

## **Abstract**

Using the state and its resources has constituted a vital form of consolidating power for Africa's rulers. However, donor-sponsored reforms have threatened to curtail the opportunities of African leaders to maintain their regimes in power. Donor reforms introduced under structural adjustment programmes have sought to reduce the size and scope of government as well as to cut state spending and thereby curb the possibilities of state patronage. Reforms have also attempted to contain corruption and improve state governance. In Uganda, however, the relationship between donors and the government has reproduced patronage government. The donors have hailed Uganda as a major case of economic success in Africa. They have provided it with large amounts of financial assistance to support the implementation of reforms. High levels of foreign aid have provided the government with public resources to sustain the patronage basis of the regime. Moreover, in a context where wide discretionary authority was conferred on governing elites in the implementation of reforms, public resources could be used in unaccountable and non-transparent ways to help the government maintain its political dominance. The donors have begun to realize belatedly that they have been propping up a corrupt government in Uganda.