to misunderstandings, and - at worst – alleged abuse on the part of its recipients, all things that eventually pushed the government to recognise that the whole scheme had in fact been “a failure”, as early as 2003 (Uganda Hansard, 20 August 2003). For general discussions of the scheme and a review of the fortunes of the concept of “entandikwa” in Ugandan parliamentary discourse see also Uganda Hansard, 3 December 1998, 14 and 21 July 1999, 24 August 1999, 22 September 1999. 2 May 2000, 5 April 2001, 6 July 2001, 7 August 2001, 13 December 2001, 17 July 2002, 25 July 2002, 22 August 2002, 22 April 2003, 30 April 2003, 11 May 2004, 24 August 2004 and 4 July 2006. The presence of the term in the context under analysis signals in my view the possible seepage of some key ideological constructs from mainstream Ugandan political discourse into the seemingly less ideological and more technical realm of ICT policy – at a time when ‘Entandikwa’ didn’t have a negative connotation, however.
“The [NICTPF] Task Force picked inputs from the work of the following stakeholders:

b) [UNCST]
c) Uganda Information and Infrastructure Agenda Project (UIAAP) spearheaded by Makerere Institute of Computer Science
d) Big Push Strategy by Uganda Investment Authority
e) The Draft White Paper on Communication and Information for Sustainable Development that was initiated and developed under the then Ministry of Information.
f) Uganda Communications Commission’s Study on Policies and Strategies for Rural Communications Development\(^{365}\).
g) Report (Perwit International) presented at a Stakeholders Workshop on Promoting E-Business in Uganda.
h) Report (Perwit International) on Strategic Partnership for E-Business in Uganda\(^{366}\) (MoWHC 2003b: 12)

C-1.2.3 The Persistence of “Scattered Initiatives” Contradicting the Happy Ending(s) of the Narrative

“Many documents, committees and organizations have been formed to deal with the National ICT Policy formulation process, its coordination and implementation. At present nobody seems to have a complete overview of how the process is proceeding, where it has reached (current status), and where it is going. Also the mandates of the different Stakeholders/Agencies need to be investigated” (IICD 2005a: 1).

“Then there is the issue... you see if you are in the Ministry of Health, you don’t need the Ministry of ICT to tell you what to do about telemedicine, and if you are in Education, you don’t need to be told to put ICT into the curriculum, or use it to train teachers... but some Ministries are not sensitive to that, and sometimes you go to Cabinet with budgets, and budgets for ICT are very little, and it makes it difficult, so you will just have a wish list and nothing gets implemented” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 26 September 2008).

“(…) there is also the problem of activities in other sectors, for example education, how can the Ministry of ICT drive ICT in these other sectors? In the current institutional framework, it’s not clear how they provide for that. I think they were thinking of cross-cutting committees,

\(^{365}\) The study which had by then led to the formulation of the RCDP (UCC 2001).

\(^{366}\) Perwit International is a Canadian Consultancy firm and both the studies mentioned here had been commissioned by the UIA (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 September 2008).
for the Ministry to be able to coordinate things” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 February 2009)

“The current situation is that we have the different pillars of ICT policy, and a new framework should be developed on the basis of these pillars – whereas before we had the opposite, i.e. the framework led to the pillars. And there are also various sectoral policies that should be harmonised. This is something rather unique (...). On one hand, the Ministry is tasked with and intends to carry out a review of the various pillars, while on the other there is pressure to harmonise policies at EAC level because it is understood that ICTs will play a major role in realizing the EAC integration programme, i.e. they will drive the rest of the integration programme. The problem of the different stages at which different policies are in terms of review means that one of the outcomes (...) may in fact be a harmonised review framework, rather than a harmonisation of the policies” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 November 2008)

C-1.3 “Minor” Narratives About Donors

C-1.3.1 Donors as Passive, Non-Intrusive Supporters of ICT Policy Initiatives

“I can’t say IDRC started it. I think it would have happened even without IDRC. There was a programme, Acacia, but for us we didn’t start it because of the Acacia programme, we were already working on it” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 4 December 2008)

“(…) it was done by Ugandans. We were invited by UNCST, and I think they had sourced money from (…) the Canadians, but these guys were in the background, we drove the process, and we got input from people, from Ministry agencies and so on” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 19 November 2008)

“There was a deliberate effort by donors to leave ownership to Ugandan actors, and IDRC’s support was just that: support” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 September 2008)

“[the IDRC] let us drive and own the processes (…) [t]hey ask[ed]: how can we help you with your problems?” (Ofir 2003a: 72)\(^{367}\)

\(^{367}\) Also notable is that in many official documents confirmations of the presence of donors as parties involved in ICT policymaking are conveyed exclusively through very brief votes of thanks offered to them by local actors in opening statements at workshops and in similar occasions, or through similarly very brief, introductory statements made by donor representatives at such workshops (UNCST 1997, 2000b, 2002b).
C-1.3.1.1 Examples of How Donors Actively Contribute to the Construction of the ‘Passive Role’ Narrative

From a letter sent to a Permanent Secretary by the Uganda country manager of a donor organisation:

“During my last visit (...) to Uganda, we had the opportunity to briefly discuss the progress made by the (...) project (...). As you surely recall, we also discussed the need for an ICT policy process in the Ministry. This was confirmed in a meeting (...) with the Minister (...). I am happy to inform you that [name of donor] is willing to facilitate this process. However we do need an official request from the Ministry. So my question to you is if the Ministry is willing to send an official request to the Managing Director of [name of donor organization] (...). This request can be (...) by email or by letter” (Anon 2005a)\(^{368}\)

The letter to which the above extract refers was then quite evidently sent, as attested by the project proposal that was subsequently developed by the donor organisation in collaboration with the Ministry in question, in which the same sequence of events was eventually reconstructed as follows:

“The Ministry (...) started the [name of donor organisation]-facilitated [process] in [date]. Following the initial workshop held in [location and date], senior management at [the Ministry] further articulated its desire to establish an ICT Policy for the Ministry and the sector via a (...) process which will have the objective to facilitate the development of the ICT sector policy (see Appendix 4)” (Anon 2005b: 1, where Appendix 4 is then said in a footnote to be “the letter sent by the PS to request for a (...) process to support the ICT policy formulation”)

2) From a donor document outlining plans of an ICT policy-related working group:

“Following are the planned activities of the Policy Group (...).

1) ICT policy processes follow up:

- With MoICT, leading to a formal request from MoICT for support with formulation of policy, implementation strategies and work plans, before end of March
- With [name of other Ministry], leading to a formal request from [name of Ministry] for support with formulation of policy,

\(^{368}\) The sender and the Ministry are anonymised for reasons of confidentiality.
implementation strategies and work plans, before end of March (…)” (Anon 2007b: 3, emphasis mine).

C-1.3.2 Donors Reconstructing Their Role as Influential

“International agencies, in particular the World Bank and UN agencies such as UNECA and UNESCO; and bilateral public and private donor organizations such as the IDRC and others very actively supported developments in this field in the nineties. These organizations thus had the potential to exert an extensive influence over policy-making processes due to their funding of projects and studies and their partnerships with local organizations. They were also very well accepted by the government and were able to access the highest level decision-makers if necessary” (Ofir 2003a: 26)

“the work of the IDRC assisted in helping to shift public perceptions from an understanding of ICTs as a technical issue only, to an understanding of the importance of ‘consumer applications’ and the ‘value-adding capabilities’ of ICTs. [According to one of the informants consulted by the author of the study] the IDRC was ‘the one that blew the whistle that brought the country to where we are in ICTs’, giving ICT development a kick-start and ‘planting the seeds that are now coming to fruition’” (Ofir 2003a: 39)

“What worked well? (…) [The] presence of a funding partner who had supported ICTs in the local government” (APC/IICD 2007c: 23).

C-1.3.3 Donors as Those Responsible for “Scattered Initiatives” and Lack of Coordination/Haphazard Approaches

“Most [ICT-related] initiatives have been started without reference to or knowledge of other initiatives in the country. This has led to fragmented and uncoordinated action and repetition of errors. (…) In many cases, initiatives have been purely donor driven, and have been accepted without any needs assessment or prioritization in relation to national needs” (DIIAUP 2001: 46)

“In my perception, at the beginning, around 1997, there was only a very broad concept of ICT policy. No one could really articulate the concepts, and from forum to forum you simply heard people saying ‘we have no ICT policy’, and this was often used as an excuse, people were saying ‘until we have an ICT policy we can’t harness ICTs for development’ and so on. (…) However, as there was some pressure from donors, some people also said that ICT policy was not a panacea, and that we could engage in harnessing ICTs without having an ICT policy. This led to several fragmented efforts (…), i.e. several projects developed that were in one way or another looking at promoting the
use of ICT for development. The [MoWHC] started gathering information on these efforts, but yet no one really said ‘let’s have an ICT policy’ – i.e. these efforts were gathered, but there was no intention to have a policy yet" (Personal Interview, Kampala, 19 September 2008, emphasis mine)

“[ICT projects and ICT policy] are not divorceable (...) for example if somebody is working on a financial system for local governments, and the government is also developing IFMIS [a financial management information system deployed at central government level], this impacts on a policy level, because you have to decide what system you are going to use (...). It’s very easy to get to the point where every donor has its project, and at some point you have to sit down and say ‘we think IFMIS should be the system’” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 28 September 2008)

“UNDP [was] supporting several African countries with their policy processes. These things become like a trend, so we had worked on information and communication, and that was the White Paper, and then they came and said ‘why don’t you merge things, other countries are merging things’. And they supported the process financially” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 17 November 2008)

C-2 The Linear Process

C-2.1 Examples

C-2.1.1 The NICTPF

“The first [part] was taking stock of what ICT was at the time in Uganda (...) taking stock of ‘emerging issues’, that’s how we defined them. (...) The consultants would come and interview people, like you are doing now, but eventually there would be also participative workshops, with governments, the private sector and civil society. (...) [At] the workshops these emerging issues were discussed and became policy objectives. We built the final policy document around these issues. Then we developed the vision for the policy, and the mission, and other parts, through consensus at workshops. (...) Then (...) we had to decide which Ministry would take the policy forward (...). It was decided it should be Works. (...) And then in November 2003 the Minister, Nasasira, took the policy to Cabinet for approval” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 26 September 2008)

“A background study was conducted as the main input into the design of a policy framework. Two consultants (...) were contracted to carry out a survey and prepare a position paper on the status of ICT development in the country. (...) A meeting was held on 16 Aug 2000
to facilitate a high level dialogue about the policy between key ICT stakeholders. (...) On 27-28 September 2000 a National Stakeholders’ Workshop was held to discuss the background document on the status of ICT development and application in the country, identify key policy issues to be addressed by the national ICT policy and identify the institutional framework for the development and application of the policy. (...) With this input, a draft policy document was developed by UNCST under supervision of the Task Force, based on the background study, the documents noted above and the forum inputs. (...) A final policy document was drafted and submitted in August 2001 by UNCST to [the MoWHC], to take to Cabinet. However, further discussions between Ministries found that a number of issues concerning electronic media and other aspects related to information were not well developed. It was therefore decided that [the DoI] had to be involved in order to ensure that information and communication needs were addressed in the policy. A mutually agreed team was established to revise the draft policy document, whereupon it was submitted to the Cabinet for consideration (...)” (Ofir 2003a: 48-49, emphasis original)

C-2.1.2 The TPR

Stages of the TPR process specified by the UCC working group tasked with delivering the new policy:

1. The internal process
2. Process with the stakeholders
3. Process with the Commissioners UCC
4. 2 Public Consultative forums
5. Presentation and input from the Minister
6. A formal adoption and recommendation to the Ministry (UCC 2004c: 2)

Documents relating to the engagement of stakeholders in the TPR process then highlight the existence of two (or in one case three) main phases of the process, corresponding to different ‘groupings’ of the various steps highlighted in Figure 5.2

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369 A similar reconstruction of the process is contained also in the 2002 final draft and the October 2003 final and approved version of the NICTPF, with no mention of the submission to Cabinet of course, as that had not happened yet (MoWHC/Office of the President/UNCST 2002, MoWHC 2003b).
370 Conceptually corresponding to the ‘research’ phase, or step 1 in Fig. 5.2.
371 Corresponding to step 8 in Fig 5.2, i.e. the submission of the policy to the Ministry.
(Chapter 5)\textsuperscript{372} – as portrayed also in the following excerpt from the final draft of the policy:

“The [UCC] defined a two-stage process for the policy formulation. The first stage involved collection of background information and a think tank strategy (…) [during which] an issues paper was developed, giving points of debate about the new policy. The second phase involved a series of consultative fora, both public and limited, giving an opportunity for the general public, civil society, investors and service providers, legislators, and various government officials to give their views and input” (MoWHC 2006: i)

A senior UCC official generally described the way in which the Commission usually approached ICT policymaking as follows:

“(…) the starting point is identifying the issue, what is the concern of a specific policy. Then you need to establish a small team of people on the basis of their expertise. This will be the cornerstone of putting research together on the issue concerned. This team will do desk research on the specifics of the issue (…) [and] eventually put together a document summarising the key issues. In the process of creating this document, the team would also collect information from outside the Commission. Then there is an initial review of the document, internally, and then you go on to stakeholder consultation, normally in the form of a workshop: a draft document is circulated, and if necessary, people are also invited to submit comments in advance of the workshop. Then of course during the workshop there will be presentations by the team, and key stakeholders will be invited to say something, in addition to the public. (…) Then there is a review of the initial document, where the document is refined, and then it is posted on the UCC website for comments. (…) Once the document has reached a satisfactory level of maturity, it’s taken through the next stage, usually through the [UCC] Board of Directors. Then it depends on the purpose, for example once it has been approved by the Board it may go to the Ministry for further review, and broader consultation between Ministers” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 5 December 2008)

\textsuperscript{372} In the three-phase version, the first phase comprises the collection of baseline data, the discussion of the policy document’s structure, and the production of a first draft of the policy (corresponding to the first four steps in Figure 5.2); the second phase comprises discussion and further development of the first draft, and the production of a final draft for submission to the Minister (steps 4 to 8); the third phase refers to the formal adoption and implementation of the new policy (steps 9 onwards) (UCC 2004n). The subsequent two-phase version was composed of ‘Inception and Drafting’ (steps 1 to 4), and ‘Discussion’ (steps 4 to 8) – leaving out the final ‘adoption’ phase, possibly because that would not involve stakeholders in the broader sense (e.g. those external to government) (UCC 2004a).
C-2.1.3 IICD-Sponsored Round Table (RT) Processes

From an interview with an informant who had participated in RT processes involving the NPA:

“First comes understanding why you need policy. Then you search for information and best practices. Then you look at various aspects that come out of the consultations, you get buy-ins, and then go through the process of approval by government” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 12 November 2008)

A reference paper produced for a 2005 RT workshop similarly describes the RT process as being comprised of the following steps:

1. An assessment of how ICTs are used in the sector, and the extent to which they are aligned with organizational goals
2. Scenario building during a Round Table workshop to set out a common vision for ICTs in the sector, and in the organizations
3. Priority setting for the whole sector during the Round Table workshop based on the common vision
4. Write and validate a policy statement
5. Develop a sector ICT implementation programme
6. Validate the sector ICT implementation programme (MTTI 2005b: 5)

From a questionnaire designed by a consultant to gather initial data on ICT policy activities in various Ministries as part of the NPA’s RT process:

“If policy is still being formulated, at what stage is the process?
   a. Zero Draft
   b. First Draft
   c. Internal Departmental/Organizational review
   d. With Cabinet
   e. Ready for laying before Parliament” (NPA 2006a: 2)

Documents relating to other sectoral policy development efforts supported by the IICD refer to the RT process in similar ways, i.e. as a ‘linear, step-by-step process’

373 There is obviously no mention of approval by Cabinet or Parliament (steps 9 to 11 in Fig. 5.2), as the authority mandated to approve the policy was the MTTI itself, and the process took place internally to the Ministry. The sectoral implementation programme document that resulted from the RT workshop contains an ex post reconstruction of the same process describing it in very similar terms, and reporting that all the above steps had been completed and that the priority was at that point to implement the programme (MTTI 2006b: 8)
(MoH 2005: 2) with clearly identifiable beginnings and ends, and in which the RT workshop represents a key element or milestone (MoH/IICD 2005b, MoH 2005, NPA 2005b, NPA/IICD 2005c, I-Network 2005).

C-2.1.4 Policy Formulation in the MoICT

“Firstly we decide whether to do it internally, or whether we are going to ask a consultant to work on it. (...) While formulating a policy, initially it may be difficult to collect all stakeholders, to have them all in one go, so we bring representative groups to work with, and work on the initial draft. (...) It’s just the initial group, and then we go to the public. (...) [Then] the PS drafts the Cabinet Memo, and the Minister brings it to Cabinet” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 13 February 2009)

“Firstly, the consultant carries out a desk study; then he consults with key people within the Ministry. After that, a common position is elaborated and distilled into a draft, and we then go to the stakeholders with that common position; following consultation with stakeholders, the consultant produces a new draft; this is then disseminated for a second round of opinions, in particular for checks that everything has been included, and that there are no contradictions. The draft then goes to cabinet for approval. [If a ‘think tank’ is used instead of a consultant] the process is similar to the one I described previously: once the inception report has been accepted, a desk study is made, followed by interviews, and a draft is developed, incorporating the views of various people in the Ministry. This then goes to the stakeholders” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 17 September 2008)

“(…) after the inception report, we had an internal review of the process, with technical staff in the Ministry, before going to management, then we presented it to management and it was approved, with some modifications. Then we had several consultations with the technical team to acquire relevant documents (…), then two consultations with management, presenting the initial draft. When everybody was satisfied, we presented the draft to wider stakeholders. Initially it was done by email (…). Then we had (…) interviews with organisations, face to face, to identify the needs of these organisations, but also in terms of their outlook for the next years (…). Then we analyzed the survey, and came up concretely with information for the first draft. We presented this to them, and they gave comments. Then we had a one-day workshop with wider stakeholders (…), we presented the results to them, and people asked questions, and asked for modifications or clarifications. We also asked people to comment by email after the event. And then we came up with a final draft” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 18 November 2008)
C-2.2 Controversial Points

C-2.2.1 Consultation Phases

C-2.2.1.1 The ‘Rewinding’ of the NICTPF Process Due to Dissatisfaction with Consultation

a) in 2000 the NICTPF process, which by then had already reached a relatively mature stage (a ‘Vision’ and a number of ‘Policy Guidelines’ had already been formulated, for example)(UNCST 2000c), is suspended to allow the integration of inputs from the ‘White Paper’ produced by the DoI (UNCST 2000b);

b) a first attempt in this sense is made by hiring an international consultant in early 2001 to look at the two policy documents and how they could be combined\(^{374}\).

c) The UNCST-appointed NICTPF task force receives the consultant’s report in June of the same year, and eventually produces a new draft of the policy framework partially based on the consultant’s recommendations, reported to be ready for tabling to Cabinet (Ofir 2003a, UNCST 2001b, MoWHC 2001, UNCST 2002b: 81).

d) the new 2001 draft is still deemed “not fully satisfactory to all parties”, and two new (local) consultants are engaged to undertake further “fine tuning” of the document between 2001 and 2002 (Wasukira and Nassanga 2002a: 1, UNCST 2002b: 81, Ofir 2003a).

e) a further draft of the NICTPF is produced by the two consultants and subjected to further consultation in 2002 (UNCST 2002a, Wasukira and Nassanga 2002c, 2002b, UNCST 2002b).

f) the NICTPF is reported as having been approved in 2003 (Komakech 2003, Jaramogi 2003, MoICT 2006)

Note: I talk of ‘rewinding’ in this case because in formal terms passage d) implies a return from step 8 as per the diagram portrayed in Fig 5.2 (Chapter 5) back to step 4, rather than the simple repetition of steps 5 and 6 that could normally be said to characterise ‘linear’ accounts of policy process.

\(^{374}\) From the consultant’s mission report: “At issue is whether the national policy should be composed of two separate, but closely related policy documents, one focusing on information and communication technology, and the other on information content issues and activities; or whether these should be integrated into one comprehensive policy document that addresses all of the important elements together” (Uhlir 2001: 2).
C-2.2.1.2 Expressions of Frustration/Resignation at the Ineffectiveness of Consultation

Phases

“(…) it would be good if they also had the right intentions, because you can have consultation, and then things are not integrated in final drafts, they only do it to show they are doing it” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 13 February 2009)

“[The NICTPF] was all developed by technocrats, and they presented it to people, they said it was for input but really it was just presented. So it remained just a document” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 24 September 2008)

“What we used to do was to review documents, attend meetings and so on, but although we talked and talked, people would not understand what we were saying. We talked about gender issues, but they did not consider them, and the day after it was not in the document” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 19 September 2008)

C-2.2.1.3 Consultation as a Potential Hindrance

“[It is] important to maintain major roles for consultation, workshops and focus groups to enlarge the stakeholder group, encourage buy-in and reinforce consensus (…) [but the consultation process] must not be allowed to impede, stop or even slow progress in making important decisions regarding the implementation and liberalization of ICT use in Uganda” (DIIAUP 2001: 43).

“If consultation takes too long there is bound to be tension, because government has committed to specific things as part of the manifesto and its programme, and it must act” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 9 February 2009)

While the above statements obviously point to the existence of problems with the perceived nature and quality of public participation in ICT policy making in Uganda (on which we will focus in more detail later on)\(^{375}\), it could be said that at a first, basic level, they also suggest that some steps and passages in the process – in this case: single or iterative transitions between consultation and drafting - appear to some actors as equivalent in a sense to a ‘going through the motions’ that is superfluous and inefficient: this contradicts the substance of the ‘linear process’ narrative, denouncing instead quite explicitly the relatively formal character of such

\(^{375}\) See 5.4.
a narrative and its distance from what is perceived as ‘really going on’ with regard to ICT policy making in the country.

C-2.2.2 The End

C-2.2.2.1 The NICTPF

Approved and Fully Valid

The NICTPF is reported to have been officially approved by Government in 2003 in a disparate number of written documents (see amongst others Komakech 2003, Jaramogi 2003, MoWHC 2003a, Baryamureeba 2005, MoICT 2006, CIT 2007, Torach et al. 2007).

Some respondents also suggested it was approved also by Parliament:

“At the end there was a final workshop for the approval of the framework, with the Minister endorsing the framework himself, and in 2003 the policy was approved by Parliament (through a Parliamentary Committee) and then by Cabinet” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 19 September 2008)

“I am (...) certain [the NICTPF] was discussed by Cabinet, and then also discussed and approved by Parliament. It’s an important policy, and it’s on that basis that we also have the Ministry of ICT. Otherwise, one would ask ‘what policy does the Ministry of ICT implement?’ Because there are many things under ICT that require approval. Regarding whether it would be acceptable for Parliament not to discuss a policy, no it wouldn’t be acceptable, because all policies have financial impacts, and Parliament’s function is to check government, so it would be ironical if that didn’t happen” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 5 December 2008)

“The framework did go to Parliament for approval. People may not realise it – because it did not comprise an act or a bill, it just called for these acts or bills, so its presentation to Parliament was only for approval, not for discussion” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 19 September 2008)

Approved by Cabinet but not by Parliament

“The main issue is that [the NICTPF] should be approved by Parliament. It was approved by Cabinet at the time, but it was never
taken to Parliament. (…) the policy needs full approval by the legislators, otherwise it is not seen as a law and an obligation, and ministries will not allocate the necessary budgets and so on" (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 May 2008)

“Presenting [the NICTPF] to Parliament would bring the policy into the public domain, generate debate, and generally raise the profile of the ICT Policy framework” (Wasukira 2005a)

Several other sources similarly suggest that the NICTPF was never tabled in Parliament, let alone approved by it (cf. amongst others Tusubira 2005, Waiswa Bagiire undated, NPA 2005a, World Bank 2008), although there had been expectations that it should have been, both amongst national and international actors (ITU 2001, UNESCO 2002, Musoke 2003, Tusubira et al. 2003, Kweku Yamuah 2005)376.

Not Even Approved By Cabinet

A number of sources then suggest that the government never actually committed formally to the NICTPF, and that the policy was never officially approved by Cabinet, remaining therefore just a “draft” with little or no prescriptive value (Musoke 2003, PANOS London 2004, WOUGNET 2005a, EAC 2005, MEGA-TECH and Partners 2006, World Bank 2008).

The following extract from a public communication by the Chair of the ICT parliamentary committee, dating April 2009, exemplifies quite well how this issue

376 Some of the informants I spoke to counteracted that approval by Parliament was not strictly necessary for a policy like the NICTPF, and indeed Ugandan policy practice does not seem to require Parliament approval of all government policies, limiting this requirement only to policies that have a financial impact and/or require the emanation of legislation that has binding effects on all citizens. A policy analyst working in central government illustrated the difference between specific types of policy in relation to the need for parliamentary approval as follows: “In general, we deal with four categories of policy document: protocols, which need to go to Parliament because the ratification of a protocol binds the entire country and its population to it, so by nature it needs to be approved by Parliament; bills, which are policy documents that are law in nature; sector policies, which often do not require the approval of Parliament (…); and information papers, which are like policy briefs, informing Cabinet of a particular issue, and these may also be used to inform Parliament if necessary” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 9 February 2009). These distinctions between different policy-related documents are reflected also in an ‘adequacy checklist’ circulated by the Cabinet Secretariat for the use of government officials who prepare policy documents and the memos to support them in Cabinet (Republic of Uganda undated).
has remained unresolved for several years, and how the NICTPF has been perceived by some actors (including relatively authoritative ones) not to be ‘valid’ and binding:

“I can only confirm (…) that we do not have a National ICT Policy in place yet. This has consistently been the concern of our Committee in Parliament. We raised this issue in 2006 while we were considering the Ministry’s [financial year] 2006/07 Ministerial Policy Statement and Budget allocations. The Ministry pledged to initiate a process to review the National ICT Framework of 2003 that the Ministry of Works, Transport and Communications had established. In [financial year] 2007/08 and 2008/9 we as a committee did require the Ministry to finalise the consultations and review so that we can have a National ICT Policy. It is the same concern we have even today. It is simply unfortunate that even the 2003 ICT Policy is in Draft” (Baliddawa 2009b)

C.2.2.2.2 The TPR

An Unexpected Ending

“We spent a lot of time in putting [the new telecom policy] in proper shape, we had discussions with the UCC, and with the public through public meetings, and with the Ministry of Works. The UCC came up with the documentation, and we worked on the final draft, which should have gone to Parliament for endorsement and approval, and to be put into effect… of course it was also to go through Cabinet first. I don’t know what happened then… at the end of 2005 there was an election coming, and it was not a priority. I don’t know if it went to Cabinet, but it didn’t go to Parliament. In 2006 we had elections, then the new Ministry came up with guidelines, and they became law, they are law still now. I don’t know if a new policy is coming along” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 12 February 2009)

“It is very frustrating to waste our time for over a year, consulting stakeholders in the ICT industry, taking us off our valuable work to discuss and contribute to what we think is the best way forward for this nation only to hit a dead end. I wouldn’t like to blame UCC on this but certainly Hon. Nasasira has a lot of explaining to do. How can he just simplistically dismiss the results of a process which was painstakingly long and relied on so much good will? Are there powers that are at play behind the scenes?” (Wire Lunghabo 2005)

“[W]e asked the Ministry to present the revised policy but it was never done, up to now. It is being implemented in bits and pieces, and it was
never officially adopted” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 24 September 2008).

The ‘Shortcut’ Represented by the Successive Emanation of Ministerial Guidelines

“The normal process would be the actual policy process (...). [You] call upon stakeholders, and then produce draft policy recommendations for the Minister. All he had to do was to approve them or to change them. But elections were coming up (...), the sector was working well so it wasn’t seen as a priority. However, the new policy stipulated that the changes were necessary, so the new Minister adopted the principles of that in his policy guidelines. The Minister can produce guidelines, for example he could also ban the use of mobile phones if he wanted. In this case, what he lacked was the policy analysis, and the policy objectives, he just went and took the actions from the document. The rest is really about painting the path of where you are going as a country and so on. It was a stopgap measure” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008)

“The policy proposal got extracted to create policy guidelines by the Ministry, the guidelines were based on that document (...). Of course you’d have wanted the whole document to come out, because it was a good process, people felt they had participated, and that they owned it” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 2 December 2008)

C-2.3 Closure vs. Openness

“We first discuss the document internally, then go to the public, and listen to them. Then the consultant works on it, and we have a checklist to follow to check that he gets every issue, and then we finalise the draft and have a conclusive workshop. The idea is to get input into the document” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 26 September 2008)

“It’s easier to come up with a draft if you have less people” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 27 September 2008)

“(…) we open up for legitimacy, but as a process of formulation we heavily use [few people]” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008)

“(…) some parts of the policy process may need to be closed or limited to the involvement of only a small number of experts and stakeholders, e.g. when research is carried out or when the policy document is being written” (APC/IICD 2007b: 2)\(^{377}\)

\(^{377}\) The report cited here is a summary of ‘lessons learnt’ from an APC/IICD workshop on ICT policy held in 2007 that was based amongst other things also on the Ugandan experience.
“Openness is not always effective: sometimes a closed process is needed. But when the processes are long how do we keep them closed? How do we open them and to whom? When and how? Sometimes you have to allow space for analysis and for certain preparations so long as this does not close communication channels thereafter (…) All stakeholders should be represented in the planning phase but it should only be a small group” (ibidem, 17)

“At times workshops are open-ended, and at times they are closed and by invitation only. The majority are open-ended. [Closed meetings] are specifically with operators, with a similar process to the open ones, but without the general public” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 5 December 2008)

C-2.4 Transliminal Actors

C-2.4.1 Drafters

“[My role] went from facilitating [policy] dialogues both in technical and logistic terms, to drafting chapters and sections of the policy, to keeping notes from meetings, etc. (...) [My influence lay] in the definition of the agreement on what is critical. There were long lists of concerns brought by others, and a consensus needed to be found. Obviously, the criteria for doing this were also based on personal views. So, [a senior official] was also there, of course, but the key role of drafting the documents was mine” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 November 2008)

“We talked about gender issues, but they did not consider them, and the day after it was not in the document. (...) This is because if I am given a report, I have the capacity to decide what goes in it. And all consultants are men, so they will say ‘oh it’s just the women complaining as usual here’. (...) If given liberty to do so, we have influence. We look at the document and we say change here, delete that etc. [I ask the respondent to expand on this, i.e. is influence exerted through text editing?] Yes, influence is the power to delete, to amend, to add things to texts.” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 19 September 2008)

“I have to say that I don’t know what was kept and integrated from my document and what wasn’t. There is only so much one can do from outside: one can suggest for some things to be included, but ultimately the people who are responsible for developing the policy have room to decide what to put in and what to leave out” (Personal Interview with an international consultant, over Skype, 12 January 2009)
“When we first went for the drafting, we said let’s just collect ideas, and then these ideas were written down and it was presented to the Minister as it was, and also put on the web like that. So I asked them to take it off the web and send it to me and we edited it, simply reorganising the document so that it made more sense. (…) Normally there is a drafting team, and this time [a government official] directed [a representative of the private sector] to draft the initial document, but in the end [the representative of the private sector] did not put the thing the way it should be, so we said let’s get a day to reorganise it, but no one had the time between them, so my boss said ‘let’s just do it ourselves then’” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 February 2009)

C-2.4.2 Consultants

C-2.4.2.1 Employed to ‘Speed Up’ the Policy Process

“In light of (…) the need to expedite development of the National ICT Strategy, the UNCST which is implementing the project, is seeking a local consultant (…)” (Terms of Reference for ICT Consultants, UNCST 2003d: 1, emphasis mine)

“Consultants are used when time is limited: they develop a draft report, which is then in any case taken to the general public” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 17 September 2008)

 “[Y]ou want a lean structure for government, so you can’t have 100 people to do all the work internally. So using consultants and budgeting for it is preferred – it’s cheaper, and has been found to be more effective” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 17 September 2008)

C-2.4.2.2 ‘Framers’ of Policy Issues

“Knowledge is important. I’ve been in academia before, and your role there is to make life easier for the student, to extract the gem from the junk, and consultants are important because they do that” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008)

“[T]he consultant comes up with issues out of the blue (…) External stakeholders like them are also important, as they have ideas, sometimes very good ideas” (Personal Interview, 17 September 2008)
Neutral or Influential?

“There may be instances where a lot of work needs to be done, and you don’t have the capacity, so we use consultants, but then they only provide data” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 5 December 2008)

“Facilitation is needed to provide a ‘neutral setting’ in which the different actors can meet. The facilitator – being a ‘neutral outsider’, yet knowledgeable in the field of ICT innovation – receives somehow naturally a mandate to bring parties together, to facilitate, and even to mediate between them” (Moens and Broerse 2006: 38, emphasis mine)

“Of course the facilitator influences through agenda setting: the choice of the theme and the organisations or persons to invite. However this is done in collaboration with a steering committee that comprises the most important actors related to the theme. Experience [shows] that the slightest manipulation or imposition and political agendas back fire. Openness on the own agenda as of the beginning is required and this agenda should be limited to the general results expected” (ibidem, 37)

“(…) the consultative process tends to be driven by politics, they say ‘our party wants to achieve this, so do it quickly’ and so on. This leads to frictions and compromises, you do things you do not intend to” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 18 November 2008)

“The external input [of facilitators] was not on the motivation, it was on the process. There should be partnership, but you find that when the mzungu comes, he will lead the whole process. You would expect him to share expertise, and best practices, not just lead (…) The EU will appoint the programme manager at COMESA, who then appoints his own team of assistants, and they produce the Terms of Reference [ToR] (…) - and the level of ownership by national governments is questionable. (…) Danish Management and the EU approve the ToRs with the regional department of COMESA, and the consultants report to staff in the COMESA and the European Union” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 12 November 2008)

378 One of the authors of the academic article cited was an international consultant who had facilitated one of the IICD-sponsored ‘Round Table’ workshops in Uganda.
C-2.4.3 Ministers and the Cabinet

C-2.4.3.1 Exclusive Role

“It’s the Minister who tries to convince his colleagues in Cabinet, they debate and look if there is any conflict with other policies, and if there are the resources for implementation” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 13 February 2009)

“We were not able to table the policy to Cabinet directly, so we had some options: it could have been the Ministry of Finance, or [MoWHC], or via the private sector, for example through private members’ bills. We agreed that [MoWHC] ought to be leading and tabling the policy, with secondment and approval by other ministries and the other bodies involved” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 November 2008)

“All [the Minister] had to do was to approve [the recommendations] or to change them. But elections were coming up, and this was not a priority, the sector was working well so it wasn’t seen as a priority” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008)

Another example is provided in a background paper developed as part of the NICTPF process in 2000, which reported that the Minister responsible for information in the Office of the President was willing to “stay” the tabling to Cabinet of the DoI’s White Paper to allow for its integration into the parallel ICT policy development process led by the MoWHC at the time (UNCST 2000c: 6) – suggesting that the developments in this sense also came down to personal decisions by the Ministers involved379. Along the same lines, MoWHC Minister John Nasasira personally assured participants to the final NICTPF national workshop held in 2002 that if the policy were approved by those present at the event, he and the Minister of Information would then “immediately” take up the task of tabling it in Cabinet (UNCST 2002b: 22).

379 A former DoI officials that had been involved in this negotiation recounted the same event as follows: “We convinced our Minister, we told him that since they are going to facilitate information, and we get to keep content, let’s use them. The Minister at the time was Basoga Nsadhu, and he understood, because he was also a journalist (Personal Interview, 2 December 2008)
C-2.4.3.2 Individual Character, Ability and Power

“When we had the new policy, the Minister tried to get it approved by Cabinet but didn’t succeed” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 26 September 2008)

“Policy is also about negotiation, and depending on your commitment and your ability to negotiate the policy will go through or not” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 9 February 2009)

“The government had some strong opposition on some issues, for example on whether to open up fully to liberalisation, or adopt a more cautious approach and only open partially: we wanted to open up, but they wanted to open only partially [I ask who “they” means] Government. You see normally we deal with the line Minister, and then he deals with Cabinet [I ask who exactly the respondent thinks was opposed to opening up - the Minister personally or other people in Cabinet?] We dealt with the line Minister, not with Cabinet, so I don’t know about Cabinet – but for him as a person he was not fully convinced we should open up” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008)

C-3 Participation

In this section we will look into actors’ representations of what happens when the process is ‘opened up’ to participation by a wider set of stakeholders and by the public at large, by focusing on narratives relating to participation in relation to ICT policy development.

As in our analysis of narratives relating to the policy process, our analysis here takes into account both prescriptive representations of instances of public participation in ICT policymaking, and ex post reconstructions of such instances and of the process more generally.

C-3.1 The Positive Narrative on Participation

C-3.1.1 Examples

Elements of this narrative are found mainly in ex post reconstructions of specific ICT policy making efforts (the NICTPF in particular), but also inform a number of
prescriptive descriptions of the policy process (i.e. descriptions how specific processes are supposed to unfold). Examples include:

- NICTPF-related workshops being consistently described as “participatory, consultative, cross-sectoral and interactive” over time (UNCST 2000c), (UNCST 2002b).
- the NICTPF process being described as “consultative and participatory” in successive draft versions of the NICTPF and in the final ‘approved’ version, often accompanied by lists and brief descriptions of the consultation activities undertaken as part of the process (UNCST 2001a: 4, 2001b: 4, MoWHC/Office of the President/UNCST 2002: 11, MoWHC 2003b: 11).
- The inclusion in Uganda’s submission for the second preparatory meeting for WSIS I of a recommendation that “mechanisms that involve the public and stakeholders in the policy formulation and development process for ICTs” be developed and managed (UCC 2003d)380.
- The inclusion in President Museveni’s official statement at WSIS II of a statement depicting Uganda as supportive of “the involvement of all stakeholders in the decision-making mechanism related to the Internet” (Museveni 2005b, emphasis mine).
- Prescriptions that the NPA’s work on the integration of ICTs into Uganda’s PEAP be characterised by wide consultation and participation, with representatives of “various sectors (Government Agencies, Private Sector, Civil Society and other stakeholders) [sitting] together on the same table (...) to discuss the ICT/e-Government and other e-Strategies (...) in a participatory and transparent manner” (NPA 2005a: 2, emphasis mine).

References to ICT policy development in Uganda as having traditionally been highly participative and having benefited from being a “bottom-up” approach feature widely also in non-governmental documents (cf. for example Ofir 2003a, WOUGNET 2006c: 6, Amuriat 2007, Arendsen 2008).

C-3.1.2 Reasons

C-3.1.2.1 ‘Ownership’

“Wider participation is difficult to manage, but it will enrich the output, it will enrich the quality because it creates more ownership. The key thing is the ownership of the document, for the purposes of implementation” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 5 December 2008)

380 This recommendation notably moves from third place in the list of ‘action points’ contained in an early draft of the document to being listed as the very first action point in the final draft (UCC 2003e, 2003d). An amendment to this action point proposed by local CSO WOUGNET, asking “participation of women and disadvantaged groups in the policy formulation process” to be facilitated and encouraged, is not accepted however (WOUGNET 2003: 4, UCC 2003d).
“(…) ownership and participation shall be a key determinant of the success of any policy” (UCC 2004b: 3)

“A policy is as good as its ownership, thus the first primary concern is to define stakeholders” (UCC 2004e: 2).

“[Policy should rather be] imperfect and owned, than perfect and spurned” (Tusubira 2003b).

“Participatory development planning with beneficiary stakeholders and prioritised programme implementation which involves them ensures their inclusion and ownership, enhances visibility through transparent implementation stages, curbs corrupt practices and resource misappropriation, optimizes cost benefits and promotes national unity and peaceful co-existence of citizens in the contentment that Government is concerned to serve them equally” (Chekwoti et al. 2003: 9).

“We believe as a Commission that part of our responsibility to you as stakeholders and the public at large is to ensure that there is adequate consultation, adequate flow of info and discussion among or within various issues that concern the sector, and prior to any major decisions being taken by the commission or even by government, to whom we are advisors in policy, it’s important that sufficient consultation takes place” (UCC Executive Director Patrick Masambu, in UCC 2000).

Participation is generally linked to ownership also in several other documents, in particular those produced by government or donors (cf. for example UCC 2004i, 2004o, MoH 2004, UNCST 2004a, APC/IICD 2007c, infoDev 2008).

C.3.1.2.2 Participation as an Established NRM Tradition

“This open forum where stakeholders will be discussing issues pertaining to the sector and together look for solutions and a way forward, is in line with government policy and method of work and is highly recommended. I think you remember in the early days of the Movement when we used to talk about open method of work, this is one way, to call everybody here and openly argue, quarrel, agree, disagree so that we can move forward together” (MoWHC Minister speaking at a UCC public forum, UCC 2000).

“(…) we invite [stakeholders] to give an opinion, and the committee values their opinion. It is now also part of government’s way to make policy, by consulting with people” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 27 September 2008, emphasis mine)
“Then we organise public workshops. The government says we must consult people when making policy, it’s a standard thing” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 26 September 2008, emphasis mine)

References to the ‘early days’ of the NRM and more generally to the NRM government’s commitment to involving the ‘grassroots’ in democratic political decision-making are present also several policy-related documents produced both by government and non-governmental actors (cf. for example UNCST 1997, Dol 1999, Ofir 2003a, Torach et al. 2007).

C-3.1.3 ‘Qualifications’

C-3.1.3.1 Progressive Improvement Over Time (Vs. High Participation Throughout)

“The [NICTPF] process was similar [to others that followed it], but at the time consultation was not as established as it was later, it was not so structured” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 5 December 2008)

“One could also say that policymaking as a core function of government is something new: before it used to be just the Ministry of Planning that was responsible for much of the policymaking work, so some people now don’t know what the requirements actually are in terms of policymaking. Sometimes there is also lack of appreciation for the input that the private sector and civil society can contribute, sometimes people don’t understand why they have to consult widely” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 9 February 2009)

C-3.1.3.2 Synecdochic Participation

“[I]t will be practically impossible to invite all operators: take for example training institutions, there are so many in the country, so you are going to group them, and invite representatives from these groups” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 13 February 2009)

“Stakeholders are many and various. Clearly they cannot all be contacted or be involved at the same time during the lifetime of this activity. It is considered enough to identify representative stakeholders to input their concerns” (UCC 2004n: 1)

“The involvement of various parts of society can be direct or indirect. Direct involvement was by articulating concerns and suggestions at meetings, and it was open to all clusters of society. Indirect involvement was reached through studies: for example, if you take part to a focus group discussion, or respond to a questionnaire, then you
are participating indirectly to the process” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 November 2008)

“We know the people who are useful, the Okellos, the Tusubiras… (…) Okello will mobilise people from her side, the university will also do it with academia…” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 26 September 2008)

“You have to work with key stakeholders, for example private enterprise, but also NGOs, as they bring awareness of what is happening, and they all need to be brought aboard – so that the spirit of adoption is better, because they are with the masses. [I ask whether these organisations represent the masses in the process] Yes, they represent people” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 18 November 2008)

“With the participation of WOUGNET and CEEWA the assumption was that they were representing women and the masses” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 September 2008)

“Usually the report that [our organisation] will present after [consulting with stakeholders located ‘outside’ the main policy process] has all the points of view in it, but then at meetings you only present priorities, so things are left out, and then the consultant will select even more, because they want to have brief reports (…) [So] we ask people to prioritise things at meetings, and we explain that things may be dropped off, so it’s important to prioritise (…). [Once government-managed consultation ends] we’ll prepare a report, which is disseminated back to the community, and then we try to have follow ups, say after six months, so that people have had the time to look at it. If things did not go well, they will be disappointed, but you have to explain, for example say that the focus of the government was on the internet, and you should see what you can do with it (…) [I ask whether this reporting back implies simplification, and whether there is any degradation of the information as part of the process] Not so much, because when the information comes from the community, it’s in very simple form. When it comes from [government] it’s complex, but we will know how to report it back in a simple way, because that’s where we started in the first place” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 26 September 2008)

381 The idea that people can ‘indirectly’ participate to policy formulation by being represented through studies and surveys is also espoused in a number of other documents, in particular documents originating from consultants (see for example Intelecon 2000, DCI Ltd. 2002, MoH 2004, PIS Ltd. 2008).

382 The respondent refers here to Dr. Dorothy Okello, director of civil society organization WOUGNET and an academic at the University of Makerere, and to Prof. Francis Tusubira, also an academic at Makerere and formerly head of that university’s Department of ICT Support (DICTS).
“For the committee, normally there would be drafting first, and then stakeholder consultation, but we didn’t have many resources, so what we did was to have a representative committee, with various people on it, so that stakeholders were already represented there. So for example we had people from the university, and they would go back to the university to discuss with their colleagues” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008)

“You have a Task Force, to look at documents: you choose a team that is representative of all sectors of society, the private sector, academia… and then you come up with a policy document” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 26 September 2008)

C:3.1.3.3 The ‘Political’ View: ‘Real’ Reasons for Participation (Personal Convenience, Exerting Particular Influence, Being Seen as ‘Active’)

“Some leading actors in the [NICTPF] process were frustrated by a group of Ugandans who always want to ‘own’ processes that they never initiated and claim credit when they succeed. Such persons often positioned themselves strategically to claim credit for particular processes even when it was clearly evident that they do not have the capacity to implement them. Some worked in cliques to frustrate the process because they wanted to be seen as its movers and shakers. Although many of such efforts were in vain, they left a lot of frustration on the faces of many leading actors” (Waiswa Bagiire undated: 6)

“National policies are supposed to be national, but are usually initiated by individuals, and individuals can leave their mark, especially if they are clever. (…) workshops are further stages to push individual ideas, and to get them accepted, to get ownership” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 17 September 2008)

“[There is a] hidden agenda of some of the policy members of the team / personal interests (…) [and] some people/professionals who are involved in the process get stuck on petty issues in order to promote their personal/professional interests” (Anon 2007a)\(^383\).

“Most of the time we are there to represent the interests of our company, so people in reality will pull the policy in different directions and angles. The first thing you think in any case is ‘what’s in it for us?’” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 February 2009).

\(^{383}\) These comments are extracted from a draft evaluation report on ICT policymaking in Uganda commissioned by a donor, and interestingly, they were eventually elided from the final version of the report (APC/IICD 2007a).
“For us it is an input, and we need to see an output. If the output is not there, I will not go, I prefer doing something that creates profit for my business” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 2 December 2008)

 “[The private sector is] vocal, but also arrogant. Often they say they don’t see the role of government – but then who will take connectivity to rural schools, for example?” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 26 September 2008)

 “There is space for discussion, and I think we have been able to effect change, but sometimes presenters are very very rigid, and also if you are able to organise a force at the forum you will be more able to effect change. I think we as operators are now better organised, and we come with a common position. The consumers, they try to organise themselves, but I don’t think they are properly organised yet” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 12 February 2009)

 “Now, with the Ministry of ICT, things are publicised more widely, but this is where it is important to get organised representation, because at these open meetings there is no organisation, you just go from topic to topic and 70-80 people can comment in various ways. We should get more organised as a lobby group, to ensure you can say ‘here is our position on this’, with a position paper” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 February 2009)

 “We are able sometimes to influence, but if they [i.e. government] are convinced of the way to go, it’s hard to convince them” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 12 February 2009)

 “I guess the ICT part is also new: from the donor community, you want to be perceived to be at the forefront… so it’s the modernity of the issue… and it’s the same for governments, you want to be seen to be doing something, and that probably plays a role” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 26 September 2008)

 “Having IDRC [in the NICTPF process] was seen by other foreign players as domineering. Although it was liberal in dealing with [Uganda], other foreign players saw IDRC as taking all the credit for the project and were reluctant to offer advice and even contribute to its funding. (…) [Other donors] did not know the details of the policy and the context in which the policy was going to operate. This was because their stake was not as big as that of the Ugandans. To them, it was more of doing a job for a living yet Ugandans had the interest of ensuring that the policy leads to tangible development” (Waiswa Bagiire undated: 7)

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384 Mentions of participation as a way to influence policy outcomes are found also in official documents produced throughout the first ten years of Ugandan ICT policymaking (cf. for example UN CST 1997, APC/IICD 2007a).
“It is disappointing that the [IDRC’s] Acacia focus on gender did not influence the policy processes or outcomes” (Ofir 2003a: 6)

C-3.2 The Inverted, Oppositional Narrative

C-3.2.1 Not Really Participation

“[The NICTPF process] was new to many people, so the level of participation was not as high as that of other policies. So although participation was higher than for (...) other policies, there were (...) not many people who contributed to the national ICT policy due to failure to understand some of the issues being discussed” (Waiswa Bagiire undated: 19)

“If you look at participation, [it] is very minimal, because consultation is minimal. How do you get people to participate? You inform them, give the basics, it’s like teaching, you give the tools, then you open a discussion. When you go to a lecture theatre, you don’t start by discussing. When you have a jury system, the jury first listens to the case, then makes a decision. But you cannot make policy through a 2-hour consultation” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 2 December 2008)

“[The Government] listens, but with one ear [and] is often ‘slow’ to act (...) [There is] poor info flow [and] little knowledge management” (Nkuuhe 2007).

“We call it participatory, but it isn’t really, it’s more for validation (...) [and] with validation, you can change a few things, but not much” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 February 2009)

“(…) it depends on who is vocal. (...) it was the same at WSIS... all the noise we made turned into a single statement in the final report. Can you imagine? All our issues, in a single statement” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 19 September 2008)

C-3.2.2 Elitism and Inadequacy of Synecdochic Participation

“The problem is how representative are the organisations that participate. Full involvement would be with open invitations: we are developing this, we invite you all to come, and everybody can come – but it rarely happens (...). For example, there is a gentleman (...), I can’t remember his name, and he represents consumers, he is at every forum and he says he is representing consumers – but who knows what goes on behind, what his relationship is with consumers.
He just says he represents them, with his organisation” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 24 September 2008)

“[T]here is no organised civil society, for example a consumer association. Our circles of influence don’t reach all parts of society, so that you can actually feel the person talking, and if you feel the person talking it’s not like when somebody is representing it” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 February 2009)

“If something came up for the disabled, associations would speak for them: if disabled people came up directly, there would be more freshness, you would hear it directly from them, but somebody always speaks on their behalf anyway” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008)

“The problem is that there is an inner circle, but it’s not formalised. There is no problem in having an advisory group, but it should be formalised, so that you get proper and broader representation, and so that it is accountable” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 February 2009)

“[It is] unclear how stakeholders are selected and consulted (...) [and] the number of stakeholders involved in (...) the policy formulation process is too much limited to ‘inner-circle’ of a few government institutes” (Arendsen 2008)

“[M]arginalised stakeholders [have] not been given a chance to fully participate” (UWCI 2004).

“Usually, (...) stakeholders are selected by the people who make the policy – and it may be that they only select people who they know are going to agree” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 24 September 2008)

“We need to keep consulting more widely, because the danger is that you can always predict what they are going to say” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008)

“If you have the usual suspects, you have convergence, they all end up agreeing, because if you know the others and see them regularly, you don’t really want to antagonise each other…” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 13 February 2009)\textsuperscript{385}

\textsuperscript{385} For what is meant as ‘the usual suspects’ see also Section B-1.2.2.3 in this Appendix.
D. Objects

D-1 Textual Objects

D-1.1 ‘Debate Framers’

D-1.1.1 The Value of Preliminary, ‘Debate Framing’ Information and Research

“From our experience here in Uganda, the problem initially was to understand what an ICT policy is, what are the steps... (...) There also has to be an element of research: what have other countries been doing, and so on. At the beginning, there was nothing of this kind. People spoke of generalities, for example they would mention Singapore - but there was nothing specifically about the process, and lessons from Singapore may also not necessarily be very useful in Uganda. It was also because there were very few examples of similar processes. It only came at later stages. Perhaps it was me who heard about these things later on, but for example we heard about what Rwanda was doing only after having approved the framework, and it was on a comparative basis, so as to put pressure on countries to now implement policies. Instead, you have to work with people who have this information” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 19 September 2008)

“You need research, and for research you need consultants” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008)

“Apart from the background documents as it were, I used the laws maybe... I looked at the legal framework. We must also have referred to the Constitution, I think – at the start of the document” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 17 November 2008)

“Let’s say we need a situation analysis: we then need instruments, like expert opinions, administrative support, data and so on” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 November 2008)

“First, for me I believe, to work in policy you need research, that’s a key area. (...) If you talk about rural connectivity, you have to go there and find out why for example the farmer does not find it a priority. So for me, when it comes to policy, it’s research, and being able to influence policy” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008)

‘Background’ studies are also explicitly identified both by government and donors as a key preliminary component for the conduction of several of the policy processes I analysed, and most notably in the case of the ‘round table’ policy

In this respect, ‘background’ or ‘reference’ studies and papers remind of the concept of ‘Entandikwa’ mentioned in section C-1.2.2 of this Appendix, representing as they do one of the key ‘foundations’ on which ICT policy formulation is perceived to be built: quite tellingly in fact, when MoWHC Minister John Nasasira once described the ICT policy efforts undertaken previously to the NICTPF process as ‘Entandikwa’ to the process (UNCST 2000b: 31), he was indeed referring specifically to activities and processes that culminated in the production of a number of background reports and studies, and were eventually listed as ‘inputs’ in the final version of the NICTPF (MoWHC/Office of the President/UNCST 2002, MoWHC 2003b).

**D-1.1.2 Formats**

As mentioned above, in most cases preliminary ‘debate framing’ information is supplied through standalone ‘reference’ or ‘background’ papers (cf. for example UNCST 2000c, UCC 2002a, IICD 2003, MTTI 2005b, UCC 2005a, WOUGNET 2006a).

In some cases, however, ‘debate framers’ also take the form of shorter, ‘digested’ documents. The background paper that informed the first NICTPF workshop was for example accompanied by a separate ‘Aide Memoire’, consisting of a blue A4 sheet folded three times to form a small leaflet, carrying a summary of the main points from the paper it accompanied, and information on the aims and the structure of the workshop it was designed to support (UNCST 2000c). Most of the reference papers cited above, together with many others, also include ‘executive summaries’ designed to resume key points from the main paper, as do policy drafts (see also below, and cf. DoI 1999, Intelecon 2000, UNCST 2001b, 2004a, MoWHC 2005b). In general, these seem to represent attempts to overcome some of the difficulties connected with the fruition of extensive documents by specific types of stakeholder (see also below, section D-1.1.4).
D-1.1.3 Policy Drafts

In most cases the policy drafts I consulted contained sections designed to discursively circumscribe the boundaries of the policy issue at stake and justify the need to make policy about it (cf. UNCST 2001a, 2001b, MoWHC/Office of the President/UNCST 2002, UNCST 2004a, UCC 2004j, 2005e, 2005d).

An excellent example of how successive drafting contributes to the incremental framing and sedimentation - and in this case also the significant modification - of the boundaries of policy debate in the context of a given policy process is represented by the various drafts of the NICTPF, which in coincidence with the progressively increasing involvement of the DoI in the process start making increasing references to the importance of the ‘information’ element of ICT policy, and see the inclusion of references to articles of the Ugandan Constitution regarding access to and freedom of information that were not present in previous drafts, which seem to derive in fact from the work previously done by the DoI for its White Paper (based in turn at least partially also on the work previously undertaken on the subject by an international consultant) (UNCST 2001a, 2001b, MoWHC/Office of the President/UNCST 2002: 9, DoI 1999: 5-6, Uhlir 2001).

The ‘debate framing’ function of policy drafts is denoted very clearly also in the following statement from an interview with a CSO worker involved in policy consultation:

“Obviously if there is a draft on anything, we’ll start from that, and take it to the rural communities” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 27 September 2008)

D-1.1.4 Access and Distribution

“[There has been insufficient time to read the policy document and therefore make good comment” (UCC 2004l: 2).

“If you give me a bill and 24 hours to give feedback, I won’t do it” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 2 December 2008).
“Sending documents or information may not necessarily mean communication (...). [The consultation] document [was] sent out late” (APC/IICD 2007c: 17, 24)

In a piece of private correspondence I was able to see during fieldwork, a consultant tasked with facilitating one of policy processes at the centre of this study also noted he was aware that “most [task force] members don’t seriously and analytically read documents”, meaning that an “abridged” version of the reference paper he was preparing should also be developed as part of his assignment.

D-1.2 Process-Related Textual Objects

D-1.2.1 Process Descriptions/Prescriptions

Examples of documents that descriptively or prescriptively enumerate ‘phases’ or ‘stages’ of the ICT policy process have already been cited in section C-2.1 of this Appendix, to illustrate how the ‘linear process’ narrative is articulated in practice. Some of the documents cited in that section also contain examples of the speeches given by various actors at policy events, which in some cases focus on the intended or ideal stages of the ICT policy process: one such example is the speech given at the final NICTPF workshop by the UNDP’s resident representative in Uganda, which contains detailed descriptions of what the “second phase” of the national ICT policy process (implementation) would imply (UNCST 2002b: 15).

The importance of ‘guideline’ or ‘roadmap’ documents in the context of the policy process became particularly clear to me when I encountered an instance in which a particular set of guidelines (the AISI guidelines, most notably – proposed by UNECA as a way forward for the formulation of plans to implement the NICTPF) was considered somewhat unhelpful, and was thus at least partially rejected, by Ugandan ICT policy actors:

“Initially, UNECA came to present papers on policy processes. We did what we thought was feasible – for example, the initial assessments they were talking about had already been done in our case. Our policy was largely pushed by non-state actors, initially. It already came from down rather than up, it was reactive. (...) Their guidelines were for
those just starting the process – but we were already at an advanced stage” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 November 2008)

“[M]aybe the weakness [connected with using AISI guidelines] was having a one-size-fits-all approach. [UNECA] were involved and they provided guidance on what should be in the policy... [and] also on the process, sometimes. Also, examples of other countries were brought, and the problem is that these examples are often not taken critically, you just look at what was done elsewhere and replicate it... and you can replicate success, but you can also replicate failure” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 24 September 2008)

“[UNECA’s] role has never extended much beyond providing templates and drafts as part of the AISI project – but there is no one-size-fits-all solution in ICT policy” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 May 2008)386

D-1.2.2 Role Specification and Attribution

The documents produced by the UCC’s TPR working group to distinguish between different categories of ICT policy stakeholder (UCC 2004n, 2004a, 2004i – cf. also section B-1 of this appendix) represent an excellent example of process-related textual objects designed to specify and attribute roles and responsibilities in the context of the ICT policy process. An analysis of the minutes of the meetings of the working group shows in fact how these documents inspired discussions internally to the group, and were in turn modified as a result of these discussions (UCC 2004f, 2004e, 2004d, 2004c, 2004b).

The attribution of roles and responsibilities to different types of policy actor also characterises several of the documents produced in relation to the policy processes sponsored and supported by the IICD, such as project proposals, contracts, memoranda of understanding between the donor and governmental bodies, and documents detailing the terms of reference (ToRs) for the engagement of specific actors or groups of actors, such as consultants, facilitators, or task force members (MTTI/IICD 2005b, MoH/IICD 2005a, 2005b, NPA/IICD 2005c, IICD

386 Interestingly, the draft implementation framework that resulted from this particular policy effort stated that “allocating authority over ICT to one Minister does not establish a sufficiently collaborative or transparent governance framework” (MoWHC 2005b), and recommended that an independent directorate be created instead, and MoUs between this directorate and relevant Ministries be formulated for the governance of different aspects of ICT. The Government quite clearly decided to ignore also this recommendation, and created the MoICT one year later.
ToR documents in particular contain detailed and supposedly binding prescriptions regarding what is expected of specific policy actors, and they are generally experienced as an important component in shaping the way in which policy is formulated.\footnote{For example, ToRs were mentioned by some respondents not only as key documents informing the initial phases of policy processes, but also as tools that made it possible to ensure that specific actors would be included in consultation activities, or tools through which donors could influence some aspects of the policy process, such as timing, resourcing, and reporting lines (Personal Interviews, Kampala, 12 and 18 November and 2 and 5 December 2008).}

**D-1.2.3 ‘Rules and Regulations’**

These include pieces of legislation and other types of governmental document that define and/or prescribe ‘best practice’ or actual legal requirements in relation to policy formulation in the country. Examples include the ‘checklists’ provided by the Cabinet Secretariat for the preparation of Cabinet memos, which contain different questions for different types of policy (Republic of Uganda undated), or the rules governing the work of Parliament and its committees (Republic of Uganda 2006). Both these types of document were mentioned by respondents as textual objects that had an impact on their approach to ICT policy formulation:

“[W]ith the making of a Cabinet Memo (...) there are also guidelines we need to follow, so while you write [the memo] you take them into account, (...) to ensure that [the memo] addresses issues, that there is justification for a specific policy, how the needs of stakeholders have been integrated, and if their views have been integrated, you have to show where and how” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 13 February 2009).

“[W]e’ll also look at the guidelines for decision-making processes, because if we come up with an idea, we found that the government will come up with processes and procedures, and you have to know them. You can’t skip stages and go to MPs, a Minister has to move things to Parliament for you” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 27 September 2008);

“Normally to do our work we need to find out what the work plan of the Ministry of ICT is, but now Parliament is also involved, for example, so we need to understand more about how it works” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 February 2009).
D-1.2.4 ‘Simplified Foreground’ Vs. ‘Complex Background’

As seen in section B-1 of this appendix, with the exception of the TPR’s ‘stakeholder’ documents most of the references to stakeholder categories or process phases contained in documents produced by the Ugandan government with regard to ICT policy are limited to simple bullet lists or in-text enumerations, with little detail as to the roles of specific stakeholder or to the actual content of specific phases.

The same level of ‘simplification’ applies also to public statements: MoWHC Minister John Nasasira once responded for example to a critique on alleged oversights by the UCC in the formulation of regulatory frameworks for telecommunications as follows:

“You see, government creates policy, Parliament enacts, passes laws, and the UCC then regulates according to policy and law” (UCC 2000).

The MoWHC Minister adopted a similar degree of simplification also on another occasion, when responding to criticisms made in Parliament regarding the alleged lack of involvement of MPs in policy consultation activities:

“Unless Parliament feels that the Government should change its process of policy formulation, the current process of policy formulation is that you have a Ministry. The process starts by developing a policy; we prepare a draft policy document and consult stakeholders through workshops and seminars. There is no policy that we have tried to develop, not only in this ministry but also other ministries, without having these stakeholders’ workshops, where Members of Parliament have been invited to attend and more specifically the sectoral committees. (…) If Parliament so wishes that we change to Yellow Paper, Green Paper and eventually White Paper for every policy formulation, then Parliament could raise that as a matter for government to consider and in future we go through the stages” (Uganda Hansard, 20 August 2003).

Behind this ‘foreground’ made of simplified, if not simplistic descriptions of the ICT policy process and of the categories of stakeholder involved in it, a significant ‘background’ of complex and detailed negotiations about roles, responsibilities and
process phases exists, populated mainly by documents produced in collaboration with, if not entirely by, donors and/or the CSOs/NGOs that collaborate with them.

A survey commissioned by the IICD on the role of the national networks the organisation was sponsoring in relation to ICT policy (for example, Ugandan CSO I-Network) contains for example no less than eight possible roles these national networks may have or intend to have in relation to ICT policy formulation (IICD 2009). Other documents produced by the IICD, such as ToR documents and progress reports relating to policy processes sponsored by the organisation, are also characterised by particular levels of complexity (cf. IICD 2005a, MTTI/IICD 2005b, MoH/IICD 2005b, IICD 2006a, MoH/IICD 2005a, IICD/I-Network 2006, 2007).

Documents produced by the MoWHC in accordance with AISI guidelines similarly contain relatively detailed specifications of roles and responsibilities, conveyed through the use of complex classification tools such as stakeholder matrices and logframe-type tables (MoWHC 2004d, 2005b).

I found no documents featuring this level of complexity produced by government without explicit or implicit (but easily traceable) inputs or contributions on the part of donors.

**D-2 Non-Textual Objects and Resources**

**D-2.1 Examples**

*D-2.1.1 Vehicles and Fuel*

Cars, pick-up trucks and fuel are regularly included amongst the “inputs” necessary to support policy formulation work found in the MoICT’s annual policy statements presented to Parliament (cf. for example MoICT 2008d: 41-44).

Vehicle and fuel expenses appear to be necessary in particular to support field missions. 42% of the proposed budget for the Parliamentary committee on ICT for 2009/10 referred for example to field trips and fact-finding missions (Republic of
Uganda 2008c). The same applies to consultants, as evidenced by the following interview extract:

“When costing, you need to ensure you recover it, and also the cost of hiring vehicles and the fuel for going to the field, and also for the people who do the interviews” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 18 November 2008)

In one case I also came across a document entitled “Car Hire to Collect Various Working Documents and Data Required For The Post Duopoly Policy” (UCC undated-a), which contained a table detailing expenditure relating to car hire, signifying that vehicles and fuel are sometimes employed also simply for the distribution or collection of textual objects.

**D-2.1.2 Venues and ‘Refreshments’**

Expenditure for catering and venue hire are also mentioned regularly in some of the ‘internal’ documents I consulted – e.g. budget documents relating to the work of the Parliamentary ICT Committee (cf. Republic of Uganda 2008c), or to policy processes supported by the IICD (e.g. NPA/IICD 2006). The importance of budgeting for this type of expenditure was also stressed by some of the respondents I interviewed (Personal Interviews, Kampala, 19 September and 11 November 2008).

**D-2.1.3 Stationery, IT Equipment, Office Equipment**

“[Y]ou have to have the necessary equipment: (...) computers, laptops, printers, a photocopier, a fax machine – you have to put in a significant investment” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 18 November 2008).

Equipment of this kind is perceived as particularly important for the production and distribution of policy- or process-related textual objects, and/or the organisation of workshops and meetings: a document produced in preparation for one of the IICD-sponsored ICT policy-related ‘round table’ workshops lists for example, amongst the items that need to be sourced to organise the workshop, computers, printers, projectors, microphones, and myriad stationery items, including notebooks, pens,
markers in all colours, flipchart paper, printing paper, name tags, manila cards (in “at least 4 different colours”), yellow stickers, masking tape, scissors, razor blades, and staplers (of “light and medium size with enough staples”) (NPA/IICD 2005a: 1).

D-2.1.4 Internet Access

“We had slides, Powerpoint slides. I also did some reading on ICT and ICT policy in general, from internet sources” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 17 November 2008)

“We did internet searches, library searches, and looked at case studies from other countries that had ICT policies” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 19 November 2008)

‘Internet searches’ are also explicitly cited as one of the methodologies in consultants’ inception reports and other reports describing the unfolding of ICT policy processes (cf. for example DCI Ltd. 2002, MoH 2004, PIS Ltd. 2008).

D-2.1.5 Cash

Paying *monetary allowances* to meeting participants to cover their travel expenses, and/or provide them with incentives for participation is relatively common practice in the Ugandan context.

I first became aware of this practice through interviews with local informants (Personal Interviews, Kampala, 11 and 19 November 2008). In one case however I also had direct experience of it, when I was asked by a respondent if I was prepared to pay an allowance in exchange for an interview (and I did).

Paying monetary allowances so as to attract and retain suitable participants is also explicitly recommended in a set of AISI-inspired guidelines on the composition of the working groups tasked with producing implementation plans for the NICTPF (MoWHC 2004d: 1).
D-2.2 Financial Impact

From the introductory letter accompanying the first policy statement produced by the new MoICT Ministry in July 2006:

“[The current priorities are] finding a home and obtaining necessary funds to cater for rent; obtaining funds for furniture for [the Minister and his staff] in that new home; obtaining funds for means of transport (…); obtaining enough funds for both recurrent and development budgets to enable the Ministry to take off” (MoICT 2006: vii).

The financial impact of policy activity can also be significant for non-governmental actors:

“[W]e need money to facilitate ourselves, for the facilitation of meetings etc.” (Personal Interview with a CSO worker, Kampala, 17 September 2008)

“Those who are consulted must be prepared to commit funds, time and their best human resources, who will have to work very hard to keep up with the pace in order to add value to the process” (Chekwoti et al. 2003: 11).

D-2.3 Scarcity of Financial Resources, and the Role of Donors in this Respect

“Ah, we are badly funded, we are poor – but we do have some money from government, and we had some from IDRC and others. But you have to note that all the people in the [NICTPF] task force were volunteers, we never paid anything. Only later, we gave people some money (…) Consultants were paid by IDRC, but they were largely local people, so they accepted what we had” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 November 2008)

“For the workshops, the challenge in this country is that people would expect a refund, an allowance, but the budget was limited. The ministry paid travel expenses, for those that were coming from upcountry, but not allowances” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 19 November 2008)

“Yes, there were donors, but we had a tough time, we had a lot of workshops, and the main funder was UNCST, the money from donors was small” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 4 December 2008)
“The UNCST would normally circulate printed materials prior to the meetings, as they had the budget for printing things” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 September 2008)

“[P]hotocopying facilities [for the second phase of the NICTPF process] were in the UNDP office, it was done there. Apart from the pay of consultants, the resources came from there, it was all on UNDP budgets, including the workshops and so on” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 17 November 2008)

“[Without IICD] it would have been extremely different. (…) [I]t probably wouldn’t even have happened. I am not certain, but IICD did put in a lot of influence, in terms of timelines, taking things forward, and providing financial support and resource people, and being able to push and see to it that things actually happened. If it even had taken place without IICD, it would not have taken place as efficiently and quickly” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008)

E. Spaces

E-1 Key Spaces

The following is a list of the key spaces in which activities linked to the different ICT policy processes analysed as part of this study have taken place:

• Task force meetings and discussions for the NICTPF process normally took place in the boardroom of what used to be the UNCST’s offices at the time, located on the 11th floor of Uganda House (Figure III.1), on Kampala Road (one of the main traffic arteries in central Kampala); this was considered more practical than meeting at the MoWHC’s headquarters, located in Entebbe (some 40km south of the capital); public workshops and seminars would instead normally take place in the conference facilities of top hotels also located in central Kampala, such as Nile (now known as Serena), or Sheraton (UNCST 2000b, 2002b and Personal Interviews, Kampala, 12 and 19 November and 2 December 2008)

• The first two meetings of the UCC’s TPR working group took place in the offices of the University of Makerere’s Directorate for ICT Support (DICTS),

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388 The UNCST since moved to new premises in nearby Nasser Road.
389 Personal Interview, Kampala, 2 December 2008.
located on Makerere’s main campus, while the remaining meetings of the group took place in the UCC boardroom, located on the fourth floor of Communications House (a tall building in central Kampala that hosts amongst other things the UCC’s headquarters; Figure III.2); public workshops and meetings in relation to the TPR took place in large hotels in Kampala, and in particular at Grand Imperial, used by the UCC for the same purpose also on a number of other occasions (UCC 2003a, 2004d, 2004c, 2004b, 2004l, Nkuuhe 2005, Masambu 2007, UCC undated-c and Personal Interviews, Kampala, 12 November and 2 December 2008)

• Key meetings relating to the IICD-sponsored round table processes took place in the head offices of the institutions involved, such as Crested Towers (home of the NPA’s offices and located opposite the Parliament of Uganda; Figure III.3), or the premises of the MTTI, also located in central Kampala; round table workshops took place instead in hotels located in small towns not very far from Kampala, such as Seeta and Jinja, while other secondary consultation meetings took place in Kampala, again in hotels such as Grand Imperial; some of the work connected with these processes was also undertaken in I-Network’s offices, located in Kira Road, in Kampala (NPA 2005a, IICD 2006b, MTTI 2005a, 2006a)

• Up until 2009, when I left the country, the meetings of working groups convened by the MoICT had normally taken place in the Ministry’s boardroom or in other meeting/conference rooms in the ministerial headquarters, located in Social Security House, on Jinja Road in central Kampala (Figure III.4); public workshops and seminars have instead taken place mainly in hotels around the capital, and in particular at Sheraton and Grand Imperial (Personal Interviews, Kampala, 19 November 2008 and 10 February 2009)

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390 This is likely to have been due to the fact that the Chair of the working group, Prof Francis Tusubira, was the director of DICTS at the time, in addition to being a UCC commissioner.
In addition to the above, there are a number of other spaces and places that have to various extents been associated with ICT policy formulation activities and meetings, including:

- The Parliament of Uganda, located in central Kampala, for meetings of the Parliamentary ICT Committee and plenary discussions relating to ICT (Figure III.5); the Parliament’s premises are also home to the Office of the President, which includes the Cabinet Secretariat
- The MoWHC’s headquarters, located in Entebbe; the Ministry also has smaller premises in central Kampala, on Port Bell Road, where the Minister also has an office
- Statistics House (Figure III.6), home amongst other things also to Uganda Computer Services (UCS) - the IT arm of the Ministry of Finance - and more recently NITA; Statistics House also hosted the MoICT’s premises when it was first set up (basically in the same rooms as UCS/NITA) (UCC 2006a)
- State House, the official residency of the President in Entebbe, hosting amongst other things the meetings of the Presidential Investors’ Round Table (PIRT), and Cabinet meetings
- The former Ministry of Information’s headquarters in Nakasero (central Kampala), for meetings relating to the DoI’s White Paper
- The Postal Building, home to the Office of the Prime Minister and where the DoI is currently located (Figure III.7)
- The premises of various national CSOs, like CEEWA, I-Network and WOUGNET, all located in the Kamwokya area of Kampala, and in particular on Kira Road
- Premises hosting the country offices of donor organisations, such as the UNDP (located in Clement Hill Road, close to the Postal Building: Figure III.8) and UNESCO (formerly located also in Clement Hill Road and now located in Embassy House, opposite Parliament); the IDRC did not have its own premises in Kampala and worked out of the UNCST’s offices in Uganda House (Figure III.1) and in connection with its regional office for Eastern and Southern Africa, located in Nairobi; the IICD also doesn’t have its own premises in Kampala and it has so far carried out some of its work by making use of the premises of partner organisations (I-Network in particular)
- Premises hosting the headquarters of large telecom/ICT operators, such as MTN (Hannington Road and Yusuf Lule Road) and UTL (Rwenzori Courts).
E-2 Kampala Vs. “Upcountry”

E-2.1 Visual Representation

Figure III.9 shows the location of key ICT policy-related buildings and venues in the capital’s central business district, and in nearby Entebbe, and Figure III.10 is a picture of the central Kampala skyline showing the location of some ICT policy-related buildings. Figure III.11 shows the relative location of Kampala and other towns in which ICT policy-related meetings were held in the overall national context.
Figure III.9 - Location of Key ICT Policy Related Buildings in Kampala (in red)

(Inset top left: central business district in the context of the city)

(Inset bottom right: locations in Entebbe)
Figure III.10 – Central Kampala Skyline, with Locations of Key ICT Policy-Related Buildings
Figure III.11 - Key ICT Policy Locations in the National Context
E-2.2 Justifications for the Centralisation of ICT Policy Activities in Kampala

“(…) all the people were all here, in the city, and those in rural areas were not included, and still now it’s difficult, because there is no power” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 4 December 2008)

“With ICT, people are just around Kampala, it’s easier, you don’t go to rural areas, they wouldn’t even understand what you are telling them, OK the people in rural areas have phones and so on, but the important ICT users and the people who know are in Kampala” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 12 February 2009)

E-2.3 Centralisation Leading to the Wrongful Exclusion of Extra-Urban Stakeholders

“There is an arrogant assumption sometimes that being rural you don’t have a say, you don’t really know what ICTs are about, but it’s wrong, being rural you just don’t have education perhaps, but it’s not true you have no say” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 24 September 2008)

“I say that consultation should improve, they say they put things on newspapers, inviting the public to workshops, but what are the chances of someone getting on the bus from Kabale to come to the meeting?” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 February 2009)

“When people talk about ICT they seem to focus just on the internet, but the UCC for example regulates also radio, which is important in rural areas. In the city, people use radio just for entertainment, but in rural areas it’s a key source of information” Personal Interview, Kampala, 27 September 2008)

“They say ICT doesn’t get used in rural areas because they are expensive, because there is no power and so on – but people use radios in rural areas, and they buy beer, so it’s not fully true, if you ask me, it’s because people have no value for it, so rather than reduce prices, you have to work on content” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008)

“The media [refer] to the internet and information technologies as communication issues (...) [but] rural communication issues hardly [feature] in this understanding and most [articles concern] urban issues and particularly mobile telephony” (PANOS London 2004: 11).

391 In this context, “power” means electricity.
“In the TPR, [rural communities were not represented] at all. For [the Rural Communications Development Policy], there were focus groups and pilots. But otherwise, frankly most policies did not address or include rural people” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 24 September 2008).

“Look at the fact that everyone is from Kampala: is there no private sector in Jinja, in Mbarara, in Gulu?” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 13 February 2009)

**E-2.4 ‘Outsourcing’ of Extra-Urban Representation to Non-Governmental Actors**

_E-2.4.1 Civil Society_

“The meetings are usually called in Kampala... in terms of the process, they always say consultation has taken place, but I don’t really know about any meetings upcountry... which is where civil society comes in, to bring in the point of view of the rural population... although it is not entirely satisfactory: there should be meetings upcountry too” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 27 September 2008)

“The role of civil society is to reach those parts that government cannot reach. Government does things in a grand way, and some minorities are not catered for, so that’s where civil society has a role. Civil society was instrumental in identifying ‘all else’, like women’s issues and the issues of other disadvantaged groups. It was instrumental in pulling out the plight of disadvantaged people, and it had its own resources, they were advocating with resources - so they were fixing the loose ends” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 November 2008)

“We are asked to participate [as civil society] because we can mobilise people” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 February 2009)

_E-2.4.2 Virtual Spaces_

“Because of the nature of the discussions, also on the mailing list, policymakers find it useful and sometimes things are taken up. For example you may remember some time ago on the list there was a discussion about telecom companies doing free promotions, and as a result the UCC stood in and stopped the promotions. I did also get some calls from the UCC to check if what was being said on the list was true. (...) Policymakers do not interact on the list, but they do listen in” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008)
“There are discussions on mailing lists, like I-Network... people are discussing issues, and the UCC or the government then calls a meeting, and you go into it with ideas you pick up from the list” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 27 September 2008)

“There is also a lot of online consultation, for example there are synergies with - say – WOUGNET, or I-Network... there is a community around ICT, on mailing lists... The ministry keeps... it becomes a way to engage with the public” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 28 September 2008)

E-2.4.3 Consultants

Consultants’ reports often contain very clear exemplifications of how the Kampala/non-Kampala divide is conceptualised and perceived with reference to ICTs: a draft IT policy commissioned by the MoICT in 2008 states for example that the consultant had “anticipated” that most of the IT users that needed to be consulted would be in Kampala, only to find that was not necessarily the case, as in many cases respondents’ organisations had branches upcountry (MoICT 2008c: 90).

Similar, relatively rough distinctions between Kampala and ‘non-Kampala’ are applied in other ICT policy-related ‘background studies’, such as the NIIA report sponsored by the World Bank, or the SCAN-ICT surveys supported by UNECA and the IDRC (DIAUP 2001, UNCST/NFRD 2002b).

E-2.4.4 Parliamentarians

“In any case, MPs approve policies in the end, and they are the people’s representatives, so people are also represented there” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 November 2008).

From an interview with an MP:

“I have to respond to people in villages, and see what is happening with ICT there, while for [the Minister] it’s enough to have hotspots in big hotels in the city, so that people like you who come from abroad can use the internet. The Minister is not preoccupied with what happens in villages. The ICT development we see in Kampala should
be the result of what’s happening outside Kampala. That’s where we differ, because I am accountable, and in 2011 [year when the next elections are planned] I will have to ask ‘how does this help me to get votes?’” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 February 2009).

E-2.4.5 The Media

“Journalists also pick up things [from mailing lists] and put it in the media, and this influences policy, because the word of journalists, while not necessarily true, is very forceful. Sometimes they will also call to check stories and so on, and then they publish them” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008)

A good example of this type of dynamic is contained in a newspaper article on the failure of the TPR process, which includes direct and indirect quotes taken directly from emails to the I-Network mailing list (Muwanga 2005a, Wire Lunghabo 2005). The I-Network mailing list was itself once the subject of a newspaper article, which focused specifically on how discussions developed on the list and how, as part of this, issues worthy of policy attention could emerge (Ssekalo 2009).

E-2.5 ‘Outside’ Kampala

E-2.5.1 Outskirts

Meetings and workshops held on the outskirts of Kampala include some of the IICD-sponsored ‘round table’ workshops, which took place in Jinja and in Seeta, and workshops organised by the MoICT and held in Entebbe, involving parliamentarians and/or government officials (NPA 2005b, MTTI/IICD 2005a, UNECA 2007, MoICT 2008b).

“Sometimes workshops are residential, sometimes not, they are just one-day workshops. They usually take place in hotels, away from people’s offices, for example in places like Entebbe, because you want to take people away from disruption, otherwise they will just go in and out, ‘I am just going out to do something’ and then they come back…” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 18 November 2008)

392 In one case I even found myself quoted in I-Network’s printed newsletter, following comments I had made on the mailing list about the quality of the internet connection I used to have at home (Kisambira 2008).
The fact that workshops and retreats outside Kampala are considered useful to improve attendance is demonstrated also by the attempt made by the Parliamentary ICT Committee at the end of 2008 to organise a parliamentary ‘retreat’ in order to expedite the discussion and approval of the NITA Bill. In this respect, a letter regarding the organisation of this event stated:

“The Committee has had three consecutive meetings to consider the NITA-U Bill, 2008 with a very dismal turn-up of committee members and yet this is a very important Bill that needs maximum attendance and concentration. It is therefore imperative that the Committee has a retreat at Imperial Resort Beach Hotel in Entebbe for the 21 Members and three staff of the Committee on ICT as soon as possible to dispose of this important Bill” (Parliament of Uganda 2008).

E-2.5.2 International

“We started getting fully involved at national level after WSIS I, also because there we had opportunities to interact with government officials, and that’s how it started, really. (…) some people said WSIS was a waste of time, but for us it was good to establish credibility with government officials, because we were also going to the summit, from Uganda, but with our own resources, so our credibility increased” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 February 2009)

“If you speak at international events, you gain respect, people say ‘I saw X speaking there, you should speak to him, he knows’, and you know, if you have a Ugandan working for example in Rwanda on something, people say ‘how can it be? he should work here’” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 13 February 2009)

E-3 Government vs. “Outside”

E-3.1 The Locations of ‘Closed’ Vs. ‘Open’ Phases

“The meetings [of the NICTPF task force] were taking place at UNCST, in the boardroom in Uganda House. The workshops were held at Hotel Africana, and at the International Conference Centre” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 19 November 2008)

“Consultation meetings [relating to the NICTPF] normally took place in hotels. Drafts were then travelling between relevant government offices, with task force meetings taking place at UNCST. Now they take
place at the MoICT” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 September 2008)

“[Meetings would take place at] UNCST, in Uganda House, and then at the UCC, in Communications House. Consultation workshops took place at the International Conference Centre, at least the ones I took part to” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 12 November 2008)

“Many [of the NICTPF workshops] took place at the [International] Conference Centre, including the last one, where the policy was approved, with everybody there, including the donors… all the players were there. There was maybe one also at Hotel Equatoria” Personal Interview, Kampala, 19 September 2008)

“The [TPR] committee meetings took place in the UCC Boardroom. The wider consultation meetings took place at Grand Imperial and the like” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 2 December 2008)

“The MoICT has a conference room. There must also be a boardroom. We used to go to the UCC boardroom too. Then if you target individuals, you have to go their offices. Workshops would be held in hotels, or in training centres” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 19 September 2008)

“When there are many people involved, meetings take place outside Ministry buildings (…), except if we are presenting to technical people in the Ministry, in which case we will be in the Ministry. If we need to involve the Minister it will be in the Boardroom of the Ministry” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 18 November 2008)

E-3.2 Accessibility

The conclusions I have drawn regarding security and ease of physical access to different types of space are based primarily on personal experiences I had in the field.

For example, it was certainly more laborious and difficult for me to enter governmental spaces than commercial spaces such as hotels, as entrances to the former are usually guarded by several security guards or police, and security checks are more thorough – so much so that in periods of intensive fieldwork I had to develop habits that made it easier to access governmental spaces, such as keeping my pockets empty of metallic objects so as not to trigger metal detectors, and carrying the minimum number of objects possible in my bag to reduce security
checking times. In order to visit governmental spaces I also had to dress in suitably smart attire, to fit in with the environment (while for a white foreigner like me, walking around a hotel in a t-shirt and jeans is normally considered acceptable).

With regard to the expenditure necessary to access and use hotel-based facilities, the minutes of one of the meetings of Uganda’s National WSIS Task Force convened by the UCC reveal that due to the limited financial resources available, some task force members proposed that while the public consultative workshop the task force was planning could be held as usual at Nile Hotel’s International Conference Centre, lunch could perhaps be had more cheaply somewhere else that day, or simple snacks could be provided rather than a full lunch (UCC 2003c: 3).

As for virtual spaces, interviews with members of staff at national CSOs suggested that mailing lists were useful, but lack of access to the internet still proved to be a problem:

“We have a network of about 90 members, and we have a mailing list, but some organisations are not online, and we communicate with them by phone, or by letter. Normally we bring up issues on the mailing list, so some members will be left out” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 27 September 2008)

“We try to get comments on documents, but it’s limited to people who have email. We did an SMS campaign back in March, and found out there were people who participated who normally wouldn’t” (Personal Interviews, Kampala, 10 February 2009)

F. Acts

F-1 Workshops

F-1.1 Frequency/Ubiquity

“At some point there will be a public forum, normally two, one to disseminate, and (...) a second forum to discuss the changes made on the basis of the feedback received” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 28 September 2008)
“Whatever way they want to do it, at the end of the day they’ll have consultative meetings, and that’s where I come in” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 26 September 2008)

“There is no policy that we have tried to develop, not only in this ministry but also other ministries, without having these stakeholders’ workshops where Members of Parliament have been invited to attend (...)” (MoWHC Minister John Nasasira addressing Parliament – Uganda Hansard, 20 August 2003)

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“Then we organise public workshops. The government says we must consult people when making policy, it’s a standard thing” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 26 September 2008).

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“The Ugandan government required that stakeholder workshops be held during the consulting process” (UCC 2005b: 20).

“At times workshops are open-ended, and at times they are closed and by invitation only. The majority are open-ended (...) [Those by invitation only] are specifically with operators, with a similar process to the open ones, but without the general public” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 5 December 2008)

Literal references to workshop as ‘milestones’ or ‘turning points’ are contained in several documents, including for example the report from the first NICTPF public workshop held in 2000 (in the introduction, and in the inaugural speech made by a representative from IDRC) (UNCST 2000b: iv, 25), and documents relating to the IICD-sponsored round table workshops (cf. de Jager 2005a).

Sections describing the process of formulation of the NICTPF contained in policy drafts and in the final policy document also contain several references to workshops as key elements of the process (cf. for example UNCST 2001b), and workshops are sometimes also literally listed as ‘deliverables’ in ToR documents relating to the work of consultants and other actors in support of the policy process (cf. UNCST 2003d, infoDev 2005).

Workshops seem in fact to be such a common feature of Ugandan ICT policy processes that in some cases actors talk of “workshop fatigue”, complain about their frequency and perceived lack of effectiveness, and even crack jokes about them:
(...) it will be counter productive to organise [a workshop] the way it is normally done. (…) it may look like a repetition and some people may not attend/participate (due to workshop fatigue)" (Extract from correspondence between a local consultant and the representative of a donor organisation)

“[Most of the work of the UNCST seems to involve] workshops and seminars instead of real research and input in the modernization of the economy” (Republic of Uganda 2000: 33).

“We have for a very long time been working on drawing up strategies, drawing up plans, ideas (…) on how ICTs can actually have a positive impact on the development and growth of our country. These, many of you will recall, were through many different forums: we had workshops, and workshops, there were workshops to create ideas, workshops to validate the previous workshops, we had workshops to receive the validations of the validations of the previous workshops [laughter all round] (…) Then we prepared a workshop to receive the report from the (…) [more laughter]. So we actually had a lot of workshops” (MoICT Minister Ham-Mukasa Mulira addressing UCC officials in his first meeting with the Commission after his nomination, UCC 2006a)

F-1.2 Stated/Official Aims

F-1.2.1 Discussion and Identification of Policy Issues

“A forum like this one where stakeholders interact and discuss freely not only with the commission but also with the policy arm, that is government, I think is a very welcome innovation, or development. As a policy, as I promised to you here before, UCC shall continue on a regular basis to hold such workshops, which we believe is the best way of facilitating the flow of information among stakeholders and increasing their awareness” (UCC Chairman Abel Katahoire at a UCC “stakeholders workshop” held in 2000, UCC 2000)

“This open forum where stakeholders will be discussing issues pertaining to the sector and together look for solutions and a way forward, is in line with government policy and method of work and is highly recommended” (MoWHC Minister John Nasasira at the same UCC workshop, ibidem)

“OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP

i) to discuss the background document on the status of ICT development and application in the country
ii) to identify the key policy issues o be addressed by the national ICT policy

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iii) to identify the institutional framework for the development and application of the policy”

(Extract from an ‘aide memoire’ included with UN CST 2000c)

Documents relating to the IICD-sponsored round table workshops held to develop sectoral ICT policies and plans similarly suggest that the workshops were considered as opportunities for participants to generate policy ideas and suggestion for their implementation, for example through scenario-building and discussion (cf. for example NPA 2005b: 4), and the same was said to be the objective of workshops held for the formulation of the MoICT’s IT policy in 2008 (PIS Ltd. 2008).

**F-1.2.2 Consensus Building and Creation of “Buy-In”**

“OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP (...):

- To have the key stakeholders effect ownership of the ICT Policy.
- To have key stakeholders support the rest of the ICT Policy development process” (UNCST 2002b: 2)

“Hopefully, at the end of this exercise, there will be consensus so that the preparation and validation of the ICT Policy can be finalized” *(ibidem, 14)*

“Ownership” and “validation” are also explicitly mentioned as key goals in documents relating to workshops organised for the TPR, and to the round table workshops mentioned above (UCC 2004h, 2004n, NPA/IICD 2005c). A book published by the UCC in collaboration with IDRC focusing on the RCDP process similarly refers to workshops as having an “immense” role in “creating buy-in” *(UCC 2005b: 21)*.

**F-1.2.3 Stakeholder Influence on Policy Process Outcomes**

As seen in section C-2.4.1 of this appendix, the opportunity to suggest amendments to policy drafts and to request the inclusion into policy documents of issues that may have been overlooked is perceived by some actors as a key way in which ICT policy stakeholders can have an influence on policy process outcomes.
In many cases this is one of the objectives of consultative workshops: the report of the proceedings of the 2002 NICTPF workshop is an excellent example in this respect, as it devotes several pages to the comments made by participants at the workshop, accompanied by the responses of the consultants responsible for the policy draft, attesting to the intention of enabling participants to effect changes in the policy text (UNCST 2002b: 6-12).

In an evaluation of the IDRC’s role influence on the Ugandan ICT policy process produced by an international consultant, a respondent hailing from the IDRC similarly suggested that the organisation managed to have policy influence also through its participation in consultative workshops (Ofir 2003a).

F-1.3 Unofficial/Secondary Aims

F-1.3.1 Networking

“[Policy making is viewed by some as a] waste of time (…), just an opportunity to network for other things and interact with colleagues” (Waiswa Bagiire undated: 12).

“When you have people together, you have relations, you get the feeling of what people think as they react “(Personal Interview, Kampala, 19 November 2008)

“[In order to ensure you are regularly invited to comment on ICT policy, it’s important to] participate to as many meetings as you can” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 February 2009)

The evaluation section of a report from a workshop held in 2006 to discuss gender-related aspects of the NICTPF similarly states that ‘networking’ with other participants was one of the personal objectives identified by workshop attendees, and reports that all participants considered their objectives to have been achieved (WOUGNET 2006c). ‘Networking’ is also mentioned as one of the additional advantages of round table workshops (Moens and Broerse 2006), and workshops have been perceived to facilitate networking in particular because they contribute to the temporary breaking down of “hierarchy and power relations” (de Jager 2005a).
F-1.3.2 Learning/Capacity Building

“First, people [who attend workshops] want to know what’s going on. They are more interested in knowing, than in claiming to know: someone who is more conversant with ICT would simply download the document, read it and say “OK that’s fine”, but the ordinary user wants to know more” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 5 December 2008).

“I wanted [name of MoICT official] to come to [event organised by respondent] but he didn’t turn up. That would have been a good way to know what they are doing. Instead, now I have to make an appointment and go and ask him” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 19 September 2008).

Learning about the work of other stakeholders and organisations is also another of the personal objectives mentioned by participants to the WOUGNET workshop mentioned above (WOUGNET 2006c), and a 2008 World Bank working paper more generally suggests that in developing countries, capacity building in relation to ICT policy takes seems to take place mainly through workshops and seminars, rather than via more structured training opportunities (infoDev 2008: 15).

F-1.3.3 Legitimisation/Performance Measurement

“Some [organisations] have to demonstrate what they do, so they can report ‘we took part to this, we influenced that policy’ and so on. Maybe for some individuals, it’s to catch the attention of decision makers, because if they do that, they will be called upon also in the future” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 24 September 2008).

“Participation’ can easily be a psychological urge to raise an individual’s or group’s own profile, sustain bureaucracies, develop and defend own interests at home and abroad” (Chekwoti et al. 2003: 2).

One of the sector implementation plans developed following the NICTPF also makes reference to the number of workshops organised to raise awareness about ICT policy as a measure of performance in relation to the policy process (UNCST 2004a).
F-2 Openings and Closures

F-2.1 Openings

F-2.1.1 Task Force Composition as a ‘Litmus Test’ for Inclusiveness

“[The NICTPF task force should] be strengthened and regularised (...) [and should incorporate] new members from [the] private sector, civil society and development aid agencies” (Comment by a member of UNECA staff at a NICTPF workshop held in 2000, UNCST 2000b: 23).

“We discussed who should be on [the NICTPF Task Force], for example the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Works, then a representative of the Ministry of Education, and so on, but we didn’t want it to become like a Cabinet [laughs]” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 4 December 2008)

“Government also didn’t leave many spaces for civil society on committees, often just one – so [name of organisation] was called” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 27 September 2008)

“(…) [participants to task forces] must be influential, powerful, they must be ‘doers’, and there should not be too much disparity in ranking between them” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 19 September 2008)


“The [UNCST] committee had a free hand of [deciding who should be on the NICTPF task force]. We’d sit down and discuss it, and IDRC sometimes also suggested ‘why don’t we invite such and such’” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 4 December 2008)

“There is no problem in having an advisory group, but it should be formalised, so that you get proper and broader representation, and so that it is accountable” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 10 February 2009)

“[The members of the NICTPF task force] were natural choices, charismatic characters that were already active in the sector – I can’t really say whether they were nominated or co-opted. We asked sectors institutions to identify champions, and in the end these were people we were already working with” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 11 November 2008)

 “[The role of donors in the policy process was also] maybe [that of providing] suggestions on the formation of the committee, that it had to
be inclusive… and they may also help in suggesting good people to do parts of the work” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 5 December 2008)

F-2.2 Closures

“I don’t think there was a day when [the NICTPF] was officially launched, government accepted it – did they accept it officially? – but there was no special launch. Maybe if it had been launched officially it would have been clear that [the remit of the NICTPF extended beyond that of the MoWHC] [laughs], maybe that's why” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 4 December 2008).

What was expected from the respondent was probably an official launches similar to those that had characterised other ICT policy processes (cf. for example MTTI 2006b, Stienen 2006).

As for reactions to the non-completion of the TPR and the subsequent emanation of ‘guidelines’:

“The whole [TPR] process was slowed down and it’s been going on and off since then (…) but it’s not very interesting, it was done so long ago, and one wants to move on. But the policy proposal got extracted to create policy guidelines by the Ministry, the guidelines were based on that document. (…) Our consolation was that the policy guidelines were produced on that basis. Of course you’d have wanted the whole document to come out, because it was a good process, people felt they had participated, and that they owned it” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 2 December 2008)

“[Normally] the process would be to call upon stakeholders, and then produce draft policy recommendations for the Minister. All he had to do was to approve them or to change them. But elections were coming up, and this was not a priority, the sector was working well so it wasn’t seen as a priority. However, the new policy stipulated that the changes were necessary, so the new Minister adopted the principles of that in his policy guidelines. (…) In this case, what he lacked was the policy analysis, and the policy objectives, he just went and took the actions from the document. (…) It was a stopgap measure” (Personal Interview, Kampala, 3 December 2008)
Appendix IV - Examples of Visual Representations of the ICT Policy Network in Uganda

*Figure IV.1 – “Sector Scope Demarcation (Stakeholders)”*

(Source: E-Information Strategy and Sector Plan, UNCST 2004a: 9)
Figure IV.2 – “The Ugandan ICT Policy Community”

Figure IV.3 – “Institutional Arrangements”

(Source: Uganda’s Experience on Building ICT Indicators, Ssemboga 2004b: 8)
Appendix V - Respondent Details

Table V.1 provides details of the respondents interviewed as part of the study.

It should be noted that ‘Role’ refers to the main role(s) occupied by the respondent at the time of interview only (or formerly occupied, in the case of retirees). In practice, in several cases respondents had also been engaged in ICT policy processes in different unique or multiple roles in the past, and/or were still engaged in different, secondary roles at the time of interview (examples: some civil servants had been private consultants or academics in the past; some private consultants had previously worked as civil servants or academics; donor staff had also worked as consultants or had been MPs, or went on to become MPs; MPs had also been local entrepreneurs; CSO staff had also worked as consultants and/or were still working as academics; and so on). The ‘Role’ listed below thus reflects the current or former most relevant occupation of respondents, as evidenced by the way they introduced themselves to me (e.g. their business card, or a statement in this respect).

*Table V.1 – Respondent Details (Interviews), By Sector*

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<td>Policy Analyst</td>
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<td>Local Entrepreneur</td>
<td>Self employed</td>
<td>Private Sector (Local)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local Entrepreneur / Consultant</td>
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<td>Private Sector (Local) / Consultancy (Local)</td>
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</table>
Appendix VI – Interview Question Guide

Initial Questions / Role

• What was your role/involvement in the ICT policy process?
• Who do you perceive as important/influential in the process? (be prepared to discuss what “important/influential” means; no pre-packaged answer: ask the respondent how they would define importance/influence)
• Do you perceive yourself to be/have been influential in the process? (Examples of relevant episodes/outcomes/achievements?)

Process-Related

• What are the “rules of the game”? And who set(s) them?
• How does the process work? Can you provide a “simple” description?
• What do you see as the past, present and future milestones of the policy process?

Places and Objects

• Where did policy-related meetings take place?
• What information/materials were you provided with? Do you have them / can I see them?
• What information/materials did you produce? Do you have them / can I see them?
• What are your “tools of the trade” in relation to the making of policy? (i.e. what do you use in your policy work: computers? internet? pens, paper? files? ….)

Participation

• Who do you perceive as key stakeholders in ICT policy, and how are they represented/who speaks for them – if they are not participating directly?
• Have you ever been represented by somebody else?
• Do you represent somebody in particular?

Challenges / Conflicts

• What do you see as the key challenges/conflicts in ICT policy making?
• What do you suggest should be done to overcome specific obstacles?

End

• Is there anything else you think we should have covered / I should have asked?
• Who should I speak to next? (for snowballing purposes but also as a verification of answers regarding influence)
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