Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE)

Local Government Councils Scorecard Assessment 2016/2017

Civic Engagement: Activating the Potentials of Local Governance in Uganda

Decentralization and citizen democracy continue to be a work in progress in Uganda and other African countries. The Local Government Councils' Scorecard Initiative (LGCSCI) Report 2016/17 titled Civic Engagement: Activating the Potentials of Local Governance in Uganda explores a wide range of actions for holding governments accountable for executing their mandate and providing effective services to citizens. The book highlights an innovative methodology grounded in evidence-based performance scorecards and social accountability practices for direct citizen engagement. While other studies focus on the effects of participatory budgeting and monitoring of public expenditure, evidence-based evaluation of government performance by civil society has received less attention at the level of practice. This book fills that gap.

Civic Engagement: Activating the Potentials of Local Governance in Uganda highlights the civic engagement action plan process, a mechanism for activating the demand side of local governance. The book analyzes the most effective mechanisms for building issue-based civic consciousness of citizens as well as cementing the social contract between the elected leaders and their electorate. The LGCSCI methodology will inspire practical ways for innovators in the fields of social accountability, civic engagement and development to build on successes and address challenges in the decentralization process. The lessons learned provide an invaluable guide for government officials and politicians, academics, civil society and development practitioners to grasp how to implement and strengthen local governance, democratic mechanisms for citizen engagement, and positive social change. This study should be on bookshelves everywhere, representing an important contribution to the case study literature on decentralization and accountability in Africa and beyond.

Professor Russell D. Rhoads
Grand Valley State University (USA)

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS SCORECARD INITIATIVE REPORT
2016/17

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT:
ACTIVATING THE POTENTIALS OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN UGANDA

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is with pleasure and humility that ACODE presents to our esteemed audience the 7th Annual Local Government Councils Scorecard Report with findings from the assessment for FY 2016/17. The financial resources for the assessment that was conducted in 35 districts around the country was provided by development partners through the Democratic Governance Facility (DGF). ACODE is grateful to the DGF contributing partners (Austria, Denmark, Ireland, The Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom (UK) and the European Union (EU)) for their generosity. ACODE would also like to appreciate support from USAID and UKaid under GAPP, who provided funding for the assessments in the districts of Arua, Masindi, Nwoya and Apac. We are also indebted to the Think Tank Initiative (TTI) for providing core funding to ACODE. In a special way, we would like to thank the Hewlett Foundation, whose support to ACODE’s Centre for Budget and Economic Governance (CBEG) enabled us to deepen civic engagement and citizens demand for better service delivery through Civic Engagement Action Plans (CEAPs).

ACODE is indebted to the following government agencies for their continued support of the scorecard assessment: Ministry of Local Government, the Office of the District Chairpersons, District Speakers District Councils, Chief Administrative Officers and the District Clerks to Council in all the 35 districts. We are also grateful to the district councilors who are the primary focus of the scorecard assessment. In addition, we are grateful to the very many community members who put aside their time to attend the community meetings that were organized in all the sub counties of the scorecard districts.

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We also wish to acknowledge ACODE’s network of district researchers who are responsible for conducting fieldwork in the 35 districts that produced the data for analysis in this report. Lastly, we would like to acknowledge the effort of Dr. Cornelius Gulere who edited this report.
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<td>ACODE</td>
<td>Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment</td>
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<td>BSDME</td>
<td>Budget and Service Delivery Monitoring Exercise</td>
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<td>CEAPs</td>
<td>Civic Engagement Action Plans</td>
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<td>CEMs</td>
<td>Civic Engagement Meetings</td>
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<td>CAO</td>
<td>Chief Administrative Officer</td>
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<td>CBOs</td>
<td>Community Based Organizations</td>
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<td>CBTIC</td>
<td>Citizens’ Budget Tracking and Information Centre</td>
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<td>CG</td>
<td>Central Government</td>
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<td>CICO</td>
<td>Chongqing International Construction Corporation</td>
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<td>CSOs</td>
<td>Civil Society Organizations</td>
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<td>DEC</td>
<td>District Executive Committee</td>
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<td>DGF</td>
<td>Democratic Governance Facility</td>
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<td>DP</td>
<td>Democratic Party</td>
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<td>DPAC</td>
<td>District Public Accounts Committee</td>
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<td>District Service Commission</td>
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<td>ESSAPR</td>
<td>Education and Sports Sector Annual Performance Report</td>
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<td>FAL</td>
<td>Functional Adult Literacy</td>
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<td>Forum for Democratic Change</td>
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<td>Focus Group Discussions</td>
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<td>FY</td>
<td>Financial Year</td>
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<td>GAPP</td>
<td>Governance Accountability Participation and Performance Program</td>
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<td>GDP</td>
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<td>Kick Corruption out of Uganda</td>
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<td>LC</td>
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<td>LGFC</td>
<td>Local Government Finance Commission</td>
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<td>National Resistance Army/Movement</td>
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<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<td>Water and Environment Sector Annual Performance Report</td>
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Civic Engagement: Activating the Potentials of Local Governance in Uganda is the theme of this seventh Local Government Councils Scorecard Report for FY 2016/17. After eight years of conducting assessments about the performance of local governments and building the capacity of elected political leaders and engaging citizens, noticeable improvements have been registered at the community, local government, and central government levels. At the community level, citizens’ engagement with their local government leaders is intensifying, as evidenced by the surge of civic engagement action plans leading to the submission of petitions, letters and SMS messages to councils. At the local government level, responsiveness is increasing, as evidenced in the rising performance scores in the areas of monitoring and meetings with constituents, and by local government officials’ engagement in the civic engagement action planning processes. At the central government level, the memorandum of understanding between local governments and the Parliament of Uganda signed earlier this year is an important underpinning of increased policy response.

The central premise of LGCSCI is that by monitoring the performance of local governments and providing information about their performance to the electorate on a regular basis, citizens will demand accountability from their elected leaders. This increased demand, which Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and local governments channel upwards to the national level, will ultimately result in a more engaged citizenry, a more responsive government, better performing local government officials, and more effective public service delivery. Activating this accountability chain requires building the capacity of the key stakeholders to demand and supply better governance and service delivery and building durable linkages through which the demand and supply operate on a continuous process. LGCSCI activities are strategically designed to enhance the ability of communities, CSOs, and local elected leaders to demand better service delivery, and to create the opportunities for productive engagement between these key actors through which these demands can be effectively made and addressed.

This initiative stems from the desire to contribute to the deepening democratic decentralization in Uganda and address the problem of poor service delivery. ACODE and ULGA were convinced that it was important to compliment the supply side interventions like strengthening the capacity of local governments to deliver efficient public services to citizens with demand side interventions that focussed on citizens’ civic competence to demand their civic rights and exercise their civic responsibility to perform their duties and obligations as citizens. The dissemination of the scorecard results at the lowest possible level, the civic education that occurs through the civic engagement action planning sessions, and the development and implementation of the civic engagement action plans; were all found to be a key mechanism for activating the demand side of democratic governance.
LGCSCI continues to be grounded in an action research methodology that incorporates systematic quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques that follow conventional scientific research norms and good practices. District councillors, chairpersons, speakers of council, and district councils are assessed using their individual scorecards. The process is rigorous and evidence-based thereby enabling researchers to triangulate data from a variety of sources to arrive at the ultimate performance scores. Each scorecard is divided into parameters corresponding to the roles and responsibilities of local government councils as articulated in the Local Government Act, and each parameter has a series of indicators. Every indicator was assigned an absolute score that is awarded using a threshold approach to create a cumulative total of 100 points.

As a strategic social accountability initiative designed to build both the voice and teeth necessary for responsive governance, LGCSCI continues to focus on building the capacity of citizens to demand for effective service delivery and the capacity of local governments to meet that demand by providing services effectively and efficiently. As the information presented in this report conveys, local government’s capacity to respond to citizen voice was indeed strengthened. It should be noted that most of these leaders are being assessed for the first time, having been elected in February 2016. By the end of the five-year term of office in 2021 these leaders will likely perform much better as a result of both experience and the capacity building interventions associated with the scorecard initiative.

On the demand side, in FY 2016/17, ACODE took its work with citizens to a different elevation altogether. Civic engagement was not only popularised but entrenched. Many more citizens caught up with the innovation of developing Civic Engagement Action Plans (CEAPs). Citizens’ awareness on how to develop CEAPs and the role these CEAPS play in enforcing the social contract between elected local leaders and the electorate on the delivery of public services reached a higher level as this innovation was implemented in all sub-counties in all 35 districts. In the districts where LGCSCI is implemented, citizens are becoming better able to use their voices to demand for improved service delivery and local governments are better positioned to respond.

There has also been remarkable improvement not only in the overall performance of the elected political leaders since the scorecard was first introduced in 2009, but also in the legislative and monitoring performance areas. Being the first assessment of the new term for many of the elected political leaders assessed, there are many visible indicative launch-pads for better performance in the coming years. Important to note is that, consistent with the history of LGCSCI, we still see good performing districts like Gulu, Kabalore, Mpigi, Wakiso and even hitherto, poor performers like Agago and Mable scoring above 60 points. This is an indication that some of the good performers have mastered the tactic of doing well, while some which used to perform badly, partly due to conflicts, have through LGCSCI interventions dealt with them.

The work of local governments, however, continues to be hindered by a variety of structural issues, the most significant of which is inadequate human and financial...
capital to do what they are mandated to do. There are a number of shortcomings associated with adherence to the Standard Rules of Procedure for Local Councils. For instance, while the majority of district councils operationalized the standard rules of procedure in their council and committee proceedings, a few ran council business disregarding some of these rules during the year under review. The rules of procedure distinctly define council and its membership limiting it to the political representatives who have taken an oath. However, a review of the minutes of the 35 councils showed other stakeholders actively engage in these debates in contravention of the provisions of the rules. These included the Resident District Commissioners (RDCs) as well as Members of Parliament. Several districts councils had administrative challenges, as evidenced by the lack of a well laid out schedule for council meetings for a financial year, the inability of committees and councillors to monitor priority development areas due to budgetary limitations, and administrative deficiencies, especially in the office of Clerks to Council.

The 2016/2017 LGCSCI report makes the following recommendations:

- It is very critical for Government to provide adequate and unconditional financing to Local Governments in order for them to deliver on their mandates.
- It is recommended that Government puts a moratorium on creation of districts.
- There is need to deepen decentralization by reviewing the decentralized functions with a view to return them to local governments.
- It is necessary to explore avenues for increasing revenue generation and halt creation of town councils and municipal councils.
- There is need to adequately facilitate councillors if they are to effectively and efficiently monitor service delivery and provide oversight over the technical staff.
- Ministry of Local Government should establish a mechanism to resolve rampant conflicts within the council and between districts should be sorted out as soon as possible.
- There is need for affirmative action for women councillors and other special interest groups in terms of facilitation.
- Government should increase funding for environmental management to mitigate against climate change in Local Governments.
- There is need to enhance capacity of local government to generate local revenue to enable invest in their priority areas.

The findings from this year’s scorecard initiative, the discussions in the scholarly literature, and the eagerness of other countries to adopt the LGCSCI model all confirm the relevance of decentralization as a framework for deepening democracy in Uganda, and points to the critical role that systems of social accountability have in strengthening it. Uganda, like others who have implemented comprehensive decentralisation, has made progress with decentralisation and also experienced stagnation and
even reversals. The work towards perfecting democratic decentralisation, with all its challenges, is ongoing and critical, since it is one of the best options for delivering local democracy. This year’s assessment points to the power of civic engagement to activate and ultimately realize the promise of decentralisation. These recommendations, if enacted, would go a long way towards ensuring that the full potentials of local governance are indeed activated and that the citizens of Uganda reap the full benefits of decentralisation.
Enhancing service delivery requires activating citizen demand
1. INTRODUCTION

In this seventh Local Government Councils’ Scorecard Assessment Report, we present evidence-based performance results of the elected political leaders in 35 districts around the country during the FY 2016/2017. The assessment focuses on the role political leaders play in the decentralisation process. The score card indicators are based on the roles and responsibilities of local government leaders as stipulated in the local government act. The level of detail, verification and quality control by the professional team at ACODE over the years has ensured that these otherwise politically sensitive assessments stand the test of time and attract respect from the leadership. As is now well known, the assessment is not a name and shame venture, but rather, a capacity building tool for leaders to deliver on their mandate.

1.1 Background

While the adoption of the decentralization policy in Uganda in 1992 was billed as a panacea for solving most of the socio-economic, political and democratic challenges, its implementation has not been matched with the promise that had been anticipated. The enactment of the Local Government Act in 1997 was no doubt a major landmark in the country’s quest for democratisation. However, decentralisation has witnessed major reversals in terms of recentralization of some key functions, underfunding of local governments, and districts’ dependence on the centre for their financing. All of these limit their ability to undertake localized strategic planning and priority setting as envisaged by the policy.

The decision to re-clarify, re-brand and re-introduce decentralization in Uganda was made by the National Resistance Council (NRC), which was the parliament at the time, as a deliberate move by the leadership at the time to break the trappings of past conflicts. The first three decades of Uganda’s post-independence period were characterised by bloodshed, lawlessness, political instability and economic despair. This kind of situation characterized the majority of the African States and some observers described the continent as ‘Hopeless Africa’. Akokpari attribute the weakness and failure of the state to prolonged conflicts contesting the nature of the states in Africa. Failure to fulfil the social contract with citizens, state inability to provide basic services, and failure to create reasonable economic conditions for development exacerbated the conflicts.

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1 Oloka-Onyango, J (2007.) Decentralization without human rights?: Local governance and access to justice in post-movement Uganda. Human Rights and Peace Centre, Faculty of Law, Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda. HURIPEC working paper ; no. 12
He further argues that,

*Often described as ‘failed’, many African states are weak and show a growing incapacity to provide minimal services, including basic security for their population, a fact which further deepens the state’s legitimacy crisis*.\(^5\)

This situation has consistently led to violent contestations of power, state weakness and the states’ inability to deliver efficient services to all citizens. Nhema and Zeleza also observed that,

*Violent conflicts of one type or another have afflicted Africa and exacted a heavy toll on the continent’s societies, polities and economies, robbing them of their developmental potential and democratic possibilities. The causes of the conflicts are as complex as the challenges of resolving them are difficult. But their costs cannot be in doubt, nor the need, indeed the urgency to resolve them if the continent is to navigate the 21st century more successfully than it did the 20th, a century that was marked by the depredations of colonialism and its debilitating legacies….*\(^6\)

Uganda’s adoption of the decentralization policy was premised on the realization that the centralized approach to management of public affairs and development planning was not working. Right from independence in 1962, the central government system remained questionable in effecting poverty reduction, improving peoples’ welfare, service delivery and good governance.\(^7\) According to Adolf Mwesige, the former Minister of Local Government, Uganda did not only seek to empower the people, but also needed to speed up development and improvement of the quality of life of its citizens. Decentralization was therefore envisaged as a vital means of enhancing transparency and accountability in the Local Governments. It would also promote good governance and participatory democracy across the country. It sought to empower citizens, democratize state power and facilitate modernization of communities.\(^8\) It meant the transfer of power and resources from the centre, through the districts, to village local councils. It offered an opportunity to the majority of citizens to participate in government and decision making on matters that directly affected them and their localities.

The decentralisation policy is as relevant today as it was three decades ago. Government needs to unreservedly invest in the successes by matching it with commitment and adequate funding to allow local governments to implement their mandates without re-centralisation. In addition, both central and local government need to work with citizens and non-state actors to build durable social accountability systems that ensure that the gains of decentralisation are consolidated and its promises are achieved.

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\(^5\) Ibid, 2008:90


1.2 The Local Government Councils Scorecard Initiative (LGCSCI)

In pursuit of the desire to contribute to the deepening of democracy in Uganda and the East Africa sub-region, ACODE has been working in partnership with Uganda Local Government Association (ULGA) since 2009 when the Local Government Councils Scorecard Initiative (LGCSCI) was initiated. The main goal of the LGCSCI has been to strengthen local governments in Uganda to execute their mandates, including the provision of excellent service delivery and political accountability to the citizens. From 2009 to date, ACODE and ULGA have implemented the LGCSCI in an incremental manner. The initial assessment started with 10 districts (2009), then 20 (2010), 26 (2011-2014), 30 (2015) and currently 35 (2017). The past seven years of periodic assessment of the performance of district councils, district chairpersons, speakers and individual councillors, has resulted into positive outcomes in local governance, especially, in terms of service delivery and civic competence.

The Local Government Councils' Scorecard Initiative was conceived as a long-term local governance strengthening initiative initially aimed at building the demand side of democracy. As the theory of change for LGCSCI reveals in the next chapter; having worked with national level ministries, departments, agencies and parliament for some time, it was concluded that, unless the citizens were empowered to demand effective service delivery and political accountability, the supply side, which is government infrastructure, would not be responsive. It was then decided to shift the focus to the demand side, by focusing on local governance and civic engagement at community levels. The initiative sought to build the demand side of democracy by strengthening citizens’ demand for the delivery of effective public services and political accountability from their elected leaders at the district level. It is also envisaged that, by conducting regular assessment of the performance of elected district leaders and communicating their findings to their electorate, it would motivate the leaders to work harder to improve the service delivery. Through regular monitoring of services, their contact with the electorate would increase. This would improve representation of constituency issues on the floor of the councils; reduce the leakages of financial resources, and corruption tendencies, ultimately empowering the local governments and strengthening “vertical accountability” in the country.

This assessment report is organized into eight chapters. Following this introduction, Chapter Two provides a theoretical discussion of decentralisation and social accountability, and presents LGCSCI's theory of change. Chapter Three describes the LGCSCI methodology that includes the assessment, capacity building and various tools of citizen engagement. In Chapter Four, the findings of FY 2016/17 assessment are presented. It includes an analysis of the performance results of the district councils, chairpersons, speakers of council and individual councillors from the 35 districts. Chapters Five and Six focus on innovative mechanisms of citizen engagement. Chapter Five describes the civic engagement action planning process as a mechanism for amplifying citizens’ voice and engaging local government officials about service delivery issues. Civic technology and its role in strengthening civic engagement is the focus of Chapter Six. The economic environment in which
local governments operate can enable or constrain their ability to respond to citizens’ service delivery demands. These dynamics around local government financing are the focus of Chapter Seven. The conclusions and recommendations presented in Chapter Eight, if taken up, will activate the potentials of local governance in Uganda.
Civic engagement begins with the youth.
2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Genuine decentralization can be deployed only if local governments at least have the leeway, at the margin, to make decisions about the local public services they choose to provide on the basis of their own preferences. It is on this point that the distinction between devolved responsibilities and delegated powers takes full meaning.9

Central to the analysis of decentralization and its practical performance in Uganda and elsewhere is an understanding of how it is designed at the institutional level. Such an understanding makes it possible to determine the gap between the ideal organizational imperatives and the real organizational frameworks set out in the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, and other related legal instruments. This chapter conceptualizes decentralization with the view to providing a deep understanding of its origin and rational as a vehicle for democratization and the central role that robust social accountability mechanisms play in ensuring that the ideals of decentralization are realized. It concludes with a discussion of the theory of change for the Local Government Councils Scorecard Initiative (LGCSCI), a cutting edge strategic social accountability initiative, which forms the basis of this report.

2.1 Defining Decentralization

Most scholars concur that defining decentralization is problematic, given the complexity of the concept. However, a distinction can be made between horizontal and vertical decentralization. Horizontal decentralization distributes power among political institutions within the same level of government while vertical decentralization distributes power to political institutions between two or more levels of government10. For purposes of providing a deeper understanding of decentralization, it is important to dissect key elements that underpin the concept. Decentralization can be unpacked into three key modalities: deconcentration, delegation and devolution11.

Deconcentration or administrative decentralization is where the central government merely shifts representatives of central government ministries to branch offices at the local level. The central government retains its responsibilities and competencies for some specific functions but mandates its regional or local departments, much like branch offices, to carry them out. Consequently, the deconcentrated offices operate within a vertical hierarchy often called line ministries. In deconcentration, there are limited changes in the distribution of power. Local administrators can make few decisions without consulting the central government ministries.

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Delegation is the assignment of delegated powers and resources to local governments who become direct agents with a mandate to act in place of the central government. This arrangement establishes a principal agency relationship in which the central government has the role of the principal and the local government is the executing agency in compliance with the terms of the contract. Under the delegation modality, norms and standards are set for delegated functions within reasonable limits, particularly with respect to the resources allocated. Where minimum thresholds for service delivery are high but resources are not enough, the local governments do not have the means to do more or better.

Devolution shifts full decision-making and financial authority to local levels. Devolution is often referred to as democratic or political decentralization. Under devolution, local governments become partially or wholly responsible for formulating, implementing and financing policies.

Decentralization has alternatively been defined as “the transfer of authority, responsibility and accountability from central to local governments”12. Democratic decentralization looks beyond local government administration and service delivery to institutions and structures that enable people to make decisions that affect their daily lives. Decentralisation also places much emphasis on the presence of mechanisms for fair political competition, transparency and accountability. Governments that are open to the public, responsible to the public, and respectful upholders of the rule of law are decentralised.

2.2 Evolution of Decentralization in Uganda

The evolution of decentralization process and practice dates back to colonial times. The 1919 Native Authority Ordinance gave the District Commissioners responsibility for a hierarchy of appointed chiefs at Village, Parish, Sub County and County levels13. In 1930, Local Councils were created at each of the administrative levels. The 1949 Local Government Ordinance established the District as a local government area and the basis for a separate district administration. Subsequently, the 1955 District Administration Ordinance was also introduced as an attempt at creating greater democracy and effectiveness in local governments.

The Local Administrations (Amendment) Ordinance of 1959 gave the Colonial Governor power to appoint District Chairmen and members of the appointments boards14. Local Councils were introduced and given responsibility for district administration which included collecting revenue. The central government retained power to control most district council decisions. For proper administration of their areas of jurisdiction, chiefs were salaried local government officials and they remained accountable to the central government through their respective district administrators.

13 Entebbe, Government Printer 1919
commissioners. It should be noted that the colonial administration system was the basis for the re-introduction of full-scale democratic decentralization in Uganda in 1992. In 1967 the Republic Constitution replaced the 1962 independence Constitution that had devolved significant powers to local governments and had granted adequate revenues to enable the efficient delivery of services. Accordingly, the 1967 Constitution and the Local Administrations Act centralized powers and severely constrained local authorities. The period between 1967 and 1970, local governments degenerated considerably as the local administration political offices became appointive. The consequence of this change was that of complete inefficiency, since there was lack of direct accountability to the electorate for efficient and effective provision of services. When Idi Amin captured political power in a military coup in 1971, he dissolved the District and Municipal Councils. When President Milton Obote came to power for the second time in 1980, his government did not make any attempt to revive democratic local governance.

Full democratic decentralization was established by the National Resistance Movement Government (NRM) when it came to power in 1986. The NRM initiated a process of decentralization of power to local governments by promoting popular participation through a system of elected Local Councils. Government set up a Commission of Inquiry into the local government system whose findings and recommendations informed the eventual design and form of decentralization that Uganda would adopt. The National Resistance Council (NRC) that acted as National Assembly or Parliament for the interim period (1987-95) enacted the Resistance Councils and Committee Statute in 1987 which among other powers provided for the following:

- Creation of Resistance Councils (RCs) and Committees right from the village to the district and granted these councils wide ranging powers;
- Creation of District Development Committees;
- Empowerment local people, by giving RCs a watchdog function over civil servants working in their areas;
- Fostering of political accountability by holding the RCs fully accountable to the electorates and by vesting them with powers to recall their representatives;
- Fostering of administrative accountability by requiring district officials to be answerable to councils.

The Ministry of Local Government still serves as the key intermediary between local governments and the central government.
Objectives of Decentralization in Uganda

The following objectives form the imperative and drive for the decentralization policy in Uganda

1. Transfer of real power to districts and thus reduce the workload of remote and under-resourced central officials;
2. Bring political and administrative control over services to a point where they are actually delivered, thereby improving accountability and effectiveness;
3. Promoting people's feeling of ownership of programmes and projects executed in their districts;
4. Free local managers from central constraints and, as a long-term goal, allow them to develop organizational structures tailored to local circumstances;
5. Improve financial accountability and responsibility by establishing a clear link between the payment of taxes and the provision of services they finance;
6. Improve the capacities of the councils to plan, finance and manage the delivery of services of their finance and manage the delivery of services of their constituencies;
7. Enhance local economic development in order to increase local incomes.

While the implementation of decentralization in Uganda is still constrained, the policy was very comprehensive and aimed at effective delivery of services, and democratic and political accountability of all local leaders to their electorate. This is attested by the powers that were devolved to local government. In the section below, these powers are discussed in detail.

a) Political Powers: The decentralization policy provides for democratically electing leaders at all levels in the country by universal adult suffrage. The 1995 Constitution (as amended) provides for council elections to be held every five years and on time. The councils are supposed to be inclusive and promote popular participation of all citizens without discrimination. The marginalized and vulnerable groups including the youths, women, persons with disabilities and the elderly, constitute a big proportion of the population represented. They are allowed by right, to participate in politics at all levels. The Local Council is the highest decision making political organ within its jurisdiction with legislative and executive powers.

b) Financial Powers: Both the Constitution and the Local Government Act allow local governments to collect revenue from a number of specified sources, formulate plans and budgets, allocate expenditure, and make investments in a wide range of services.
c) Administrative Powers: It should be noted that the 1967 Constitution re-centralized all the decision-making powers. The Constitution provided that the appointment of most senior managers in local governments was done centrally by the Public Service Commission. Also, confirmation, promotion and discipline of local governments staff were handled at the centre. This changed with the enactment of Legal Notice No 1 of 1994 which introduced a separate personnel system and the Constitution further decentralized the human resource management function to local governments. The Local Government Act further empowered local governments to establish their own staffing structures and the powers to appoint, discipline and promote staff under them which is exclusively vested in the District Service Commissions appointed by local governments.

d) Planning Function: Local governments are empowered by the Local Government Act to plan for the development of their localities. For example, the local governments have over the time moved from one year frameworks to medium term rolling plans; to date, they have five year development plans.

e) Legislative Function: The Local Government Act empowers Local Government Councils to make ordinances at the district level and bye-laws at the lower Local Council level.

f) Judicial Powers: The Executive Committees at the village and parish/ward level double as Local Council Courts. At Sub County/Town/Division Councils there exists a Local Council Court.

By and large, the regular assessments of performance of local governments covered under LGCSCI show that significant progress has been registered in the implementation of decentralization. Unfortunately, the creation of numerous Local Government Units in the form of new districts has rendered some to become unviable and riddled with conflicts due to tribalism and competition for physical, financial, and human resource. Most critically, decentralization has not been cost effective in terms of public administration expenditure because of the creation of additional districts that in turn creates more public service job slots that are more consumptive than productive, hence exerting pressure on the public coffers. In addition, decentralization has been undermined by recentralization of key functions, environmental crisis characterized by prolonged drought and food insecurity. This is mainly the result of continued inadequate financing, conditional funding from the center, and low revenue generation. There is a need to deepen decentralization by addressing the bottlenecks that inhibit local governments from executing their constitutional and legal mandate.

2.3 Local Government Councils’ Scorecard Initiative as a Social Accountability Intervention

Accountability is fundamental to democratic decentralization. Meaningful engagement of the electorate in democratic governance requires transparency in the relationship between government officials and citizens. It also requires a sense of obligation
among government officials to be responsive to citizens as well as an empowered citizenry capable of punishing their government representatives whenever they fail to do so\textsuperscript{16}.

The World Bank and others have zeroed in on the potential of citizen engagement and social accountability initiatives to catalyze more responsive and effective governance. For example, the 2016 World Bank report on \textit{Making Politics Work for Development}, focused on harnessing the power of citizen engagement to hold government accountable for the provision of public goods rather than private benefits. The authors of that report are unyielding on the fact that the solutions to public sector failures lie in direct engagement by citizens with political processes\textsuperscript{17}.

In other words, social accountability is essential to decentralisation. Social accountability refers to building accountability through citizen engagement in which “ordinary citizens and/or civil society organizations participate directly or indirectly in exacting accountability” from public sector officials\textsuperscript{18}, often through the monitoring of public sector performance. Social accountability strategies, “try to improve institutional performance by bolstering both citizen engagement and the public responsiveness of states and corporations.”\textsuperscript{19} Brinkerhoff and Wetterberg identify the three primary instrumental aims of social accountability as (i) increasing the effectiveness of service delivery, (ii) improving the quality of governance and democracy, and (iii) increasing citizen empowerment\textsuperscript{20}.

Scholars and practitioners continue to delve into the elements of social accountability initiatives and citizen engagement processes in order to identify the factors that seem to be the keys to maximum impact. Grandvoinnet, Raha, Kumagai & Joshi, for example, undertook an analysis of the constitutive elements of social accountability, which they claim has been a fuzzy concept, in an attempt to be able to use and support social accountability initiatives more strategically\textsuperscript{21}. Similarly, Grandvoinnet, Aslam & Raha opened the “black box” of social accountability and explored what was inside\textsuperscript{22}. The compelling finding in all of this work is that effective social accountability processes involve citizens, civic society organizations and government officials.

The involvement of citizens is often referred to as “voice.” Citizen voice is a key component of strategic social accountability initiatives. Voice refers to the various ways in which citizens – either as individuals or in organized formations – express their opinions and concerns, putting pressure on service providers, policy makers and


elected leaders to demand for better services or to advocate for them\textsuperscript{23}. Enhancing voice is part of activating the “demand” side of accountable governance.

Reviews of social accountability initiatives have shown, however, that results from initiatives that rely solely on citizen voice are generally weak\textsuperscript{24}. Many citizen report card initiatives suffer from this problem. Researchers have found that citizen voices can be strengthened with the involvement of so-called interlocutors or intermediaries who facilitate two-way communication between governing bodies and citizens, bridging cultural and power gaps.\textsuperscript{25}

Even with amplification of citizen voice by interlocutors, effective social accountability initiatives also need “teeth” – that is the governmental capacity to respond to voice\textsuperscript{26}. In the language of demand and supply, “teeth” is about the supply side of accountability, and includes the capacity of government to respond positively to citizen voice. Responsiveness is about the way that government officials. It involves having the systems and mechanisms in place for providing information to citizens, for receiving citizen input, and for responding to issues and concerns raised by citizens\textsuperscript{27}. It also includes governmental capacity to change practices and structures that inhibit transparency through, for example, investigating grievances and changing incentive structures to discourage wasteful, abusive or corrupt practices\textsuperscript{28}.

These three sets of players – citizens, civil society, and government officials – are all critically important for effective and strategic social accountability processes. Jonathan Fox discusses the power of “sandwich strategies” that engage all three types of actors in the creation of a state-society synergy leading to a “pro-accountability power shift.” He argues that:

\begin{displayquote}
While initial opportunities for change are necessarily context-driven and can be created either from society or from the state, the main determinant of a subsequent pro-accountability power shift is whether or not pro-change actors in one domain can empower the others – thereby triggering a virtuous circle…of mutual empowerment\textsuperscript{29}.
\end{displayquote}

This type of mutual empowerment is most likely to occur through strategic social accountability initiatives that are circular, iterative, and involve varying types of social accountability tools, actions and actors over time\textsuperscript{30}. The Local Government Councils

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item Jonathan Fox, Social Accountability, p.27
\item Jonathan Fox, Social Accountability, p.28.
\item Jonathan Fox, Social Accountability, p.28.
\item Jonathan Fox, Social Accountability, p.32.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
Scorecard Initiative is precisely this kind of initiative. Over the eight years of its existence, LGCSCI has engaged with elected and technical government officials at the national and local government levels, international and local civil society organizations, and community members in a host of ways using a variety of social accountability tools. Incorporating an iterative approach, each round of assessment has incorporated new ways of enhancing the supply and demand sides of democracy in order to create the virtuous circle of mutual empowerment that Fox describes. While there is still much work to be done, there are definite signs of a state-society synergy forming in the districts where LGCSCI works, and citizens are seeing improvements in service delivery associated with this synergy.

2.4 Theory of Change

Based on this experience of working with local governments in Uganda, ACODE is convinced that in order to deepen democratic decentralization in Uganda and address the problem of poor service delivery, it is important to compliment the current supply side interventions with the demand side interventions. The supply side interventions include strengthening the capacity of government institutions to deliver efficient public services to citizens, while the demand side interventions focus on citizens’ civic competence to exercise their civic rights and perform their duties and obligations as citizens of a democracy. Exercising their civic rights involves demanding for excellent service delivery and holding their elected leaders accountable for delivering those services effectively and efficiently.

Consequently, LGCSCI is premised on a demand-side theory of change. The initiative’s theory of change posits that, by monitoring the performance of local government councils on a regular basis and providing information about their performance to the public and their electorate, citizens will demand for increased accountability from their political leaders, hence triggering a vertical chain of demand for accountability from the local to the national levels and then back down through the supply side. The dissemination of scorecard results at the sub county level, the civic education that occurs through the civic engagement action planning sessions, and the development and implementation of the civic engagement action plans themselves are the key mechanisms for activating the demand side of democratic governance. Given civil society’s critical role in amplifying citizen voice, members of civil society organizations are key partners in LGCSCI’s demand-side activities.

In addition to a robust demand side, accountable governance requires government leaders who have the capacity and political will to engage with their constituents and respond positively to their demands. Thus, while the theory of change is demand-side driven, the supply side is not neglected. Indeed, the scorecard assessment process itself and the capacity building activities surrounding it are designed precisely to enhance the responsiveness of local government leaders.

Publishing and disseminating this report, strategic meetings held between representatives of local and central government, and the Local Government
Parliamentary Forum are all mechanisms for channeling the demands of citizens and local governments upwards. This completes the demand and supply chain by pressuring and enabling the central government to do its part to strengthen local governments’ ability to respond to citizen demands.

Increasing accountability in governance is integral to Uganda’s Second National Development Plan (NDPII) 2015/16-2019/20. There are several places where the activities of LGCSCI align with the Governance section of the NDPII (Chapter 14). Table 2.1 delineates the specific objectives and associated interventions within the governance areas of audit, legislation, public administration, and public sector management that connect with increasing social accountability and intersect with LGCSCI. These interventions align closely with LGCSCI’s focus on enhancing the supply and demand sides of governance through assessing the performance of locally elected officials and building the capacity of the citizens to hold their elected leaders to account for the work they were elected to do.

Table 2:1: Components of the NDP II that Align with LGCSCI Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Governance Area</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th>Reference</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit</td>
<td>#2: Increase public demand for accountability</td>
<td>i. Promote active communication between implementers of programmes and the public.</td>
<td>p.218</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Legislation              | #3: Improve citizen participation and contribution in promoting the rule of law, transparency, and accountability in the provision of services to achieve equitable and sustainable development | i. Introduce measures to strengthen citizens and the public participation in parliamentary business.  
   ii. Institute a system of linkages between local government, constituencies and the national Parliament. | p.220     |
| Public Administration    | #5: Improve democracy and governance for increased stability and development | i. Implement programmes to strengthen civic participation and engagement in national democratic processes.  
   ii. Strengthen institutional structures and instruments for transparent and credible democratic processes. | p.222     |
As newly elected District Councillors, Chairpersons, Speakers and District Councils find their footing in districts across the county and work with their more seasoned fellow members of Council to bring the goals and objectives of the NDPII to fruition, The Local Government Councils Scorecard Initiative remains as relevant and as important to their success as it was when it was launched eight years ago. Indeed, one could argue that as LGCSCI continues to empower citizens with the knowledge and tools of civic engagement, the promise of decentralization will not only be more likely to be realized, and the possibility of reversal will become more remote.
Enhancing the demand and supply sides of local governance
3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Since 2009 and save for 2016, LGCSCI has continued to be implemented from a perspective of the demand-side model of monitoring and accountability, hinged around three major actors. The first group are the citizens who actively get involved in monitoring and demanding better performance from mandated political and administrative institutions and leaders. By monitoring and demanding for better performance of their elected leaders, it is postulated that citizens gain the knowledge and skills required for civic engagement. The second group is the Local Government institution which individually and collectively serves the role of being a pressure point that is jolted into demanding accountability from the Central Government. The third category is Civil Society which, along with the media, continues to operate in the space between citizens on the one hand and political and administrative leaders on the other hand.

Other than serving a capacity building role for all three categories of actors, LGCSCI is also an action research undertaking. Unlike many social accountability initiatives which rely primarily on citizen opinions to produce report cards, LGCSCI is evidence-based. Using systematic quantitative and qualitative data-collection techniques and following conventional scientific norms of data collection, analysis and adoption of good practices, LGCSCI is permeated by actions of elected political leaders and analyses the implications of those actions for service delivery outcomes.

3.2 Selection Criteria of Assessed Districts

Over years of implementation, the number of districts covered by LGCSCI has increased from the initial 10\(^{31}\) in the FY 2008/2009 to the current 35 (FY 2016/2017) in this report. Since inception, ACODE’s desire has always been to scale-up the LGCSCI project. For instance, ACODE expanded the districts covered by LGCSCI from 10 in FY 2008/2009 to 20 in FY 2009/2010 and 20 to 26 in FY 2011/2012. The districts were increased from 26 to 30 districts in FY 2013/2014; through an addition of 4 districts courtesy of USAID and UKAID support under the Governance Accountability Participation and Performance (GAPP) programme. In November 2016, ACODE working with KICK-Uganda was able to extend LGCSCI to Kigezi-Sub-region (Kabale and Kisoro) under the DGF-supported partnership. In the same vein, the DGF further supported ACODE to extend the LGCSCI to Kalira, Sheema and Lwengo districts in the respective regions of Eastern, Western and Central Uganda. Figure 3.1 shows districts that participated in the FY2016/17 LGCSCI assessment.

\(^{31}\) The 10 districts were Amuria, Amuru, Hoima, Kampala, Kamuli, Luwero, Mbale, Moroto, Nebbi and Ntungamo.
Since inception, the selection of districts for LGCSCI has been based on five criteria. The first criterion is the need to include districts from all the regions of Uganda. The objective of this criterion is to encourage cross-regional learning and a better understanding of whether there are any variations in performance across the geopolitical location of the district.

The second criterion is the length of time individual districts have been in existence. From 1986 onwards, the Government of Uganda has been creating new districts out of already existing ones. For purposes of LGCSCI, categorization of districts has progressively followed the form of “the old” if they were in existence prior to 1986 and “the new” if they were created after 1986. The main reason for creating

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52 For the purposes of the assessment, the following districts fall under this category: Moroto, Mbale, Kamuli, Nebbi, Hoima, Luwero, Mukono, Moyo, Mpigi, Rukungiri, Jinja, Soroti, Tororo, Mbarara, Kabarole and Lira

53 This category of districts includes: Ntungamo, Amuria, Bududa, Buliisa, Amuru, Nakapiripirit, Agago and Kanungu
districts has time and again been given as the need to “bring services closer to the people”. Ultimately, one of the aims of LGCSCI has been to examine whether there are considerable variations in performance between elected local leaders from old districts and those from the newly-created districts. Other districts have been selected for inclusion in the scorecard because of being “model districts” according to the Annual Assessment. ACODE thought it imperative to explore whether such a rating could be linked to performance of the elected leadership or a combination of other factors.

The fourth criterion is the perceived marginalization of districts on account of their geopolitical location. This criterion provides a basis for examining the performance of elected leaders in “marginalised” vis a vis “non-marginalised” districts, and whether the quality of service delivery in non-marginalised districts is substantially different than in districts that are not considered marginalised. For purposes of this criterion, a district is considered marginalised if it is classified as “hard-to-reach” by the Ministry of Public Service or has suffered prolonged conflicts and instability\(^\text{34}\).

Finally, some of the districts were selected because of their perceived position of influence in a particular region. Given that the scorecard could not be conducted in all districts due to the costs involved, the inclusion of influential districts was intended to ensure that there are spill-over effects of the assessment to other districts within respective regions. A district is considered influential if it has a large population and has a municipality within its jurisdiction\(^\text{35}\). The two districts in Kigezi Sub-region (Kabale and Kisoro) were included after realisation that the region was missing out in LGCSCI assessments. It is important to emphasize that the five criteria have always been complementary rather than exclusive. Consequently, a district meeting multiple criteria has more chances of being selected for inclusion in the assessment.

Since the first assessment in FY 2008/09, LGCSCI’s focus has always been to consolidate democracy and efficiency in public service delivery in Uganda\(^\text{36}\). This goal has been pursued from two broad but interrelated perspectives. The first perspective has been provision of empirical information on the performance of local government councils to citizens as well as building their capacity to demand for accountability and effectiveness in public service delivery. The second perspective has been identification of factors that inhibit the effective performance of local government councils and building partnerships that enable the removal of those constraints.

\(^{34}\) The following districts fall under this category: Moroto, Nakapiripirit, Amuru, Lira, Soroti and Luwero.

\(^{35}\) Mbarara, Lira, Wakiso, Tororo, Moroto, Gulu, Soroti and Hoima fall under this category and are districts considered influential because they have large populations and a municipality within their jurisdiction.

Since FY 2008/09, feedback from all LGCSCI assessments has led to revisions in the capacity building, methodology and assessment indicators\(^{37}\). As such, the assessment for the current report reflects this cumulative revision processes for the Councillors, Chairpersons, Speaker; and District Council. These indicators are a result of an internal methodology review process. The indicators help to evaluate the relationship between the scorecard performance of local government councils and the quality of public service delivery in each assessed district. The scorecard parameters focus on legislative duties, contact with constituent citizens, participation in lower levels of government, and efforts at improving public service delivery. Overall, the assessment tool for FY 2016/17 reflects a methodology that has progressively improved since the first assessment in FY 2008/09.

### 3.3 Core LGCSCI Activities

The Local Government Councils Scorecard Initiative contains a range of activities that contribute to enhancing the both the supply and demand sides of governance.

#### 3.3.1 Capacity Building

LGCSCI is not only a research undertaking but a capacity building intervention as well. The initiative enhances the capacity of political leaders and builds the capacity of citizens to be effective and responsible agents of political accountability. It also builds the capacity of civil society organization (CSO) partners to act as mediators between citizens and local government councils to improve service delivery.

**a) Printing and Dissemination of Councillors’ Diaries:** ACODE and ULGA annually produce and distribute user-friendly and customized diaries. The content of each of the diaries spells out a simplification of the Local Government Act. The primary intention of the diaries is to uplift the level of record keeping among political leaders in districts. The diaries also carry relevant and basic information useful to political leaders. For instance, they contain district-specific contact information for key service delivery personnel, a checklist of the minimum service delivery standards, and a summary of the Local Government Councils Scorecard.

**b) Conflict Resolution Clinics:** Over the course of LGCSCI implementation, it became clear that one of the most significant factors affecting effective public service delivery in districts was and remains endemic conflicts in district councils. While some conflicts have been of a political nature, others have been and are still being caused by economic and social factors. When conflicts have arisen, ACODE and ULGA have found it prudent to resolve them before they get out of hand through round-table meetings and advocacy clinics.

c) **Intensive Dissemination Using Summarised District Policy Briefs:** The intensive dissemination component was introduced in LGCSCI in 2012 to provide mechanisms through which the scorecard findings would be spread and assimilated by citizens at the lower local government levels, particularly at parish and village levels. The activities under the component during the year of assessment included production and use of summarised district policy briefs. By implementing this activity, LGCSCI was able to use evidence to build the civic competence of citizens concerning their constitutional rights and obligations to demand for quality service delivery. The overriding content of the district policy briefs include; introductory remarks about each district, description of a local government and what they do, the constitutional role of a citizen and elected district political leaders, performance of elected district political leaders, factors affecting service delivery, recommendations to improve service delivery and how citizens could engage with their elected district political leaders. Accountability from the district down through local governance structures was created through the extensive dissemination of district policy briefs to mostly organised groups like women and youths groups. In a nutshell, this dissemination targeted bridging of the communication gap between the electorate and their elected political leaders and clarified the roles of different actors in local governance.

### 3.3.2 Civic Engagement Action Plans (CEAPs)

The Civic Engagement Action Plans (CEAPs) were designed to deepen citizen engagement with the scorecard results and activate citizen demand for better services. They were first introduced in the implementation and assessment of FY 2014/2015. The centrepiece of this component of the methodology is the creation of action plans by citizens for using the tools of civic engagement to engage with their councillors to address persistent service delivery issues. The civic engagement tools include petitions, SMS messages, letters and community meetings. These tools act as vehicles for citizen voice. LGCSCI researchers, who are by and large nominees of like-minded CSOs in the districts, facilitate the CEAP process, thereby deepening their roles as important intermediaries between citizens and elected political leaders. In this role, they both amplify citizen voice and monitor government response to the action plans.

By design, CEAPs are meant to achieve the following:

1. Help citizens understand the scorecard results and how to use them to demand accountability from LGCs.
2. Increase citizens’ awareness of LGC roles and responsibilities.
3. Increase citizens’ capacity to use civic engagement tools to demand for improved service delivery.
4. Build LGC capacity in the Legislative Role, Contact with Electorate and Monitoring performance areas.
Partner civil society organizations (CSOs) are engaged in monitoring the responsiveness of local councils to the formulated action plans. This has been found to open an accountability channel between civil society organizations and local government, through which demand for effective service delivery and good governance flows. Chapter Five of this report includes a more detailed discussion of this LGCSCI activity.

3.3.3 ACODE’s Local Government SMS Platform

The SMS platform system is housed in ACODE and enables citizens to send SMS messages to their councillors about any service delivery issue, such as a broken borehole or drug stock outs from a health centre, for his or her action and feedback. The SMS platform is implemented as a strategy to create space within the civic infrastructure for citizens to engage with their elected leaders at a minimal cost. Through the platform, citizens are able to share information on public service deficiencies with their elected political leaders and provide the latter with the opportunity to respond or ensure that these issues are raised during council debates. Elected political leaders are informed about the SMS platform and trained in its use during community meetings. The platform is also publicized through radio adverts. Citizens are reminded about how to send messages and the benefits that accrue from such engagement. This activity is discussed in depth, in Chapter Six.

3.3.4 Multi-District Leadership Forums

The Multi-District Leadership Forums (MDLFs) build on the successful aspects of the district leaders’ capacity building trainings as well as the peer-to-peer learning sessions. The MDLFs are organized at a regional level. In keeping with the LGCSCI action research methodology, the MDLFs combine knowledge dissemination, knowledge generation, and action. The focus is on identifying common challenges and promising practices to build the collective capacity of local government officials in a number of key areas such as conflict resolution skills and working effectively with DECs and PACs. The district delegations include both political and technical leaders and include the five principal district leaders (district chairperson, resident district commissioner, chief accounting officer, speaker and clerk to council) and five district additional councillors, including the councillors representing special interest groups (women, youth, and people with disabilities).

3.4 The 2016/17 LGCSCI Assessment Design and Methodology

The action research methodology underpinning LGCSCI combines capacity building with an assessment of elected political leaders’ ability to fulfil their mandate as defined in the Local Government Act\textsuperscript{38}. LGCSCI is not a name-and-shame undertaking but an intervention geared towards continuous training and equipping of political leaders to

\textsuperscript{38} See, Local Government Act (CAP 243), Third Schedule
be effective in fulfilling their mandates. As such, the assessment tools and methods are designed in such a way that they lead researchers to carry out capacity building through the data collection process. The annual LGCSCI assessments is conducted over a period of four months, from June to September. The reference time frame for assessment in this report was the just concluded financial year 2016/17 and covered 35 districts.

3.4.1 Participants in the Assessment

While the primary focus of assessment within LGCSCI is always political leaders, data is also gathered from clerks to council, chief administrative officers (CAOs), district heads of department, Sub County chiefs, administrators of service delivery units and a cross-section of citizens. Political leaders that participate as respondents include district chairpersons, speakers and district councillors. In addition, the District Council as the highest decision-making body in the district is assessed as an entity through interviews with clerks to council.

3.4.2 Assessment Participant Selection

Since the focus of LGCSCI is on the entire political leadership at the district level, all elected political leaders are primary sources of information. Technical leaders provided corroborating evidence that was used to score elected leaders. Data to corroborate performance of elected political leaders was also collected at the community level during Community Engagement Meetings (CEMs). Two CEMS were conducted in every sub county in 35 districts.

3.4.3 Assessment Tools and their Administration

The tool for conducting the annual assessment of local government councils is what we refer to as the scorecard. The scorecard contains a set of qualitative and quantitative measurements as well as the methodological steps for conducting the assessment. The scorecard was developed through an intensive intellectual and empirical process at the inception of the Local Government Councils Scorecard Initiative in 2009. The administration of the scorecard is divided into 4 phases, namely: (1) the preparation phase; (2) the fieldwork phase; (3) data collection, management and analysis phase; and (4) outreach and advocacy phase. During the preparation phase, a number of activities including securing buy-in from key stakeholders, customizing the scorecard, selecting the local government councils to be assessed, identification of district research teams and organizing methodology workshops are undertaken. For purposes

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39 The assessment of technical leaders is not part of the current LGCSCI. The assessment of technical leaders in districts used to mainly focus on the planning function, financial management, revenue performance, and local government capacity and project specific conditions. It was biased towards the technical administrative performance of the districts and focused more on the existence of a wide range of district planning documents. Generally, that annual assessment did not emphasize the quality of public service delivery in district. For details, see Republic of Uganda (2006). Assessment Manual of Minimum Conditions and Performance Measures for Local Governments. Ministry of Local Government. Kampala.
of quality control and standardization, a Expert Group comprising representatives of local governments, academia, civil society and donors was constituted at the onset of LGCSCI to help provide feedback and guidance on implementation as well as assessment.

3.5 The Scorecard and the Local Government Structure

The Local Government Councils Scorecard is a set of parameters and associated indicators designed to monitor the extent to which local government council organs and councillors are performing their responsibilities. The parameters in the scorecard are based on the core responsibilities of the local government councils. The main building blocks in LGCSCI scorecard are the principles and core responsibilities of Local Governments as set out in the Constitution, 1995 (As amended) Article 17640, the Local Governments Act (CAP 243) and The Laws of Uganda, Section 10 (c), (d) and (e)41. These are classified into five categories: (1) Financial management and oversight; (2) Political functions and representation; (3) Legislation and related functions; (4) Development planning and constituency servicing and (5) Monitoring service delivery.

The scorecards are designed to assess the work of elected political leaders and representative organs to deliver on their electoral promises, improve public service delivery, ensure accountability and promote good governance. It is important to bear in mind that the Local Government Council is composed of councillors elected to represent geographically defined areas. Each council also has members elected to represent the special interests of women, youth, and people with disabilities42.

In LGCSCI, separate scorecards are produced for Chairpersons, Speakers, Councillors, and the District Council as a whole. Each of the scorecards for each of the assessed elected political offices is divided into parameters based on the five principles and core responsibilities mentioned above. These parameters are broken down into a set of quantitative and qualitative indicators reflecting the statutory responsibilities and functions of the elected leader or institution being assessed.

3.6 Data Collection Processes

A number of qualitative and quantitative tools have been used to collect data. Over the assessment period, research teams from the participating districts interface with respondents, often in face-to-face encounters. The research team asks all the relevant questions and records the responses. Questions are asked and responses elicited in languages that suit the respondents in terms of comfort and confidence.

40 Constitution, 1995 (As amended), Article 176
41 Local Governments Act (CAP 243), Laws of Uganda Section 30
42 Local Governments Act (CAP 243) Laws of Uganda, Section 10 (c),(d) and (e)
The respondents are given liberty to refer to documents or refer the researcher to documents to corroborate what they are saying. The research team is at liberty to look for any other evidence to gauge the authenticity of responses elicited. The administration of LGCSCI scorecard is a process. This process is pursued rigorously to ensure the involvement of citizens and the removal of potential bias from the assessment. Data collection is approached using the following methods:

a) **Structured Interviews:** These are carried out as part of administering the scorecard parameters. Each of the accessible councillors is engaged in a face-to-face interview structured around the scorecard. The process of interviewing is a vital aspect of collecting verbal evidence that is verified later through written evidence of councillors’ performance that is adduced through analysis of documents. Information elicited in the structured interviews is critical to the scoring of the scorecard. It also involves collection of the corresponding evidence (records, letters, photographs etc.) to justify the awarded scores.

b) **Civic Engagement Meetings:** In line with the capacity building component of LGCSCI, Community Engagement Meetings (CEMS) with citizens are conducted in each Sub County. Prior to these meetings, enough mobilization is done to ensure satisfactory attendance. The CEMS are moderated by district-based LGCSCI researchers using guiding statements and questions developed from core thematic areas spelt out in the Local Governments Act. Other than data collection, the meetings are platforms for civic education and empowerment about the role of the District Council, Councillors and the District Chairman, as well as the duties of a citizen. CEM meetings are accompanied by Civic Engagement Action Plan (CEAP) sessions.

c) **Key Informant Interviews:** Key informant interviews are conducted with technical officers in the district, including CAOs, heads of department, clerks to council, Sub County chiefs and service delivery unit heads. The major focus of these interviews is on collecting succinct information on the status of service delivery and verifying the actions undertaken by the political actors during the financial year.

d) **Field Visits:** The information collected in structured interviews is verified through field visits to specific service delivery units and unstructured interviews with service users at respective units. Observation of service delivery units is supplemented with photography to verify assertions of councillors.

e) **Document Review:** This process involves preliminary and on-going comprehensive review of both published and grey literature as well as official government reports. Key literature reviewed for LGCSCI annual assessments includes: service delivery and infrastructure reports, budgets, planning documents, minutes of district councils and their committees and many others. Document review enables elicitation of qualitative and quantitative data on the status and trends of key service delivery indicators in the relevant local governments. It also provides background information on districts, the status and trends in selected service delivery indicators, planning and development targets of the districts, and
administrative information that contain evidence of the performance of district councils and the various councillors. Consequently, the review covers a wide range of national policy and planning documents, district council minutes, the district planning documents and reports, district development plans; capacity building plans; budget, budget framework paper, district revenue enhancement plan, district annual work plan; Public Accounts Committee reports; Audit reports; sub county council minutes; Standing Committee minutes and District Executive Committee minutes and/or any other unpublished district materials. The LGCSCI district researchers use documents to identify development plans made at the district level; the number of times a councillor debates or debated and/or issue(s) debated; motions debated by a councillor on service delivery issues and follow-up action on resolutions made.

f) **Photography:** Pictures are used to capture salient features associated with service delivery in the district. Similarly, photography makes it possible to triangulate information provided by the councillors during the score-card administration.

### 3.7 Specific Instruments for Data Collection

a) **Structured Interviewer Schedules:** Structured interview schedules for Councillors, the Chairperson, and the Speaker comprise the first stage of the assessment process. The questions in the interview schedules correspond to the indicators on the respective scorecard. They are developed to be in line with the legally-defined roles and responsibilities of these political leaders. The structured interviews provide an opportunity for the individual under assessment to provide information about his or her performance for each indicator on the scorecard.

b) **CEM/CEAP Guide:** Designed to engage citizens in a consultative meeting and dialogue process, the CEM guide is used at the Sub County level. The guide consists of a set of questions aligned to the Priority Development Areas (PDAs)\(^4\). Its utility is to enable citizens to discuss the quality of service delivery in their Sub County and to verify information provided by councillors. The guide also contains questions that gauge their level of civic awareness, and in the process builds their capacity for effective civic engagement.

c) **Key Informant Interview Guide:** This is a tool for use with the technical leaders at the district and Sub County level. It is designed to gain an overall picture of service delivery. The emphasis of these interviews is on determining quality, targets and level of achievement. Information from these interviews is also used to verify information provided by councillors about their performance on relevant indicators.

d) **Observation Checklist:** The observation checklist is mainly used at service delivery units to verify and record evidence of assertions made by councillors in written reports, and by technical leaders. Observation checklists help to triangulate information provided by the elected political leaders during scorecard

\(^4\) PDAs include health, education, roads, water and sanitation, and agriculture.
administration. Through direct observation, researchers are able to verify reports from councillors, especially with regard to community projects and other information on service delivery.

3.8 Data Management and Analysis

Determining the final scores for the scorecards involves careful analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data collected. The process begins with assembling the evidence from the document review, as the documents contain recorded evidence of council and councillor performance on most indicators. With this information in hand, the structured interviews are conducted with individual councillors, chairpersons and speakers. Information from the structured interviews is then augmented and verified through key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and field visits. Each indicator or score is given a weight so that the total scores add up to 100. The scores are generally based on the importance that the research team placed on the particular responsibility or function. The weighting was tested and validated through a series of focus group meetings organized during the scorecard development process.

Each scorecard is sub-divided into parameters. For each parameter, a series of indicators have been developed. Every indicator is assigned an absolute score that is awarded using a threshold approach to create a cumulative total of 100 points. Data gathered from CEMs also enable citizens to verify information provided by their elected political leaders. Data handling undergoes three major processes before it is used to produce the final scores and accompanying district and national level reports.

a) Data cleaning: Transcripts from the CEM/CEAPs, notes from KIs and the preliminary marks on the indicators given by the researchers are reviewed by the technical team at ACODE to ensure accuracy and completeness.

b) Data entry: Qualitative data (CEM/CEAP notes and KI interview transcripts, summaries from documents and field notes) are entered into Atlas-ti, while the quantitative data (scores from the scorecard) are entered using Epi-data. Key statistics from ministries and budget information are entered and managed in Microsoft Excel worksheets.

c) Data analysis: All data from the CEM/CEAPs and key informant interviews and documents are transcribed and entered into the computer for cleaning, consistency checks and coding. Thereafter, a framework analysis, which involves summarizing and classifying data within a thematic framework is done by following the preceding steps: (a) familiarization with the data, (b) thematic analysis, (c) indexing, (d) mapping, and (e) interpretation. Each transcript is read several times before beginning the analysis. The research team develops a basic thematic coding list using Atlas.ti. The rest of the transcripts are coded by LGCSCI researchers guided by an experienced Atlas.ti trainer. The Atlas.ti trainer relies on initially entered text to develop a coding list and adding new codes as new themes emerge. The final codes used to categorize and analyse the data are
focused on such topics as councillor performance and responsiveness, gender dynamics, and the primary service delivery areas of health, education, water, roads and agriculture. The LGCSCI researchers who decipher data from CEMS/CEAPs are fluent in language dialects of political leaders and communities assessed to cross-check that the quotes never lose their original meaning. Key quotations and summaries of views from the various CEM/CEAPs and KIs reflected in this report are a result of this process. Quantitative data, on the other hand, is imported into Epi-data where correlations and descriptive summaries are generated. Excel is used to generate graphs and tables used in this report.

Since the inception of the scorecard, a significant set of data on each of the districts participating in the assessment has been collected on governance and local service delivery. Given that data has been collected consistently since FY 2008/09, it is now possible to identify trends in local governance performance over time. Although some of the interpretation and analysis is cast against the history of LGCSCI, this report focuses on the current 35 districts covered in FY 2016/17.

3.9 Quality Control Measures in LGCSCI Assessment

a) **Periodic reviews:** The scorecard undergoes periodic reviews by an expert task group that is comprised of academicians, officials from the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG), representatives from the Parliamentary Committee on Local Governments, the Local Government Parliamentary Forum, district technical and political leaders and representatives of civil society. The rationale for periodic review is to ensure that the tool is forever robust and legitimate.

b) **Constitution of district research teams:** Each of the participating districts has a three-person research team comprising a lead researcher and two research assistants. The research assistants are resident in the district and are responsible for collecting information and data needed for the analysis and interpretation of the scores assigned for each indicator. They also participate in organizing the CEM/CEAPs, conducting interviews with councillors, and validating the information provided by visiting service delivery units. The lead researcher directly supervises the fieldwork and produces the district report.

c) **Training of district research teams:** The lead researchers and research assistants undergo intensive three-day training in basic research methods, research ethics, budget monitoring, and data collection, organizing and managing community meetings, facilitating the CEAPs, and conflict management.

d) **Use of the Researchers’ Guide:** The Researchers’ Guide is developed by the technical implementing team with input from the expert task group and district researchers. The guide explains the parameters and indicators in the questionnaires in detail, and provides explanatory notes to guide the researchers. The Researchers’ Guide also has a glossary that defines the key words in the questionnaires. This guarantees some degree of homogeneity and reliability in understanding and interpreting the scores.
e) **Report writing workshop:** A three-day report writing workshop is organized centrally for all lead researchers. The session is also used to peer-review the scorecards before the marks are submitted to ACODE for final verification.

g) **Technical backstopping:** The project management team comprises ACODE researchers who work closely with lead researchers to provide support and guidance throughout the research process. The team is responsible for the final validation of the data and removing or mitigating potential bias in the scoring by reviewing and corroborating all information and data on which each score is based. LGCSCI leadership team provides a peer review of the research process and ultimately authors the national synthesis report.

h) **External review of Scorecard Report:** Before final publication, the report is extensively reviewed by peers and edited to ensure consistency and quality of content.

### 3.10 Ethical and Implementation Challenges and their Mitigation

a) **Conflict of interest:** On rare occasions, some LGCSCI district researchers, in the course of implementing the assessment, express interest in joining elective politics in future to replace politicians they are assessing. Since this creates a serious conflict of interest, such researchers are asked to step down from LGCSCI implementation and assessment. In other situations, LGCSCI researchers subscribe to political opinions different from the people they are tasked to assess, which is also associated with potential to compromise the assessments. During training and support supervision, researchers are counselled to be objective, fair, balanced and non-partisan in ACODE and LGCSCI work or to step down if they find this ethical behaviour to be irreconcilable with their political aspirations.

b) **Politicians who decline to be assessed:** Although all politicians are oriented and prepared for an upcoming assessment, a few choose to object and decline to participate in the one-to-one interviews. When such a situation arises, such a political leader is given the opportunity to change his or her mind during a four-month period. Researchers are advised to approach the offices of the District Chairperson and the Speaker to ask them to convince the concerned political leader to accept to be assessed. Having exhausted all possible options, political leaders are then assessed using secondary data (council minutes, committee reports and sub county records). LGCSCI stands by the position that assessment...
has to be applied to all elected officials because they have a social contract with the citizenry.

c) Potential for compromised research: While the LGCSCI team has not registered any case of bribery of researchers by politicians who desire favourable assessments, the research team at ACODE anticipates this possibility and has put in place mechanisms to avert it. LGCSCI supervisors deliberately make on-spot checks to verify scores awarded by district researchers, and an evidence verification exercise is undertaken centrally before a final point is awarded.

d) Confidentiality: In conducting assessments of this type, confidential information about elected political leaders frequently comes to the attention of researchers. Researchers are trained, counselled and tasked to keep confidential any personal and private information they might come across concerning study participants during data collection.

e) Informed consent: All districts participating in LGCSCI were approached and gave institutional consent, which implicitly meant that they agreed to the scorecard assessment process. This consent was secured during the inception meetings with the district leadership. On another level, all elected political leaders who accept to be assessed are requested to give oral consent. They are told about the purpose of the assessment, as well as risks and benefits associated with participating.

f) Voluntary participation. All participants in the assessment do so willingly and without coercion. In the case of political leaders who decline to be interviewed, they are informed that the assessment would be undertaken using secondary data and no one has objected to doing that.

3.11 Strengths and Limitations associated with LGCSCI

The assessment of political leaders and institutions is fair and engages participants in a detailed way as much as possible. The LGCSCI methodology is well developed. The Researchers’ Guide contains detailed instructions for conducting interviews and definitions of key indicators, which greatly increases the reliability of the data gathered. Moreover, all researchers involved in the assessments are trained in contemporary social research methods.

Although the data collection process is labour and time-consuming, the variety of research tools used enables triangulation of data sources. This improved the validity and credibility of findings. The mixture of data collection methods ensures that complementary data is collected from individuals, official documents, and technical leaders to enable exploration of issues more in-depth and validate claims by respondents. At the moment, the scorecard only focuses on the district council and its organs. It is pertinent to note that the assessment does not cover municipalities and sub counties because of the limited human and financial resources required to expand it to cover these institutions.
Although the District Executive Committee is one of the important organs of the council, it is not included in the assessment because it is constituted through political appointment by the Chairperson. Hence, its performance is largely determined by the performance of the Chairperson. Similarly, the scorecard is silent on the role of other political oversight offices in the district such as District Public Accounts Committees (DPAC). The assessment subjects all councillors to a uniform assessment, regardless of the size of the constituency served by the councillor. Councillors representing special interest groups (women, youth, and people with disabilities) have much larger constituencies, yet they are scored with the same instruments and criteria as those with fewer constituents. LGCSCI leadership team acknowledges this shortcoming of the methodology.

LGCSCI engages in advocacy activities including media campaigns, public speaking, commissioning and publishing research findings for purposes of informing and influencing public policy. Time and again, ACODE and ULGA, through LGCSCI, have done adequate advocacy to the extent that issues of local and national importance are raised with the responsible central government officials. This work is often done in strategic meetings with district chairpersons, councillors, Members of Parliament, and many others as the need has arisen.

3.12 Report Dissemination

Report dissemination takes place at the national and district levels. At the national level, this scorecard report presents the major highlight of the 35 district assessments and provides a comparison of performance between the districts. This report is presented to national stakeholders, including MPs, officials from ministries, development partners, district leaders, civil society organizations, the media and the private sector. The dissemination of the district-level scorecard reports is open to the general public with special invitation to the district political and technical leadership, sub county leaders, local CBOs, local media and CEM/CEAP participants.
Capacity building improves local governance
4  SCORECARD PERFORMANCE AND ANALYSIS

4.1  Introduction

This chapter presents the performance results of the 1,040 district leaders assessed, including 970 councillors, 35 district chairpersons, 35 speakers of council, and 35 district councils in Uganda. In line with the Local Government Act, the assessment of leaders’ performance focused on five major parameters: a) political leadership and accountability to citizens; b) legislative role in district councils; c) maintaining contact with the electorate; d) participation in lower local government activities; and e) monitoring government programmes.

The assessment of FY 2016/17 is the first year of the five-year term of office of local government leaders that were elected into office during the general elections of February 2016. The current term of office will end in 2021. This assessment is therefore very critical as it will provide a baseline for the performance of local government leaders over the next five years. For most of the leaders (65%), this was their first year in office. By implication, most of these leaders were learning on the job as the majority were joining local politics for the first time. The remaining 35% were serving their second, third and in some cases fourth terms and were therefore fairly experienced in local governance.

The 35 districts covered during this assessment include districts that have participated in the assessment at various points of the initiative. The first assessment that was conducted in 2010 covered 10 districts. The most recent assessment of 2015 covered 30 districts. In 2017, five more districts were included in the assessment, which brought the total to 35 districts during this assessment. This means that the five new districts of Lwengo, Kaliro, Sheema, Kisoro and Kabale are being assessed for the very first time while the original cohort of 10 districts was being assessed for the seventh time. However, it is important to note that the composition of the different councils is completely new after most of the councils got new members after the 2016 general elections.

4.2  Composition of the District Councils

The district councils from the 35 districts vary in size and character. This sub-section presents a summary of the council sizes, gender composition, political party affiliation, level of education of the political leaders as well as the number of terms served. Figure 4:1 presents a summary of council size and gender representation. As shown in the figure, councils range in size from 17 in Amuru to 51 in Arua. The percentage of women in council also varies substantially from a low of 33% in Agago to a high of 60% in Masindi. In six of the councils (Amuru, Moroto, Buliisa, Nwoya, Masindi, and Mbarara), women comprise 50% or more of council.

44 Amuria, Amuru, Hoima, Kampala, Kamuli, Luwero, Mbale, Moroto, Nebbi and Ntungamo.
45 Lwengo, Kaliro, Sheema, Kanungu and Kisoro.
4.3 Performance of District Councils

The Local Government Act gives full effect to the policy of decentralisation in Uganda. The Act provides for a district council, which is the highest authority within a district, with the power to ensure democratic participation and decision making for the citizens of Uganda. It is through the Local Government Act that the government of Uganda envisages the establishment of democratic, political and gender sensitive structures through which all citizens can participate. The framers of the decentralisation policy also anticipated improved service delivery at local government level through increased local revenue collections and financial accountability of district councils.\(^{46}\)

In Uganda, the system of local governments is based on a district as a unit, below which are lower local governments and administrative units. By implication, district councils can be rural or urban. Local governments in a district rural area are either district councils or Sub County councils. Local governments in a city are either city councils or city division councils. Local governments in a municipality are either municipal councils or municipal division councils, while local governments in towns are referred to as town councils.\(^{47}\)

\(^{46}\) See, objectives of the Local Government Act, as amended. Part I, Section 2.

\(^{47}\) See, Part II, Section 3 of the Local Government Act.
For purposes of this assessment report, the focus of assessing performance was on the district councils from the district rural areas. In terms of leadership, the district government is comprised of political and technical leaders. The political arm is headed by the District Chairperson who works with his/her councillors while the technical arm is headed by the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), who works with professional staff. The scorecard initiative focuses on the political arm, but the findings have implications for how the technical arm implements their duties in the district.

The district council scorecard is comprised of parameters derived from the roles and responsibilities of local government councils in the Local Government Act. The parameters include the legislative role, accountability to citizens, planning and budgeting, and monitoring service delivery of priority development areas. Each parameter has a number of indicators which cumulatively enhance the performance of councils. This assessment focused on 35 district councils that participate in the scorecard initiative. Table 4.1 presents a summary of the performance of the district councils.
## Summary of the performance of the district councils

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### LEGISLATIVE ROLE

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### MONITORING DELIVERY (NPPAs)

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### ACCOUNTABILITY

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### PLANNING AND BUDGETING

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### CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: ACTIVATING THE POTENTIAL OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN UGANDA

#### Monitoring Service Delivery (NPPAs)

- **ENR**
- **FAL**
- **Agriculture**
- **Roads**
- **Water and sanitation**
- **Health**
- **Education**

#### Planning and Budgeting

- **District**
- **Local Revenue**
- **District Budget**
- **Mission and plans, vision and mission**

#### Accountability

- **Sub-total**
- **Principles of accountability**
- **Involvement of CSOs**
- **Administrative accountability**
- **Political accountability**
- **Fiscal accountability**

#### Legislative Role

- **Sub-total**
- **Legislative resources**
- **Petitions**
- **Public hearings**
- **Initiatives**
- **Conflict resolution**

#### Total Score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identifier</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Nakapiripit</td>
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<td>Arua</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sheema</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average</td>
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</table>

### District-wise Score

- **Amuru**: 49
- **Nakapiripit**: 48
- **Bulisa**: 46
- **Nwoya**: 44
- **Kamuli**: 41
- **Apac**: 40
- **Bududa**: 40
- **Moroto**: 38
- **Kisoro**: 37
- **Nebbi**: 36
- **Kapale**: 36
- **Kajojo**: 34
- **Tororo**: 29
- **Arua**: 27
- **Sheema**: 27

### Notes

- The table above details the monitoring service delivery, planning and budgeting, accountability, legislative role, and total score for various districts in Uganda.
- Each district is assessed on several criteria such as legislative role, accountability, planning and budgeting, and total score.
- The identifier column lists the districts.
- The total score is calculated by summing up the scores across different criteria.

---

**Total Score Calculation**

- **ENR**: 5
- **FAL**: 6
- **Agriculture**: 3
- **Roads**: 5
- **Water and sanitation**: 4
- **Health**: 3
- **Education**: 2
- **District**: 1
- **Local Revenue**: 2
- **Mission and plans, vision and mission**: 3
- **Principles of accountability**: 4
- **Involvement of CSOs**: 2
- **Administrative accountability**: 1
- **Political accountability**: 1
- **Fiscal accountability**: 1
- **Legislative resources**: 2
- **Petitions**: 1
- **Public hearings**: 3
- **Initiatives**: 4
- **Conflict resolution**: 5

---

**District-wise Scores**

- **Amuru**: 49
- **Nakapiripit**: 48
- **Bulisa**: 46
- **Nwoya**: 44
- **Kamuli**: 41
- **Apac**: 40
- **Bududa**: 40
- **Moroto**: 38
- **Kisoro**: 37
- **Nebbi**: 36
- **Kapale**: 36
- **Kajojo**: 34
- **Tororo**: 29
- **Arua**: 27
- **Sheema**: 27

---

**Average Total Score**: 51

---

**Districts Listed**

- Amuru
- Nakapiripit
- Bulisa
- Nwoya
- Kamuli
- Apac
- Bududa
- Moroto
- Kisoro
- Nebbi
- Kapale
- Kajojo
- Tororo
- Arua
- Sheema

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**Notes on Calculation**

- The total score is calculated by summing up the scores across different criteria.
- Each district is assessed on various criteria, and the scores are summed to arrive at the total score for each district.
- The identifier column lists the districts.
- The score ranges from 5 to 1, with 5 being the highest and 1 being the lowest.

---

**Conclusion**

This data provides a snapshot of the civic engagement and potential of local governance in Uganda, highlighting areas where improvement is needed to activate the potential of local governance.
4.3.1 Overall Performance

The average overall score for district councils was 53 out of 100 points. Overall, Gulu District council emerged the best council with 82 out of 100 possible points. This performance is attributed to the council’s routine in three parameters: legislative role (20 out of 25), accountability to citizens (23 out of 25) and monitoring priority development areas (26 out of 30). However, the council’s performance in planning and budgeting was found wanting.

Kabarole, Mpigi and Wakiso district councils followed in the second position with 73 out of 100 possible points. All three districts exhibited good performance in the three parameters of legislation, accountability and monitoring government programs but struggled with planning and budgeting. None of the top four districts scored total marks in all four parameters. Agago, Luwero, Mbale and Ntungamo districts tied in 3rd place with 64 out of 100 possible points.

Although all 35 districts councils are newly constituted, 30 out of 35 districts have participated in the scorecard before. Lwengo, Kaliro, Sheema, Kabale and Kisoro districts are being assessed for the very first time. Out of these five, Lwengo stood out with a score of 56 out of 100 possible points, placing it in 13th place. Only 18 out of 35 districts scored 50 points or higher.

4.3.2 Legislative Role of Councils

With an average score of 15 out of 25 points the legislative role was the best performed parameter by all the 35 councils. Moyo district registered the highest score (21 out of 25) followed by Gulu District (20 out of 25). Sheema and Apac districts scored the lowest under this parameter, earning only 7 points each.

Findings from the assessment reveal that most of district councils were conducting council business with having reviewed and amended the standard rules of procedure with the exception of Kabarole, Rukungiri, Apac, Kisoro and Mbarara. Council’s performance with regard to passing lawful motions for resolution on policy was mainly found wanting in as far as accountability and local government financial autonomy is concerned.

Results also revealed a general weakness in councils’ performance of debating issues raised in citizen petitions as more than half of the councils didn’t score any mark under this indicator. There was also a general weakness with regard to district councils’ performance under the indicator of membership to ULGA. While all 35 districts had paid their subscription to ULGA during the year under review, only six councils took actions on key resolutions from the ULGA Annual General Meeting during the year under review.

4.3.3 Accountability to Citizens

With an average score of 15 out of 25 points under this parameter, the district councils only performed fairly. Only two districts (Gulu and Wakiso) scored above 20 points under this parameter. Mbarara and Sheema districts were the weakest with 7 and 2
out of 25 points respectively. This performance was generally attributed to the failure by most councils to adhere to the principles of accountability with 21 out of 35 district scoring zero. Outcomes from the assessment revealed that all these 21 districts had not adopted the Revised Charter on Accountability and eEthical Code of Conduct for Local Governments. They also hadn’t displayed their district client charters. With the exception of Tororo and Sheema districts which scored zero under the indicator of involvement of CSOs in their development agenda, 33 districts registered good scores under this parameter. More than half of the councils also presented evidence of involvement of councils in their budget conferences.

4.3.4 Planning and budgeting of district councils

On average, councils scored 11 out of 20 points under this parameter. Mpigi district secured the highest mark under this parameter with 18 out of 20 points followed by Hoima and Rukungiri districts that scored 16 out of 20 points. Once again, Sheema district was the weakest under this parameter with only 6 out of 20 points.

One of the best performed indicators under this parameter was the existence of plans, visions and mission statements, as 33 districts scored maximum points. This is perhaps not surprising as these documents are mainly prepared by the technical staff and are a requirement before any district receives funding from the central government. The majority of the districts (31 out of 35) also scored total marks under the indicator of approving the district budget before the deadline of 31st May.

4.3.5 Monitoring Priority Development Areas

Monitoring PDAs was the worst performed parameter by all the districts assessed. With an average score of only 10 out of 30 points, most standing committees of council did not meet the threshold of visiting at least half of the service delivery units during the year under review. Gulu, Kabarole and Amuria districts had the best scores under this parameter with 26 out of 30 points. Amuru, Buliisa, Nwoya, Kamuli and Kaliro districts did not present any evidence of monitoring schools, health centres, water, roads or agriculture and therefore scored zero.

Monitoring of health centres was the best indicator as more than half of the districts undertook monitoring and provided reports to this effect. While budget performance data reveals funding provided for Functional Adult Literacy (FAL) classes, monitoring of this indicator was the worst, as almost all (31 out of 35) district councils scored zero. Monitoring of environment and natural resources was almost as bad as 29 out of 35 district councils scored zero under the indicator.

4.4 Performance District Chairpersons

The average total score for district chairpersons was 61 out of 100 possible points. Six chairpersons scored above 80 points and another eight chairpersons scored 70 points or more. Out of the 35 chairpersons, only the chairperson from Kanungu District is female. Table 4:2 presents a summary of the district chairpersons.
## Summary of the District Chairpersons

| Name                          | Gender | Political Party | District | Number of Terms | Maximum Score | Political Leadership | Legislative Role | Contact with Electorate | Monitoring Service Delivery | Environmental | Water Sources | Roads | Schools | Health | Agriculture | Sub Total | Environment | Water Sources | Roads | Schools | Health | Agriculture | Sub Total |
|-------------------------------|--------|-----------------|----------|-----------------|---------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|---------------|--------|---------|---------|------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-------|---------|---------|------------|-------------|
| Martin Ojara Mapenduzi        | M      | FDC             | Gulu     | 2               | 91            | 2                  | 91                | 2                      | 91                         | 3               | 5             | 2       | 4       | 2       | 2          | 45        | 91           | 3               | 5             | 2       | 4       | 2       | 2          | 45        |
| Richard Rwabuhinga           | M      | NRM             | Kabarole | 2               | 90            | 2                  | 88                | 1                      | 88                         | 3               | 5             | 2       | 4       | 2       | 2          | 45        | 90           | 3               | 5             | 2       | 4       | 2       | 2          | 45        |
| Erast Okoi                   | M      | UPC             | Amuria   | 1               | 88            | 1                  | 88                | 1                      | 88                         | 3               | 5             | 2       | 4       | 2       | 2          | 45        | 88           | 3               | 5             | 2       | 4       | 2       | 2          | 45        |
| Patrick Okello Oryema        | M      | IND             | Nwoya    | 2               | 84            | 1                  | 84                | 1                      | 84                         | 3               | 5             | 2       | 4       | 2       | 2          | 45        | 84           | 3               | 5             | 2       | 4       | 2       | 2          | 45        |
| Thomas K. Kategere           | M      | NRM             | Kamuli   | 1               | 83            | 2                  | 80                | 2                      | 80                         | 3               | 5             | 2       | 4       | 2       | 2          | 45        | 83           | 2               | 80            | 3     | 5     | 2       | 2          | 45        |
| Matia Lwanga Bwanika         | M      | NRM             | Luwero   | 1               | 79            | 2                  | 78                | 2                      | 78                         | 5               | 5             | 3       | 4       | 3       | 2          | 30        | 78           | 5               | 5             | 3       | 4       | 3       | 2          | 30        |
| Simon Agaba Kinene           | M      | NRM             | Buliisa  | 1               | 79            | 2                  | 78                | 2                      | 78                         | 5               | 5             | 3       | 4       | 3       | 2          | 30        | 78           | 5               | 5             | 3       | 4       | 3       | 2          | 30        |
| Dennis Singahache            | M      | NRM             | Lira     | 1               | 78            | 2                  | 71                | 2                      | 71                         | 5               | 5             | 3       | 4       | 3       | 2          | 30        | 78           | 5               | 5             | 3       | 4       | 3       | 2          | 30        |
| Cosmas Byaruhanga            | M      | NRM             | Kanungu  | 1               | 77            | 2                  | 71                | 2                      | 71                         | 5               | 5             | 3       | 4       | 3       | 2          | 30        | 77           | 5               | 5             | 3       | 4       | 3       | 2          | 30        |
| Josephine Kasya              | F      | NRM             | Kabale   | 1               | 70            | 2                  | 70                | 2                      | 70                         | 5               | 5             | 3       | 4       | 3       | 2          | 30        | 70           | 5               | 5             | 3       | 4       | 3       | 2          | 30        |
| Patrick Keihwa Besigye       | M      | NRM             | Lira     | 1               | 67            | 3                  | 65                | 3                      | 65                         | 5               | 5             | 3       | 4       | 3       | 2          | 30        | 67           | 5               | 5             | 3       | 4       | 3       | 2          | 30        |

**Sub Total**: 100

**Table 4.2**: Summary of the District Chairpersons 2016/2017
## Civic Engagement: Activating the Potential of Local Governance in Uganda

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4.4.1 Overall Performance

Chairman Martin Ojara Mapenduzi from Gulu district emerged as the best performer with 91 out of 100 possible points. Chairman Mapenduzi, who subscribes to the FDC party, was serving his second term as a district chairperson but had previously served as the district speaker of Gulu District. The scores present an even performance of excellence across all the five parameters of political leadership, legislative role, contact with the electorate, initiation of projects, and monitoring priority development areas. The chairman scored all possible marks (10 out of 10) under two parameters: contact with the electorate and initiation of projects. Chairman Mapenduzi’s performance is consistent with that of his council which also emerged as the best overall.

Chairman Richard Rwabuhinga from Kabarole District followed in second position with 90 out of 100 possible points. Chairman Rwabuhinga subscribes to the ruling NRM party and was serving his second term as a district chairperson. He scored all possible points under his political leadership, legislative role, contact with the electorate, and initiation of projects.

Chairman Erisat Okitoi from Amuru District was third highest, scoring 88 out of 100 possible points. Chairman Okitoi subscribes to the Uganda Peoples’ Congress and was serving his first term as a district chairperson but previously served as a councillor in the same council. His best performed parameter was his political leadership where he scored all possible points (20 out 20). Chairman Patrick Oryema from Nwoya District stood out in the 4th position with 84 out of 100 possible points while Chairman Thomas Franz Kategere from Kamuli District followed in the 5th position with 83 out of 100 possible points.

The performance of Chairman George Mutabaazi from Lwengo District stands out with 78 out of 100 possible points as Lwengo District is one of the five districts that participated in the local government scorecard assessment for the very first time. Chairman Mutabaazi scored full marks (10 out 10) under the parameter of initiation of projects in Lwengo district.

The only female chairperson is Josephine Kasya from Kanungu District. Her performance was well above average with a score of 69 out of 100 possible points. Hon. Kasya exhibited excellent performance under her political leadership having scored 19 out of 20 points.

Findings from the assessment reveal generally low scores from the chairpersons of Apac (48 points), Nebbi (37 points), Jinja (36 points), Arua (36 points), Mukono (32 points), Kisoro (32 points), Amuru (31 points) and Mbale (0 points) districts. Chairman Bernard Mujasi’s performance is attributed to an on-going court case that resulted from a petition from his political opponent immediately after the 2016 general elections. As a standard practice, a vice chairperson is supposed to assume the leadership position of district chairperson under such circumstances. However, after the vice chairperson sought for professional guidance and support from the Chief Administrative Officer at the time, he was advised to wait for instructions from
the office of the Attorney General. During a DEC meeting held on 4th October 2016, Chairman Mujasi officially informed his committee that he was unable to continue serving a chairperson due to the court case that was on-going. However, there was no official handover to the office of the vice chairperson, which in essence meant that he continued to hold the office of the chairperson. Evidence from the assessment reveals that the chairman chaired his last DEC meeting on October 4th 2016 which is why he was assessed during the year under review.

The case of Tororo District is unique. Chairman Apollo Jaramogi Olla (RIP) served the district as a chairperson for a period of six months. After his demise in January 2017, tribal tensions between the Jopadola and the Itesots in Tororo paralysed the functioning of the political arm in the district. Members of the District Executive Committee (DEC) resigned and the acting chairperson was never recognized as legitimate by sections of the council. Legally, the Electoral Commission is expected to organize by-elections within a period of six months after the death of any elected leader. However this process was further hampered by the deeply rooted tribal tensions which included demands for a new district to be carved out of Tororo District. Consequently, the vice chairperson could not be assessed as an acting chairperson since the environment she entered was not conducive to exercising the powers of a fully-fledged district chairperson.

4.4.2 Political Leadership of District Chairpersons

As a political head of a district, a district chairperson is expected to provide political leadership through a duly constituted DEC. By law, the chairperson is expected to monitor administration of government programs – which implies working closely with the Chief Executive Officer. Political leadership also includes the role of providing oversight to civil servants as well as maintaining close relations with central government.

With an average score of 15 out of 20 points, political leadership was the second best performed parameter by all chairpersons. Three chairpersons, from Kabarole, Amuria and Wakiso districts, scored full marks under this parameter (20 out of 20). More than half of the district chairpersons (21) scored at least 15 points under this parameter. The chairperson from Arua District was the weakest, having scored only 6 out of 20 possible points. This performance is attributed to the fact that Chairman Arua District did not have any evidence with regard to his oversight function of civil servants. The research team also established that the chairperson did not have evidence of communication between his office and that of his CAO.

4.4.3 Legislative role of District Chairpersons

As a political head of a district, a district chairperson is expected to attend the mandatory six council sittings in a year. For purposes of this scorecard, the threshold was put at only four meetings aware of the busy schedules that the office of the
chairperson holds. Under the leadership of the district chairperson the DEC is mandated to discuss and forward to council policies on issues of service delivery, accountability and local government financing. The DEC is also mandated to generate bills on service delivery, accountability and local government financing. Consequently, the functionality of the DEC is assessed through the office of the chairperson.

With an average score of 7 out of 15, the legislative role was the worst performed parameter by all district chairpersons. Findings from the assessment reveal that the majority (24 out of 35) scored points below 10. The highest score under this parameter was attained the chairman from Kabarole District who scored 15 out of 15 points. Chairman David Kabigumira from Sheema District was the weakest link under this parameter having failed to meet the threshold of any of the three indicators.

Whereas the chairman actually attended council meetings, the records revealed attendance of only 3 out of the threshold of 4 meetings throughout the year. There was also no evidence of motions or bills (on service delivery and accountability) presented by the DEC under his leadership. Generally, there was poor performance under the indicator of presenting bills by the DEC to the various councils.

4.4.4 Contact with the electorate

A district chairperson is mandated to remain in regular contact with his electorate. This can be achieved through interactions such as community meetings as well as through the mass media. Through such meetings, district chairpersons are expected to solicit input and provide feedback to citizens on service delivery issues, including discussions and resolutions of council. Indeed, the office of the chairperson is supported financially to ensure that this role is performed effectively. Section 12 of the Local Government Act makes it mandatory for a district chairperson to be resident within a certain area for them to contest for any election.

With an average score of 8 out of 10 points, this was the best performed parameter by all the district chairpersons. Thirteen chairpersons scored all of the points (10 out of 10) under this parameter. Despite this excellent performance, there still remains a general problem with regard to district chairpersons addressing issues raised by citizens and giving feedback to the electorate. Results from the assessment revealed a generally weak spot on communication of resolutions of council to the electorate. Indeed, a number of district chairpersons scored zero under this indicator.

4.4.5 Initiation of Projects in Local Governments

The office of the district chairperson is the highest political office in any local government. By implication, district chairpersons preside over processes that lead to partnerships and engagements with development partners such as NGOs, and are supported and mandated to lobby for development projects within their electoral areas. This may include initiating projects or supervising on-going projects in the districts.
Findings from this assessment reveal that the performance under this parameter was only fair with an average score of 7 out of 10 points. Eleven district chairpersons scored maximum points under this parameter. Chairman Micheal Lakon (Amuru District) and Chairman Andrew Ssenyonga (Mukono District) had the lowest scores under this parameter. Their performance is attributed to the fact that both district chairpersons did not link their districts to new development partners during the year under review. The only female district chairperson from Kanungu district scored 8 out of 10 points under this parameter.

4.4.6 Monitoring Priority Development Areas (PDAs)

The office of the district chairperson is mandated to provide leadership during the implementation of government programs. By implication, the office of the chairperson is expected to monitor progress of implementation through the DEC. For purposes of this scorecard assessment, six priority development areas were included: education, health, agriculture, roads, water and sanitation, and environment and natural resources. In accordance with the scorecard methodology, district chairpersons were assessed on whether they met the threshold of visiting at least half of the service delivery units and generated monitoring reports, as well as whether or not there were actual service delivery outcomes that resulted from their follow up interventions.

With an average score of 24 out of 45, the performance of district chairpersons on monitoring PDAs was fairly low. This parameter is accorded a lot of importance under the scorecard (45 out of 100 points), as the chairpersons’ role in monitoring has a direct impact on the quality of service delivery in districts. Only two district chairpersons scored 40 points or higher (Gulu and Nwoya Districts). The relatively low average score of chairpersons on this parameter is mainly attributed to the fact that while most district chairpersons (working through their executive committees) had actually monitored service delivery points, only a few were able to produce evidence with regard to the outcomes that resulted from their monitoring.

Results from the assessment reveal that the chairpersons focused on monitoring roads and health centres more than they did water, environment and functional adult literacy. Overall, monitoring of FAL was the worst performed indicator with the majority of district chairpersons scoring zero under this indicator, which is consistent with past assessments.

Chairman Esrom William Alenyo had the lowest score under this parameter, receiving zero points. This performance is attributed to the fact that while the chairman actually undertook monitoring, he did not meet the threshold of visiting at least half of the service delivery units. The performance of Chairman Abel Bizimana (Kisoro District) reveals unique results with regards to monitoring environment and natural resources in the district. While he did not meet the threshold in the other five PDAs, he scored full marks (5 out of 5) under monitoring of ENR.
4.5 Performance of Speakers of Council

The office of the speaker of council is provided for under Section 11 of the Local Government Act. This office includes both the speaker and his/her deputy. District speakers are primarily elected as councillors to represent constituencies. Once the council has been constituted, a speaker is then elected from among the councillors. Consequently, the bigger part of the speaker’s scorecard is drawn from his/her primary roles as a councillor.

In addition to the councillor roles, a speaker of council is mandated to provide overall leadership to the council by presiding over council meetings and preserving order in council. The speaker of council is also responsible for the enforcement of the standard rules of procedure and ensuring effective documentation of council proceedings. As such, the speaker’s scorecard comprises four major roles: legislative function, contact with the electorate, participation in lower local governments, and monitoring of PDAs. Table 4:3 presents a summary of the performance of speakers of council from 35 districts.
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**Totals and Averages:**

- Total Score: 48
- Gender: 2
- Terms: 56
4.5.1 Overall performance

The average performance score of speakers of council was 56 out of a possible 100 points. Hon. Muhammed Mafabi (Mbale District) earned the top spot, having scored 94 out of 100 possible points. Hon. Mafabi, who represents the people of Bubyangu in Mbale District, was voted into power as independent councillor and was serving his third term as a political leader. Hon. Mafabi scored all possible points under the three parameters of legislative function, contact with the electorate, and meetings at lower local governments.

Hon. Ketty Akol (Amuria District) came in second place, having scored 91 out of a possible 100 points. Hon. Akol, who subscribes to the UPC party, was serving her first term as speaker of council but had previously served one term as a female councillor representing Kapelebyong Sub County in the previous five year term of office (2011 – 2016). While a district councillor, Hon. Akol was the best female councillor during the sixth scorecard assessment of FY 2014/15. It is no wonder that the council of Amuria District entrusted her the responsibility of providing leadership to their council during the current term of office. Hon. Akol's excellent performance is attributed to outstanding performance under the two parameters of contact with the electorate and participation of lower local governments, where she scored all the possible points.

In third place was Hon. Stella Kyorampe (Kabarole District), with a total score of 90 out of 100 possible points. Hon. Kyorampe, who subscribes to the ruling NRM party, was serving her second term as a political leader representing the women of Kabende Sub County and Kijura Town Council. Like Hon. Akol, Hon. Kyorampe was a best-performer in the previous council of Kabarole (2011-2016). She was rated as the best female councillor in Kabarole during the 2014/15 scorecard assessment. The speaker's best performed parameters were her participation in lower local governments and monitoring of PDAs.

In the fourth, fifth and sixth positions were Hon. Richard Lochoto (Nakapiripirit District), Hon. Denis Lyada (Kamuli District) and Hon. Elijah Atuhaire (Ntungamo District) with 84 points, 77 points and 75 points respectively. The performance of the speakers of council from Sheema District (Hon. Kwaraija Nicholas) and Lwengo District (Hon. William Sayitoti Matovu) stand out, given that both were among the five districts that were being assessed for the very first time. Both speakers of council attained scores that were above average and performed well across the four indicators.

In terms of gender, only four of the 35 speakers of council assessed were female. Despite this low representation of women, two of the four female speakers of council emerged in the second and third positions, Hon. Rose Odero from Mororo District ranked eighth, and Hon. Ruth Loy Zikampereza from Kabala District, while in 22nd place, still scored above the average.
4.5.2 Legislative Function of Speakers of Council

In the performance of their legislative role, speakers of council are expected to chair lawful council meetings and related business committee meetings. Speakers of council are also the custodians of council records. As a best practice, speakers of councils are expected to provide guidance to council and committees on any issue with regard to council proceedings in accordance with the Standard Rules of Procedure. As earlier mentioned, the speaker’s office includes both the speaker and his/her deputy. As such, the speaker of council is expected to delegate the functions of the office to his/her deputy at least once during the assessment period.

The performance of speakers of council in the legislative area averaged 16 out of 25 points. Their overall performance under this parameter was undermined by the poor scores obtained under the indicator of providing special skills to council in which, with the exception of the top five performers, everyone scored zero. It is important to note that most speakers of council actually provided verbal guidance during council. Unfortunately, the scorecard assessment focuses on written evidence that can be traced for verification and future reference for posterity. That notwithstanding, findings showed that the speakers had paid substantive attention to their function of chairing of lawful council meetings and operationalization of the standard rules of procedure.

4.5.3 Contact with the Electorate

As district councillors, speakers of council are expected to maintain close contact with their electorate in accordance with the Local Government Act. This is done through organizing regular meetings with their constituencies. As a best practice, the scorecard also delves into whether speakers have a designated coordinating centre\(^{48}\) where they can meet their electorate.

Overall, this was the best performed parameter with an average score of 15 out of 20 points. Nine out of 35 speakers of council scored total points (20 out of 20) under this parameter. The majority of the speakers of council had a coordinating centre within their constituencies. They were also able to convene regular community meetings during which they communicated issues of service delivery from the councils. Hon. Amos Hakizimana (Kisoro District) scored the least marks under this parameter, having failed to meet the threshold of organizing at least four community meetings in Murora Sub County.

4.5.4 Meetings at Lower Local Governments

Under their primary function as district councillors, speakers of council are supposed to maintain a strong link between the district and their respective lower local governments. As such, they are mandated to participate in their council meetings. This participation includes communicating official decisions of the district council as well as soliciting key issues to be presented to the district council for consideration.

\(^{48}\) The coordinating centre can be the councillor’s home or his/her work place.
The average score under this parameter was 5 out of 10 points. A total of twelve speakers of council (including the top four) scored full points (10 out of 10). On the downside, 11 out of 35 speakers of council did not earn any marks under this parameter. This was mainly attributed to the fact that, while most speakers attended meetings in their sub counties, they did not meet the threshold of the bare minimum of four meetings. In addition, a number of the speakers of council were unable to avail evidence to show service delivery issues forwarded from the sub county councils to the district councils.

4.5.5 Monitoring Priority Development Areas (PDAs)

Speakers of council are expected to monitor service delivery including schools, health centres, road works, water and sanitation, agriculture, environment and natural resources, and functional adult literacy centres in accordance with the Local Government Act. The scorecard accords a lot of importance to this particular parameter, with emphasis on the positive outcomes from the monitoring. For this reason, a total of 45 out of the overall 100 points are allocated to this parameter.

Overall, this was the worst performed parameter by the 35 speakers of council with an average score of 22 out of 45 points. Hon. Stella Kyorampe (Kabarole District) was the only one who obtained marks above 40 points. The speaker of council from Kaliro District, who also doubles as the youth councillor, did not attain any score for monitoring priority development areas, having failed to meet the threshold of monitoring at least half of the service delivery units.

The scorecard report reveals that where monitoring was undertaken, most speakers of council did not meet the threshold of monitoring at least half of the service delivery units. Generally, speakers of council performed best under monitoring of health (health centres) and education (primary schools) while monitoring of FAL registered the least scores across the board. The majority of speakers of councils scored zero under monitoring of FAL.

4.6 Performance of District Councillors

The third schedule of the Local Government Act clearly stipulates the duties of a councillor. Councillors are categorized into two broad groups: directly elected councillors and those representing special interest groups. Special interest group councillors are further categorized into women, youth, PWDs and councillors representing older persons. The scorecard assesses the performance of councillors by focusing on four major parameters: legislative role, contact with the electorate, participation in lower local governments and monitoring of PDAs.

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49 This category of councillors had existed for only one financial year by the time of assessment. This is the first time this category is being represented in local councils.
4.6.1 General characteristics of District Councillors

The assessment covered a total of 970 councillors. They include 417 (43%) female councillors and 553 (57%) male councillors. A total of 794 (82%) councillors were directly elected councillors while 174 (18%) were representatives of special interest groups including People with Disabilities (PWD), older persons and youth. Up to 723 (75%) of the councillors were affiliated to the ruling NRM party. On level of education, 448 (46%) indicated to have degrees, diplomas or masters degrees. A total of 310 (32%) indicated to have attained O level, while 172 (18%) indicated to have attained A level. Only 40 (4%) of the councillors indicated primary as their level of education. A total of 610 (65%) councillors were in their first term while 332 (35%) were serving a second or more terms. Table 4:4 summarizes the profiles of the councillors.

Table 4:4: Characteristics of councillors

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<th>Aspect</th>
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<td>Directly elected councillors</td>
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<td>A level/certificate</td>
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<td>More than one term</td>
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4.6.2 Outstanding Performance

The analysis of councillor performance begins with a focus on just the top 37. Out of the 970 councillors from the 35 assessed this year, a total of 37 exhibited outstanding performance with scores above 80 points. These councillors are featured in Table 4:5.
### Table 4.5: The 37 Best Performing Councillors

<table>
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<th>Identifiers</th>
<th>Total Score</th>
<th>Legislative Role</th>
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<th>Monitoring DPAs</th>
<th>LLGs</th>
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As Table 4:5 indicates, Hon. Bernadette Plan from Hoima District emerged as the best performing councillor overall and the best female councillor with 95 out of 100 possible points. Hon. Plan represents the women of Kahoora Sub County and subscribes to the ruling NRM party. She was serving her third term as a district leader and was the best female councillor in Hoima district during the 2014/15 scorecard assessment. Her excellent performance is attributed to her scores under the two parameters of participation in lower local governments (10 out of 10) and monitoring PDAs in her constituency (45 out of 45).

Hon. Hussein Kato from Bombo Town Council in Luwero District was the second-highest performer and the best male councillor with 92 out of 100 possible points. Hon. Kato, who subscribes to the ruling NRM party, was serving his first term as a district councillor, making his second place ranking and first place among the men especially commendable. Hon. Kato was one of the two councillors among the 37 who scored full points under the parameter of legislation in council. He also exhibited excellent performance under his role of participation in lower local governments, having met the threshold of four meetings in his Sub County.

Hon. Thomas Jeffason Obalim from the Central Division of Lira District earned the third spot with 90 out of 100 possible points. Hon. Obalim, who subscribes to the UPC party was serving his second term as a district leader. This performance is consistent with his performance in the previous assessment of FY 2014/15 where he emerged the best councillor in Lira District. One of the outstanding factors that contributed to his excellent performance was his impeccable documentation from all his monitoring visits. He scored full marks under the two parameters of contact with the electorate and attending council meetings in Central Division.

Evidence in Table 4:5 further reveals that nearly half (18) of the 37 top councillors were serving their first term in office; 12 were serving their second while the rest were serving the third and fourth term. In terms of political party affiliation, the majority (24) of the top 37 subscribed to the ruling NRM party. The remaining 13 subscribed to the FDC (3), UPC (4), DP (1) and Independents (5). In terms of gender, there were more male councillors (26) than female councillors (11) among the top 37 leaders. Similarly, there were more male councillors (6) than the female councillors (4) among the top ten performers. However, given that women represent only 43% of the total number of councillors assessed, these performance figures for women are more impressive than they may seem at first glance. While the top 37 councillors emerged from 18 out of the 35 districts, Kamuli District produced the highest number (6) of the best councillors. Perhaps not surprisingly, none of the five districts that were assessed for the very first time (Lwengo, Sheema, Kaliro, Kisoro and Kabale) produced a single councillor among the top 37 leaders.

4.6.3 Average performance of all 970 Councillors

Turning to an analysis of the scores of all 970 councillors, Table 4.6 contains an overview of the councillor scores for all four parameters as well as the average overall
scores. The average overall score for the 970 councillors in this assessment was 44 points out of 100 points available. As stated in the previous section, the highest score was 95 points, attained by Hon. Bernadette Plan from Kahoora Sub County in Hoima District. Hon. Hussein Kato from Bombo Town Council in Luwero District (92 points) and Hon. Tonny Odongo from Apac Sub County, Apac District (89 points) came second and third respectively.

On average the councillors performed best on the contact with the electorate assessment parameter, with an average score of 12 out of 20 points available. On the other three parameters, councillors did not perform as well, with average scores of 9 out of 25 on legislative role, 4 out of 10 on Monitoring Service Delivery, and 16 out of 45 on and Attending meetings of lower local governments (LLGs). Regarding the latter, the data shows that 25% of the councillors did not attend a single meeting at LLGs throughout the financial year.

### Table 4:6: Average Performance of councillors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Legislative role</th>
<th>Contact with electorate</th>
<th>Attending meetings at LLGs</th>
<th>Monitoring</th>
<th>Total score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maximum points available</strong></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percentile 25</strong></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percentile 75</strong></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 4.6.4 Gender and councillor performance

Results show that the average total score for male councillors (46 points) was slightly higher than that of women (42 points). This near parity in performance between male and female councillors is replicated in all the assessment parameters as shown in Figure 4:2. The difference in mean performance between male and female councillors, though small, was found to be statistically significant at 0.05. The same applies to mean scores on legislative role. The difference in mean scores for male and female councillors for other parameters was not statistically significant.
4.6.5 Education level and performance

The level of education of councillors remains a point of contention. There have been calls to impose a minimum education requirement for councillors as a means of improving effectiveness of councils. Proponents of this view argue that education empowers the councillors and makes them more effective legislators at that level. The findings of this assessment show that councillors with higher levels of education scored higher, on average, in all four assessment parameters as shown in Figure 4:3. Councillors with A level education or higher performed better than councillors with O level and primary. The difference in means of total score and all parameters across level of education were found to be statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance.
4.6.6 Political party and performance

Councillors affiliated to UPC, DP and FDC performed relatively better with average scores of 55, 49 and 47 respectively. This pattern is mirrored in performance of councillors on all the assessment parameters as shown in Figure 4:4. The difference in means of total score and monitoring across party affiliation was found to be statistically significant. The difference in mean performance of councillors on other parameters was not statistically significant.

![Figure 4:4 Political party affiliation performances](image)

4.6.7 Number of terms and performance

Experience of councillors is usually associated with greater ability to fulfil their mandates. The data shows that councillors serving more than one term performed only slightly better than those in their first term scoring 46 points and 44 points respectively. Councillors serving a second or more terms performed slightly better than those in their first term on all the assessment parameters as shown in Figure 4:5. The difference in means of total score between councillors serving their first term and those serving in the second or more terms, however, was found not to be significant. The same applies to monitoring service delivery, contact with the electorate, and attending council meetings at the Sub County. Interestingly the difference in mean score for legislative role between councillors serving their first term and those in their second or more term was significant.
4.6.8 Special Interest Group Constituencies

Councillors representing special interest groups (women, PWDs, youths and elderly) cover more than one constituency. This translates into a bigger geographical coverage and with this comes a greater workload compared to the directly elected councillors who represent singular constituencies. The results show that directly elected councillors performed better with an average score of 46 points compared to 35 points for special interest group councillors. The same applies for all the assessment parameters as shown in Figure 4:6. The difference in mean total score between directly elected councillors and special interest group councillors was significant. The same applies to all other assessment parameters.

Figure 4:6 Constituency type and performance
4.7 Factors affecting council operations

The functions and operations of local governments are guided by a number of policies and guidelines among which are the Local Government Act and the Standard Rules of Procedure for Local Councils. The latter are intended to ensure effective management of council and committee business. Given the fact that a district council is a body corporate that transacts business on behalf of the district, maintaining order is of paramount importance.

The fact that councils comprise leaders from different political, social and professional backgrounds, means that rules of the procedure are the only way through which order can be maintained. A review of the minutes of council from the various districts revealed a cross section of capacity gaps in as far as council proceedings were concerned. These ranged from failure to adopt the standard rules as an official instrument of council to none compliance to the guidelines governing effective running of council proceedings.

4.7.1 Shortcomings in the adherence to the Standard Rules of Procedure for Local Councils

Adoption of Standard Rules of Procedure: While a majority of the district councils operationalized the standard rules of procedure in their council and committee proceedings, a few ran business disregarding some of these rules during the year under review. Because the standard rules are simply a generic guide to local councils across the broad, each local council is supposed to scrutinize them, customize them where the need arises, and then adopt them as an official working document. A total of 28 out of 35 district councils had adopted the rules with amendment. Five, however, did not show evidence of having adopted them at all. This implies that those five councils (Moyo, Kabarole, Kabale, Kisoro and Gulu) relied on the rules as adopted by their predecessors. This undermines the expected practice of the members of these councils to scrutinize the rules especially given the high constitution of new members in the different councils.

Non members debating in council: The rules of procedure distinctly define council and its membership, limiting it to the political representatives who have taken an oath. By inference, these are the only members that should engage in debate during council. However, a review of the minutes of the 35 councils showed other stakeholders actively engaging in council debates in contravention of the provisions of the rules. These included the Resident District Commissioners (RDCs) in the districts of Sheema, Mbarara, and Kanungu; the DPC in Mbarara; as well as Members of Parliament in the districts of Kanungu, Mbarara and Apac. In fact, Kanungu presented a unique scenario where the area Member of Parliament moved a number of procedural motions during council instead of making a formal communication.

It should be noted that while it is in order for members of parliament to make communication in their respective district councils, the best practice is to inform the speaker of course, who ensures that the communication is included on the order paper. While it is a recommended practice for Members of Parliament to attend local council meetings as ex-officio members, they are not actual members of these councils and therefore are not at liberty to actively engage in the deliberations. Findings from the assessment reveal that this active participation of MPs usually intimidates and undermines the participation of the legitimate members of council. The district of Sheema also revealed an exceptional case where communication from the RDC was always given precedence over other council business to the extent that the greater part of the discussion in council was in response to submissions made by the RDC.

Unequal opportunity to participate in council debates: Despite the fact that all district councils had substantive legislative skills following the induction conducted by ACODE and supplemented by other development partners, participation in council debates is very uneven. The function of the speaker as a moderator in council assigns him or her the responsibility of ensuring that voices from the different constituencies are heard in council. However, evidence from council minutes from districts of Moroto, Kanungu and Arua revealed dominance of council deliberations by just a few members. This undermined the fair representation of issues from the different constituencies which by implication undermines effective planning and fair allocation of resources. Rule 21 (14) of the Standard Rules of Procedure restricts deliberation on an issue by an individual to just once. The exception to this rule is when providing clarification or response at the end of a debate on a motion. Domination by one or a few individuals has a direct negative effect on the leadership potential of those councillors whose voices are not heard. By virtue of the office, the speaker of council is implicitly mandated to ensure equal opportunity for participation by all members, including deliberately encouraging the less vocal members to make their submissions.

Participation of the speaker in council deliberations: A speaker of council is the moderator of council (LGA, Regulation 11 (9) and holds the mandate to ensure effective and fair council deliberations. By virtue of this responsibility, under rule 21 (2) of the standard rules of procedure, the speaker of council is not expected to engage in the discussions of council with the exception of providing guidance. A detailed analysis of the council minutes from the 35 districts revealed that the effectiveness and neutrality of the speaker during council was compromised in some districts. For example, the speaker from Nwoya district engaged in the mainstream deliberations of council, which by implication compromised the intended neutrality of his office.

Poor documentation of council proceedings: Documenting council proceedings is the responsibility of the Clerk to Council. Given that council minutes are legal documents and essential for accountability, it goes without saying that the proceedings should be captured with detail as guided under rules 16 and 53 (1) of the Standard Rules of Procedure.

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52 Council sitting held on 27th April 2017.
These details include a full record of attendance, record of those absent (with or without apology); and consistency in the names of members cited during deliberations. The majority of district council minutes examined for this year’s assessment contained inconsistencies in a number of areas. While districts like Mukono shared some sets of minutes with no attendance, others like Mbarara, Arua and Kisoro did not indicate whether members not in attendance did so with or without apology. The district of Agago presented one set of minutes without a date. In Apac District, some individuals were cited as having deliberated in the proceedings, yet they did not appear in the attendance record. These smaller details have a bearing on the broader authenticity of the minutes particularly as legal documents of council.

**Attribution to individual members for their contributions:** For purposes of political accountability councils are guided under rule 21 (8) of the Standard Rules of Procedure to address members by their electoral areas and not official names. This is because, while in council, these members speak for a constituency and not in their individual capacity. The minutes from two of the new scorecard districts (Kisoro and Kabale) contained evidence of issues in this area, as did minutes from three of the older scorecard districts (Kanungu, Mbarara and Arua).

**Late production of minutes:** Evidence from the 2016/17 assessment revealed that 31 out of the 35 districts assessed had equipped physical offices of clerks to council. This however was not reflected in the performance of districts in as far as timely production of minutes was concerned. Researchers noted that two thirds of the districts did not produce minutes on time. It was also evident in some council minutes that minutes of council proceedings were not officially reviewed and adopted. This gap was also reflected in the delay or failure by some districts to provide these minutes to the research teams as evidence. Given the central role of these council and committee minutes as evidence of participation and other political functions of council, the inability to produce these records during the assessment process significantly affects performance scores in those districts.

### 4.7.2 Council administration

**Convening council and committee meetings:** The efficiency of local councils is best measured through the functionality and effectiveness of its organs, including the council and related committees (the District Executive Committee, Business Committee, and Standing Committee) as provided for in Regulation 16-17 of the 1997 Local Government Act. The efficacy of the district thus draws from that of the district council and established boards (Districts Land Board) and commissions (District Service Commission, Internal Audit, and Public Accounts Committee). Under Regulation 9 (1) of the LGA and Rule 11 (1) of the Standard Rules of Procedure, local councils are expected to convene regular meetings at least once in two months.

The best practice for purposes of planning is for the councils to have a well laid out schedule for these meetings for a financial year. As the council is the highest policy making organ in the district, there needs to be regular meetings for evaluation and
updates on progress of activities and budgets against set targets. These meetings in themselves act as an accountability mechanism, especially for the technical arm charged with implementation of agreed upon programmes. At the same time, they serve the purpose of ensuring political accountability as the councillors raise issues from their respective constituencies, which in turn aids planning.

Evidence from the 2016/17 assessment revealed that the functionality of business committees was wanting, as nearly half (17 out of 35) district speakers had not convened the mandatory six business committee meetings. A similar gap was registered with standing committees, despite findings showing that these committees were fully constituted in 30 out of 35 districts. In the some cases, (17 out of 35 districts), there was no evidence to show that the standing committees had conducted the six mandatory meetings assessment period. The District Executive Committees presented more positive findings with the majority of the districts (26 out of 35) having convened the 10 DEC meetings as per the scorecard threshold. Merely nine districts convened fewer than the minimum 10. The failure of these different committees to meet the requisite number of times presents a potential planning, management, and accountability gap for the districts that performed poorly under this indicator. Moreover, it undermined the performance of such districts given that there was insufficient evidence to warrant the allotted scores.

### 4.7.3 Monitoring by committees and councillors

Oversight of priority development area programs is a central function of committees of council and councillors. Ideally, findings from the monitoring undertaken should inform council debate as well as effective planning and implementation of planned activities and budgets. A number of councils and individual councillors did not perform well, having failed to provide substantial evidence of monitoring. Overall, there were more committees of council failing to meet the threshold of monitoring at least half of the priority development areas. For the majority of councils, the poor performance under monitoring was a result of budgetary constraints while for the individual councillors it was a combination of factors including capacity gaps and inadequate financial resources. Councillors from new scorecard districts like Kisoro and Kabale relied on reports from joint monitoring and not their own individual monitoring, which explains the very low scores.

Given the mandates of councillors to voice the views and plan for the needs of their constituents, lack of monitoring is likely to lead to poor planning. The chance of misappropriation of resources also increases without regular monitoring, as it is this monitoring by the political leaders that ensures accountability and value for money. They provide the checks and balance for the technical wing that implements the planned activities and budgets.
4.7.4 Administrative and policy gaps

As the discussion of the above factors suggests, consistent, high quality and timely recordkeeping and production of minutes is essential to a well-performing council. As this is the responsibility of the office of the clerk to council, the recent change in the Clerk to Council being a part time position assigned by the CAO creates a substantive amount of inefficiency and has the potential to affect the performance of local government into the future. The fact that clerkship is on assignment to Senior Assistant Secretaries has taken a toll on the motivation of these individuals and led to a number of inconsistencies and even misplacement in documentation.

Several issues with budgeting and revenue generation were also noted in this round of assessment. Evidence gathered indicated that 31 out of the 35 district councils were unable to make a substantive contribution (above 5% increment), to their overall district budgets. In addition, 8 out of 35 districts did not demonstrate clear initiatives for improving local revenue generation, which has a direct bearing on the portion of the local government resources allocated to the functions of council and committees.

4.8 Summary of Findings

The analysis of this year’s scorecard results provides a number of insights, especially given that fact that it was conducted in the first year of a new five-year term. Because many of the councillors were new to the work of local governance and all of the councils were newly constituted, performance scores were generally low. This speaks to the need for capacity building for political leaders once they take on their new roles. The fact that there are no minimum qualifications for anyone to become a councillor opens up this very important leadership function to people who need orientation in political leadership.

That said, however, it is notable that many of the first year councillors in long-standing LGCSCI districts were among the top performers. Indeed, half of the top 37 councillors were newly elected. This suggests that the work that ACODE does in these districts affects more than just the individual councillors; it seems to create a culture of good performance that enables new councillors to perform well even in their first term. The fact that none of the councillors from the five new districts, even if they were beginning their second or third terms, were in the top 37 adds additional credence to this claim.

The outstanding performance of women leaders (chairpersons, speakers and councillors) was also very notable in this round of assessment. With only four female speakers of council, the second and third spots were taken by the female speakers. Moreover, a woman was the top performing councillor out of the entire 970 councillors assessed, and 11 out of the 37 top councillors were female. Also significant is that women comprised the majority of councillors in six of the 35 districts, which points to more and more women being directly elected. The strong performance by women was not surprising because ACODE had deliberately undertaken to support women leaders more during the district orientation workshops that were organised during
the year under review. These findings reveal the potential that women have when supported to execute their political leadership mandate. Moving forward, it will be important to support women in the execution of their duties as they have two or more constituencies to manage.

Monitoring of priority development areas received the least scores during the assessment. This finding relates to the inadequate facilitation for monitoring in most councils. This gap should be fixed by streamlining monitoring mechanisms at local government level. District councillors should be supported to draft monitoring reports which can be shared with the technical staff for follow up. Civic engagement should also be deepened though community meetings to create an opportunity for citizens to interact with their elected leaders on a more regular basis. As is presented in the next chapter, the civic engagement action plan methodology is proving to be a very powerful tool that will help to deepen the demand side of democracy on one hand and increase local government responsiveness on the other.
CEAPs activate citizen demand for better service delivery
5 THE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT ACTION PLAN PROCESS: A MECHANISM FOR ACTIVATING THE DEMAND SIDE OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE

The civic engagement action plans (CEAPs) that arise out of civic engagement meetings (CEMs) is a new innovative intervention that ACODE has developed which is intended to activate the demand side of democracy as envisaged by Local Government Councils Scorecard Initiative (LGCSCI) Theory of Change. After years of working with national level ministries, departments, agencies and parliament, which constitute the supply side of democracy, without registering the desired progress in the provision of efficient service delivery to citizens by local governments. ACODE was convinced that attention needed to be directed to a largely disengaged citizenry. It became apparent that unless the citizens were empowered through service delivery based civic education and the capacity for meaningful civic engagement with their local elected official, local and central government would remain ineffective. Through a carefully facilitated process of discussions on service delivery problems and other national policy issues involving the electorate and their local elected leaders, CEAPs were developed to fill that gap, and have now been implemented across the 35 local governments where ACODE works.

Overtime, the CEAPs have become a powerful tool for strengthening the social contract between the elected leaders and their electorates and has resulted in improved delivery of services. Moreover, as a mechanism for strengthening social accountability, CEAPs are credited for triggering the virtuous circle of mutual empowerment of both the communities and their elected local leadership. This chapter discusses the rationale and methodology of the CEAPs as a mechanism for social accountability and community empowerment, and presents findings and preliminary outcomes from the CEAPs conducted during July and August of 2017.

5.1 Civic Engagement and Social Accountability

The writings of scholars and practitioners are replete with demonstrations of the importance of civic engagement to social accountability. Most are in agreement that civic engagement must go beyond civic education, and that, as Mdee and Thorley suggest, a more nuanced and negotiated engagement between citizens and government is needed. Experiments with social accountability initiatives all too often remain as experiments and do not get scaled up because of the lack of what


Jonathan Fox\textsuperscript{55} calls a “sandwich strategy” that strengthens both the demand and the supply side of democratic governance at the same time. CEAPs incorporate such a strategy.

A Civic Engagement Action Plan (CEAP) is a mechanism for social accountability that enables citizens to hold their local governments accountable for service delivery and enables local governments to respond effectively and efficiently to those demands. They are community generated action plans for using the tools of civic engagement to engage with local government officials around specific service delivery issues. Tied to the dissemination of information on, for example, service delivery sector budgets or the performance of local government officials, the CEAPs engage communities in making sense of the information and using it to develop step by step action plans for using civic engagement tools such as petitions, letters, and community meetings with government officials to engage with government officials to address specific service delivery issues.

The beneficiaries of the CEAP process are citizens, civil society, and local government leaders. Through the CEAP process, citizens deepen their understanding of the mandated roles and responsibilities of their local elected officials, better understand their own rights and responsibilities as citizens, and gain experience actually using the tools of civic engagement, all of which are essential for holding their leaders accountable and activating the demand side of democratic governance. Because CEAPs are facilitated by members of civil society organizations, the capacity of these organizations to be intermediaries between citizens and elected political leaders is deepened. In this capacity, they both amplify citizen voice and monitor government response to civic action. Government officials, too, benefit from the CEAP process as they are able to engage with a more informed citizenry and receive demands from citizens in forms they can use. Thus, CEAPs:

1. Enhance the effectiveness of citizens and civil society to demand political accountability and effective service delivery.
2. Enhance the capacity of civil society to act as mediators between citizens and Local Government councils to improve service delivery.
3. Enhance the capacity of government to respond to citizens demands for better service delivery.

The CEAP process is designed to build the capacity of citizens to use the tools of civic engagement to effectively hold their local government leaders accountable for the work they are supposed to do. As a strategic social accountability tool, it is also designed to enhance the ability of government to respond to citizen demands. Thus, while there are many tools citizens can use to express their demands, the CEAP process focuses on those that have the demand and the supply sides of accountability embedded in the tool.

For example, while a protest or demonstration is a form of civic engagement, as a tool it is focused on the demand side. While communities engaging in a protest might hope for some form of government response in the end, it is not necessarily embedded into the process. By contrast, writing a “petition” is a form of civic engagement that feeds into official government processes. A petition is a formal request, signed by a number of community members, that a service delivery problem be fixed.

Once written, the petitions are submitted to the Speaker of Council, who is then mandated to introduce the petition into Council deliberations, and Council should ultimately act on it. Moreover, government responsiveness (or lack of responsiveness) can be tracked by citizens or civil society intermediaries through publicly available records such as council and committee minutes. Thus, unlike a demand-side civic engagement tool, petitions require an official government response and are therefore strategic.

5.2 The CEAP Methodology

The CEAP methodology is grounded in a participatory action research framework wherein the research itself results in new knowledge for all participants and activation of the supply and demand links in the accountability chain. Each step in the CEAP process is designed to increase the ability of participants – whether they be citizens, community-based organizations, or local government officials – to trigger the virtual circle of empowerment that Fox (2014) describes. Citizens become more adept at using the tools of civic engagement to hold government leaders accountable, CSOs and CBOs become more adept at amplifying those voices and acting as intermediaries, and government officials increase their ability to activate the mechanisms of government responsiveness. There are four components of the CEAP methodology: participant mobilization, the civic engagement meeting, civic engagement action plan development, and support and monitoring.

a) Participant Mobilization: District researchers, together with sub county leaders and district councillors, mobilized participants at the parish level in every Sub County of the 35 districts covered by LGCSCI, taking care to ensure that women and youth are well-represented. The target is 75 participants, though in reality the size varies quite substantially. In this round of CEAPs, the groups ranged in size from 25 to over 100. Government officials including the male and female district councillors representing the sub county, the youth councillors for the district, key members of the technical teams, and sub county and village councillors are also invited and requested to attend.

b) Civic Engagement Meeting (CEM): The CEAP session typically begins with a civic engagement meeting (CEM), which involves a facilitated discussion of the key service delivery issues in the community and information sharing by district councillors, sub county leaders, and ACODE researchers. During the discussion of service delivery issues, participants were encouraged to talk about both improvements and challenges in the five service delivery sectors. Following this
discussion, district councillors representing the sub county had an opportunity to talk about a recent service delivery success in which they played a role. The purpose of this is two-fold: it gives the councillor a chance to talk about what they have done for their constituents, and also helps the participants understand the role that councillors play in service delivery. This was followed by a facilitated discussion of roles and responsibilities of local government vis a vis service delivery and the civic engagement tools that citizens can use to most effectively engage with their government leaders around pressing service delivery issues. Petitions, letters, community meetings, and ACODE’s Local Government SMS platform were emphasized as particularly effective tools. At least two researchers were present for this part of the CEAP sessions, with one facilitating the discussion and the other taking detailed notes on what is said. Field notes were subsequently typed up and then coded and analysed using the Atlas.ti software package. The qualitative data presented in this report on citizens’ voices and councillors’ response stems from the analysis of these field notes. Field notes from 304 CEAP sessions in 22 districts were included in the analysis.

c) Civic Engagement Action Plan Development: Following the civic engagement meeting, participants were asked to form action planning groups in which they would develop a plan for using one of the civic engagement tools to hold their local government accountable for resolving a pressing service delivery issue. When possible, women and youth participants formed their own groups in order to ensure that their needs were addressed. Facilitated by an ACODE district researcher, each group identified the issue they wanted to focus on and determined which civic engagement tool – petition, letter, or community meeting – they wanted to use. The local government officials present were encouraged to help the groups develop their engagement plans by contributing their knowledge of local government procedures and helping them understand what they could expect in terms of the timeliness and modes of government response. At the conclusion of the planning process, the researchers made copies of the plans generated and included them in the field notes produced for the session. Information from 385 action plans was analysed for this report. The vast majority of these plans (65%) were developed by mixed groups (women, men, youth and elderly), 40 of the action planning groups were women-only, 36 were men-only, 45 were youth, and 10 were developed by groups of the elderly.

d) Support and Monitoring: ACODE’s district researchers, most of whom are drawn from CSOs based in the districts, are also charged with supporting the groups as they implement their plans, and then monitoring government response once the letter or petition is submitted to council or the community meeting with their councillor is held. Researchers used a tracking tool for every action plan in order to document the elements of the plan, the process of its implementation, and government response to the demand. Data from the tools are compiled in order to document processes, track successful service delivery outcomes, and understand the challenges faced by communities and government officials along the way.
e) The remainder of this chapter uses data from the CEAPs conducted in July and August of 2017 to discuss the service delivery priorities of communities across Uganda, and the power citizens have, when equipped with the knowledge and tools of civic engagement, to trigger government response to their service delivery demands.

5.3 Citizens’ Service Delivery Priorities

The issues citizen groups chose for their civic engagement action plans reflect service delivery priorities in their communities. As Figure 5.1 shows, of the 385 action plans analysed, the health service issues were the focus of 28%. Water issues were the focus of 23% of the plans, education issues comprised 20%, roads were the focus of 18%, and agricultural services comprised 5%. Issues related to land, latrines, electricity, and youth development comprised an additional 6% of the plans.

**Figure 5.1  Sectors Prioritized by Citizens**

Certain specific issues dominated the action plans within each sector. Below is a discussion of the issues citizen’s singled out as specific areas for action by their elected leaders, organized by sector. Also included in this discussion are representative quotes from the CEM components of the CEAP sessions that give voice to and illustrate these citizen priorities.
5.3.1 Healthcare Services

One hundred eight of the 385 action plans developed by citizen groups focused on issues having to do with the quality of health services in their communities. The top three issues citizens focused on within this sector were inadequate conditions and services in the health centres (41%), long distance to the health centres (20%), and drug stock-outs (14%). Interestingly, 58% of the action plans developed by women focused on problems within this sector.

During the civic engagement meetings, citizens raised issues with regard to quality of infrastructure of the health facilities in their localities. They raised the need for renovation and improvements of health centres to make patients feel more comfortable as well as make it a more sanitary and safe environment for the staff and patients. The quality of health centres in a number of districts was found to be dilapidated and without the necessary structures to provide quality health care. Others lacked clean toilets. A civic engagement meeting in Kituntu – Mpigi District revealed that, “Kituntu Health Centre has small space and it leads to easy spread of diseases to other patients who are not infected. It is in a bad state. It needs renovation” and community meeting held in Acut Kumu Parish in Aromo Sub County, Lira District divulged, “the toilets at Aromo health centre are too bad that the patients even get scared to enter them”. Further, in Ogur Sub County, participants reported that, “the toilets at Aromo HCIII are in a bad state, the grass had grown all over making patients vulnerable to snake bites”. In addition, inadequate staff accommodation and poor functionality of maternity wards were mentioned severally by a number of citizens from various districts.

Long distances to health centres in some districts were reported to inhibit accessibility to healthcare services. Travel of long distances to health centres becomes a challenge for patients in need of immediate emergency care, especially young children and expectant mothers. Depending on the geographical location it also makes it impossible for some to reach a health centre in a timely manner. It ought to be noted that most of these areas do not have reliable ambulance services.

While government’s policy is to operate a Health Centre III in every sub county, a number of citizens decried the absence of these health centres in their localities. In Hoima District, Kabwoya Sub County, it was reported that Ikoba parish has no health centre. The nearest health centre was reported to be in Kabwoya and which is far a distance from Ikoba. In Mukono District, Mopatta Sub County, it was reported that, “the nearest health Centre is Bulikasa Health Centre II which is over 3 kilometres away”. Similarly, participants in Gulu, Pece Prison Parish, Laroo Division, raised the issue of access to health care services, which they noted is a challenge to the residents of the village for the fact that there is no single government health facility within the parish. Similar concerns were raised in Katrine Sub County (Arua District), and Bududa Sub County (Bududa District).

There was experience of regular drug stock out in the available health centres, which limits accessibility to necessary medication. The participants further noted that the
alternative healthcare from private clinics is often more expensive and prohibitive. It ought to be noted however, that Ministry of Health through Joint Medical Stores is supposed to deliver essential medicines and health supplies to the health centres every two months through a push system, which doesn’t cater for specific needs of each health centre.

In Bududa, Bukibokolo Sub County, citizens reported that, “Bukibokolo HC III usually has no drugs and we are forced to buy drugs elsewhere which are expensive”. Also, participants from Odoro Parish, Aromo Sub County (Lira district) revealed that despite the long distance to the health facilities, the facilities in Aromo Sub County usually have no drugs. “Every time you go to Aromo Health Centre III when you are sick, you are either given Panadol or nothing at all”. Drug stock-outs in health centres were further reported in Muduuma Sub County (Mpigi District), and Bumanya in Kalirio District, to mention but a few.

5.3.2 Water Services

Of the 89 action plans that focused on water, three issues dominated the plans: too few water sources (38%), contamination of water sources (30%), and dysfunctional water sources (19%). Water was of particular concern to men, comprising over 30% of the action plans developed by male-only groups. It was also the focus of 26% of the mixed groups.

In the CEMs, many attributed the breakdown of boreholes to the large number of people using a single water point. In Buhanika, Hoima District, citizens reported that the existing boreholes had regular breakdowns due to many people using them. The speed at which boreholes are being maintained was slow, which subjects citizens to social and economic disturbances as they waste time and money to get water. In Pakwelo Parish, Unyama Sub County, Gulu District it was reported that

“the whole of Akonyibedo Parish is severely affected by water shortage. We have only three boreholes and all of them are spoilt. We are now drinking underground piped water, which is not all that clean because the colour changes to brown when water stays in a container for long. If you want water from a borehole, you have to walk up to Lapeta and Pongdwngo in nearby parishes which are also very far and requires one to pay some money in order to be able to fetch the water”.

A similar complaint was raised in Kyinvunikidde –Lwengo District where it was reported that “two villages lack water these are Kyetume A and Kyetume B and yet their population is very big”. Another participant (from Kyinvunikidde) revealed that, “We have to look for water from water sources in the neighbouring villages which are far”.

Some districts lacked fresh water because of contamination by animals, making communities susceptible to waterborne diseases. This was common in Kyangwali Sub County, Hoima District; Paduny Parish Awach Sub County in Gulu District, Wanale
Sub County (Mbale District); and Ndagwe in Lwengo District, among others. This was especially common in cattle keeping communities where water sources were not fenced. Such areas were also found not to have active water user committees.

On a positive note, citizens in several CEMs appreciated the work their councillors had done to improve access to quality water in their communities. This positive feedback was mainly from Bumanya I, Bukigai, and Kyangwali, in Kaliro, Bududa and Hoima Districts respectively. In Kaliro District, for instance, participants reported that “the boreholes are in good condition and have flowing clean water”. The participants in from Wairagaza in Kyangwali reported that they hardly get any water problems, thus: “Wairagaza is hardly hit by lack of water. Like other parts of Kyangwali Sub County many boreholes and other water sources have been constructed”.

In Kanungu District, Kihihi Town Council, citizens appreciated the increased water connection in the community: “We appreciate the increased water connection to the community and some households in the area. However, this water still needs to be extended to other communities like Imbabiro.” In Queens Parish, Laroo Division, Gulu District, the residents revealed that they have adequate supply of water by both government and non-state actors. They reported that, “we have sufficient water supply, and recently we were lucky that a local church connected water to our area”.

5.3.3 Education

A broad range of education issues were targeted in the 76 action plans focused on this sector. The poor performance of pupils was the focus of 25% of the education-related plans. Low staffing levels, teacher absenteeism, inadequate school conditions, and long distance to schools each comprised roughly 10% of the plans. Not surprisingly, issues in this sector were singled out by 27% of the action planning groups comprised of youth.

Findings from the CEMs show that poor performance of public schools in PLE is a major public concern. In some districts like Mukono, participants revealed that many public schools’ performance had deteriorated, leading to many children dropping out of school. Furthermore, findings revealed that the public prefers private schools to public schools due to poor performance in public schools. In Hoima, Kahoora Division, a participant remarked that “Despite Kahoora division having the best pupils in PLE they are produced by private schools”. Citizens in Hoima District were further concerned on the decline in performance of government aided schools like Duhaga Boys and Hoima Public Schools at the expense of private schools. It was noted that private schools have better facilities and smaller Pupil Teacher Ratios.

A Speaker of Council of Nama Sub County, Mukono District, showed concern on the deteriorating standard of education. He attributed this to the gazetting of an industrial hub in Nama Sub County, which has led to many school dropouts and frequent absenteeism as a result of child labour.
Inadequate staffing in many public primary schools was one of the major concerns that citizens raised during the civic engagement meetings. The citizens noted that in some schools the teachers are overwhelmed by the numbers of learners and thus it becomes difficult to manage classrooms due to high pupil to teacher ratios, thus compromising the quality of learning. These cases were common in Bududa, Mbale, Arua, and Mpigi Districts, among others. In Bududda District, Nakatsi Sub County for instance, it was reported that; “Teachers in Busanza Primary School are not enough in. Each class has one teacher who is supposed to teach all subjects”. In Bamanya II, Kaliro District there were also reports of inadequate teachers, thus; “there is both a shortage of teachers in our schools. The few that are available are over loaded with huge classes. The children do not learn well”.

The shortage of teachers is compounded by teacher absenteeism in some areas. In Bududa district, Nabweya Sub County, it was revealed that, “teacher absenteeism is very high and showed us a teacher who was loitering in the trading centre”. Some teachers focus their efforts on personal economic gain, so the performance of the pupils is not a part of the teachers’ agendas. In Jinja a participant revealed that “most of the teachers are more into their businesses like sugarcane plantations and they are less concerned with the teaching but so eager to receive their salaries. And these teachers take their children to different schools away from where they teach because they don’t believe in their schools due to poor performance”.

Unconducive school conditions like lack of teachers’ houses, meals for pupils and teachers and poor supervision were among the conditions thought to impact on the quality of education in schools. A case in point was lack of teachers’ houses in Bududa, Bushiyi Sub County where teachers have to travel for long distances to reach schools where they are deployed.

A CEM participant revealed that, “most of the schools have no teachers’ houses therefore, they walk for long distances and this has contributed to their late coming and poor performance of pupils”. Another CEM Participant in Bududa, Nakatsi observed that, “there is lack of meals for both teachers and pupils and that this has also affected the performance”.

Due to patriarchal ideals, there is a preference to educate boys at the cost of the girl child. As a result, girls are not afforded the same opportunities as boys. Not only is this seen in families’ emphasis on early drop-out and marriage of girls so that the family may receive funds or other forms of payment, but this is seen in the sexual harassment of young girls by community members, whether it be on their way to school or actually at school. It was noted that in some districts, parents encourage and (or) force the girl children to get married even when they are not yet of age. A young student from Aromo Sub County, Lira District revealed that, “Some of our parents buy for us basic needs when we are toddlers but after reaching P.5, he tells you to get a man so that he can buy for you such things and as a result many girls end up getting pregnant before finishing P.7”. Similar findings were also in Mbale District, where a respondent
from Namanonyi Sub County noted that, “parents have not taken the responsibility of educating the girl child seriously. The girls are not given sanitary pads and when they first experience menstrual periods, they feel embarrassed, ashamed and rebuked by the classmates only to drop out”. There were also reports of early marriages in Lwengo District. A respondent from Lwengo Town Council, Lwengo District, further noted that, “their some parents who don’t bother about education of their children especially girls. So, such parents value bride wealth more than education. Such parents give in their children to get married so that they get bride wealth”.

Not all comments about education were negative, however. There are some bright spots. In Amuru District, Amuru Sub County, for example, a CEM participant reported that “I am excited that education was moving on well in the Sub County. The parents are supportive of their children and that they relate well with the teachers”. In Bududa, too, participants noted with enthusiasm that the district was focusing on inclusive education. In Bushiya Sub County, one of the participants said, “On the positive note we are happy that the district has at least provided a unit for deaf students at Manjiya Primary School to cater for the education of deaf in the area.” Further, in Bumasheti and Bushiya Sub-counties in Bududda District, the participants applauded government for giving them enough schools, and in Bushika Sub County, Bududa District, CEM participants observed that; “the sub county has enough primary schools, seven schools and are all in permanent structures”. In addition, in Lira District in Agweng Sub County, the community revealed that they have adequate number of schools that have given their children opportunities to study and acquire some skills. For example a participant from Abala parish in Agweng Sub County in Lira noted: “ We have a very good school - Barlongo Agro in Agweng that has helped our children learn different skills and they have been able to help themselves and their families at large”. Another participant from the same area noted that; “there are so many schools in Agweng now and so their children have all the reasons to study and become better people in the future”.

5.3.4 Roads

Of the 69 action plans focused on roads, virtually all of them focused on either poor road maintenance (61%) or poor road networks (26%). Roads were another area of particular priority to youth, as evidenced by this sector being the target of 27% of their action plans. Access to a good road network contributes to reducing the distance between people; markets, services and knowledge. A good road network simply gets people connected, which increases peoples’ mobility and spurs local economic growth. The expectation from communities in these districts is a network of roads that are well maintained, accessible and passable.

Findings revealed that there are communities that were satisfied with the nature, progress and quality of the road network in the communities. These included Kyangwali Sub County in Hoima District; Abala-Agweng Sub County in Lira District, and Kyazanga Town Council in Lwengo District, among others. In Kyangwali Sub
County for instance, some participants reported that, “In the recent past, government has maintained some roads in Kyangwali including Butoole road.” In Abala parish in Agweng sub county (Lira District) participants in CEMs noted that “Orit and Kaguta bridges are in good conditions and they have eased the transportation services in Agweng Sub County….We are excited about the many roads that are in Agweng now compared to the years back and we appreciate government for that great job”

In Lwengo District, Kyazanga Town Council citizens reported that their roads have improved over time mainly because of voluntary community service on the roads done by the members of their community. One female elderly participant noted that: “Kyazanga town council roads where in good shape and also in the village areas. This was attributed to the bill that was passed in district council where community members should do bulungi bwansi on all roads in their respective areas…. citizens have actively involved themselves in Bulungi bwansi to better up the town council roads”

On the other side, however, there were other findings from various districts that indicate many areas where roads lack maintenance, are bushy, very narrow, impassable, and some communities do not have any access roads. A case in point, in Bududa Sub County, Bududa District, citizens reported that, “there is lack of maintenance of Bumasheti to Bududa road, and Bududa to Bushika roads. They have become very bushy and impassable during the rainy seasons.” Another participant from Bududa Sub County explained the multiple consequences of poorly maintained roads: “The nature of these roads has greatly affected the development because during the rainy seasons the roads are very slippery and no vehicle can make it to this place, even the technical staff of the sub county do not work during such seasons….it is also difficult to access markets for agriculture produce mainly matooke and cabbage which end up rotting…. Bushika and Bukigai are the major markets for agriculture produce in Bududa and Bugisu region but they become inaccessible during rainy seasons because of the bad roads.”

In Hoima District, there were reports of lack of repair and maintenance of roads. In Buhanika Sub County for instance it was reported that: “The CAIIP road constructed 3 years ago is bushy and needs maintenance. We are suffering with transport during rainy seasons and this has made the areas of Kitonya not accessible yet they have an economic potential to our sub county.” Another citizen in the same CEM expressed frustration with the lack of district leadership on this issue: “There has been failure by district, Sub County, town council and Kyabatalya parish to have their roads repaired or opened up despite reminders to our elected leaders… The few roads that are under central and local governments take too long to be maintained this leaves us to suffer transporting produce and it also limits our movements”. 
There were also concerns of lack of roads connecting villages, parishes and sub-counties. In Agago District, Patongo, Lukwangole, for example, participants from Omwodlum village raise a concern that, “the villages of Owito and Omwodlum have no roads connecting them to the main road that goes to Patongo town council making it very difficult to access health services in case one is sick.” The importance of good, well maintained road networks, as this quote suggests, is fundamental to accessing other services.

5.3.5 Agriculture
The delivery of agricultural services was the target of 19 of the 385 action plans (5%). Three specific issues dominated these 19 plans: inadequate supplies of farm inputs, failure to distribute supplies, and poor mobilisation of people to attend OWC meetings. The National development Plan II recognises the need to increase agricultural production and productivity as being key to sustainable economic growth and driving Uganda to middle income status. To this end; the production trend of major agricultural commodities has been positive, but there is however need to boost the production of the National Priorities and strategic commodities. The findings from CEMs indicate that there were some successes within the agricultural sector. In Mukono District, Seeta Namuganga Sub County, people were happy that they were able to receive farm inputs. It was reported that, “People here benefit from seedlings every season. There has been distribution 50 Kilograms of seedlings for farmers in our community to selected farmers”. This positive comment about seeds delivered was an exception, however. Most of what was said about seeds and the delivery of agricultural inputs more generally was negative.

In Bududa, Bukibokolo Sub County, a participant noted that: “Under OWC seeds that are distributed are usually rotten and they do not germinate. Also, the leaders of OWC retain some of the seeds for themselves and all target beneficiaries do not receive the seeds”. Another person in the same CEM remarked that, “seeds are usually received off season and cannot be planted, if planted, they do not grow”. In Kaliro, there were reports of unfair distribution of inputs as well as withholding of inputs for farmers by the OWC officials. Also, a participant from Bumanya, Kaliro District retorted that, “there is unfair distribution of OWC agricultural inputs. The inputs are only shared among the officials themselves”.

There were reported challenges of crop pests, corruption among the OWC officials and lack of knowledge among farmers of OWC programs and enterprises they support. A case in point was in Agago where farmers complained of the army worms that had ravaged their crops. In Agago District, Patongo-Kal Sub County, a member of a farmer group reported that, “A nearby maize garden was invaded by the army worms and totally destroyed. There were many other maize gardens in the Sub County that were destroyed. What can we do since government seems to have turned a deaf ear to our cry?”

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56 Agriculture Sector Budget Framework Paper FY 2017/18 http://budget.go.ug/budget/sites/default/files/Sector%20Budget%20Docs/BFP_01_Agriculture%202017-18_0.pdf
In some districts, participants suggested solutions to some of the challenges they were facing. For instance, participants who are farmers in Kaliro District recommended the need to stabilise prices for their agricultural produce. Farmers feel that the re-introduction of farmers’ co-operatives would be critical in achieving this. For instance, a farmer from Namugongo, Kaliro District recommended that, “There is a need to bring back cooperative societies that can help farmers in stable prices otherwise people from town buy produce from farmers at a very low price even when prices are high in towns. This is due to lack of negotiation power”.

5.4 Citizen Knowledge of Councillor Roles

Citizen demand for service delivery improvements begins with citizen knowledge of government functions and processes. Over the course of the past eight years, LGCSCI has been using the dissemination of scorecard results as an opportunity to educate citizens about the roles and responsibilities of their elected leaders. These efforts appear to have borne fruit. In the civic engagement meetings during this round of the assessment process, citizens in most districts were well aware of what their councillors were supposed to be doing.

When asked about their knowledge of the roles of their elected councillors, the citizens reported that councillors’ roles include representation of citizens in council, lobbying for projects to be implemented in their electoral areas from government, legislation, participation in planning and budgeting at council level, engagement with citizens in their electoral areas, and monitoring service delivery.

a) Representation:

In district after district, citizens clearly stated that one of the roles of their councillors was to represent them in local councils. As an elderly participant in Bududa said, “They are our voices. Their role is to represent citizens in council.” This understanding was echoed in other CEMs as well:

“They are supposed to represent us at the district meeting and get for us services.” (Mpigi)

“They should take community challenges to be addressed by the government at the district level.” (Arua)

“The role of the councillors is to give us feedback of what is happening in the district since the voters have sent them because they cannot all crowd there”. (Gulu)

“We want her to represent us as women because we have many problems” (Mpigi)

“A councillor’s work is to attend council meetings and stand in the gap for us while at the district.” (Lira)
b) Lobby for government projects:

Citizens also demonstrated their knowledge of councillors’ roles in lobbying for services on their behalf. Citizens expect their leaders to bring various services and goods to their electoral areas. As one participant in Mukono stated, “Councillors are expected to lobby for better services to be delivered in the Sub County”. In other districts, citizen’s knowledge of this role was evident as well:

“One of the roles of councillors is to lobby for development projects from government”. (Bududa)

“The District local councillors act as a link between the citizens and other stakeholders like government and NGOs, asking for government programs and bringing them to the communities” (Arua)

“The other role of councillors is lobbying for government projects” (Mbale)

“A councillor is supposed to lobby NGOs to intervene in their plight and should also take part in passing the district or Sub County budget.” (Arua)

c) Contact with the electorate:

Engaging with citizens is another mandated responsibility of councillors. They are supposed to regularly organise meetings with their constituents to collect input from them and give them feedback from the councils. Citizens understood this role well, and very often named it when asked about the roles of their councillors.

“I think councillors should find out things that are affecting us in our village and go to the district and find ways of working on them. Councillors should give us information from the district about what they are going to do for us in our village when they come for village meetings”. (Lwengo)

“The role of their councillors is to collect the issues concerning service deliverer and taking it to the district council for debate and other relevant offices from the district” (Gulu)

“The role of a leader is to bear the responsibility of the community to gather information, issues from the citizen to the Sub County to make sure that citizens benefit from the government” (Mpigi)

“We expect councillors to solicit for development views from the villages and subsequently deliver them to the district” (Mukono)

Representing constituents, lobbying on their behalf, and engaging with the electorate were the responsibilities of councillors that citizens across the districts seemed to be most aware of. Councillor responsibilities in the areas of legislation, budgeting, and monitoring service delivery were also noted, though less frequently.

d) Participation in budget formation and approval:

The citizens in Mpigi, Kaliro, and Lwengo Districts were particularly aware that it a responsibility of councillors to participate in the formation and approval of local government budgets. In Mpigi, for example, one CEM participant noted that; “What
I expected from the councillors is to budget and solicit for funds from the district to construct schools, and boreholes in our community”. In the same vein a participant from Kalirio Town Council said, “A councillor should take part in passing the district or Sub County budget”.

e) Monitoring service delivery:

Councillors are mandated to monitor service delivery in their electoral areas. Interaction with citizens in some districts revealed awareness of this statutory function. In Mpigi, for example, one participant stated that “Councillors are supposed to monitor government activities in health, education, and agriculture”. Again, in Mpigi, one gentleman noted that “Councillors are supposed to keep monitoring to see if health workers are doing their job and report back to the District Health Offices and ensure that problems are put right”.

The roles mentioned by citizens are in line with the statutory roles of elected leaders as stipulated in the Local Government’s Act. This demonstrates a shift from those roles that citizens had previously prescribed for their leaders that included attending burials; buying groceries and alcohol for supporters; paying school fees for children of supporters; and taking care of personal challenges of citizens. While there were occasional claims that the role of elected leaders was to provide food for their constituents, these were few and far between and mainly from elderly participants. For the most part, knowledge about the roles and responsibilities of elected leaders that forms the foundation for civic engagement, exists in the local communities and can be built upon to drive the demand side of democratic governance in Uganda, as the CEAP process demonstrates.

5.5 Activating responsive local governance

Although four months is a relatively short time to see concrete service delivery outcomes from the CEAPs, especially given the fact that the petitions and letters created through the plans need to make their way through local government processes, many plans have already received responses from local government officials and some have even resulted in the service delivery outcomes citizens called for.

A sampling of the status of the action plans in 18 of the districts suggests that most of the action plans have indeed been implemented in that petitions and letters have been written and submitted to council. While it is difficult to say at this early stage what the status of the petitions are within the government process, monitoring reports from the district researchers provide the following insights into the value of councillor involvement in the CEAP process itself for moving citizen demands through the mechanisms of council and attaining positive service delivery outcomes.

1. When councillors play no role in the CEAP process, the action plans themselves are less likely to be implemented by the citizen groups.

2. When councillors mobilize community members and sensitize them to the processes of local government, the action plans are more likely to be fully implemented by the citizen groups.
3. When councillors respond to the action plans implemented by the people and/or attend the meetings in which the petitions or letters are drafted, action is more likely to be taken to resolve the issues of greatest concern to the communities.

4. Councillors' direct engagement with technical leaders who have the capacity to address the service delivery issues raised by the communities can in some cases resolve the issue without bringing it before council as a whole.

5.6 Putting the demand and supply sides of local governance in motion: three case stories

The case stories below demonstrate the power of the CEAP methodology to activate the demand and supply sides of local governance.

Case Story #1: Nakapiripirit – Roads (Mixed group)

On October 16, 2016, a men and youths group convened a community meeting which people attended from Nakuyon, Arionomoru, Naabere, and Lokwasinyon villages. The meeting discussed the impassable road within their community. Another meeting to discuss the same issue was held on October 19, 2016. The second community meeting was held at Naabore village and was attended by 89 community members – 40 males and 49 females. According to the minutes of the meeting, all community members agreed that the issue of the damaged impassable road becomes a priority because it had substantially affected movement of people, cut off villages from each other and severed economic activities. Further, accessing Amaler Health Centre had become very difficult because the road has become impassable. The community members as a way forward wrote a petition to the area district male councillor, Hon. Lochoto Richard and gave copies of that petition to the sub county chairperson, Senior Assistant Secretary and the Community Development Officer of Namalu Sub County.

The community leader, Mr Moru Joseph, delivered the petition to Hon. Lochoto Richard November 26, 2016. The petition was served to Hon. Lochoto who later presented the petition to the district council sitting on December 16, 2016. Council referred the matter to the works and technical services committee. Hon. Lochoto also presented the same issue to the LC III council sitting on December 19, 2016. The matter was discussed at the Sub County and it was resolved that Amaler-Lokwasinyon road be rehabilitated. In February 2017, the construction works started and Amaler-Lokwasinyon road got rehabilitated. This whole process took a period of 4 months.

Case Story #2 Kaliro – Agriculture (Women)

In Kaliro District, a CEAP was developed in Nawaikoke Parish, Nawaikoke Sub County to address unfair disbursement of agricultural inputs through the Operation Wealth Creation (OWC) Program. An action planning meeting targeting the women and youth
was convened on July 11, 2017. This meeting, however, attracted other participants including persons with disability, older persons, staff of service delivery units and leaders at the sub county level. During the meeting citizens pointed out a number of gaps in the delivery of seeds under the Operation Wealth Creation programme. In this meeting the most prominent concerns were that women were often left out during the distribution of seeds by OWC staff, and that seeds were distributed during off season for planting. The meeting resolved to develop an action plan on how to raise these concerns to the concerned authorities and seek redress.

The women in the group decided to write a letter to the directly elected male councillor for Nawaikoke Sub County to bring to his attention their discontent with the manner in which seeds are distributed to beneficiaries under the OWC programme. The women chose to write to their area male councillor because they found him to be easily accessible and often available in the constituency. Honourable Ivan Musasizi (directly elected male councillor) doubles as the Vice Chairperson for Kaliro District.

The group, through their chairperson, Harriet Mutesi, convened another meeting on July 17, 2017 to draft the letter. A letter was written during this meeting, and with the attendance list attached, it was delivered to the directly elected councillor, Honourable Ivan Musasizi on July 20, 2017. The Honourable Ivan Musasizi received the letter from the women’s group and pledged to forward their issues to the coordinator of the OWC.
programme and also provide the group with necessary feedback. In his capacity as the area councillor, Hon. Ivan Musasizi wrote a letter to the office of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) dated July 21, 2017 informing him of the citizen letter he received in which a group of women from Nawaikoke Sub County were requesting to be given maize and coffee seedlings from the office of the coordinator of Operation Wealth Creation (OWC). The Senior Assistant Secretary (SAS) on behalf of the CAO’s office wrote a letter dated September 7, 2017 to the office of the Coordinator of OWC requesting the Coordinator to allocate seedlings as requested by the group of women from Nawaikoke. In the area councillor’s feedback to the women’s group, he noted that the OWC coordinator verbally made a commitment that he would prioritise this particular women’s group in the next distribution cycle of seeds, even when they were not organised in groups as required by OWC implementation guidelines.

During the month of September 2017, the women group reported to have received the agriculture inputs as promised. Specifically, they received 13 bags of Maize seeds which is equivalent to 130 kilograms, and 6 bags of Beans seeds, which is equivalent to 60 kilograms. Moreover, the women’s group has now been officially recognised as a farmers group and will therefore be eligible to receive disbursements of inputs in future.

**Case Story #3 Wakiso – Health**

This is a case story of community members who were placed in one group of community Members from Kakiri, Wakiso District who were dissatisfied with performance of Kakiri Health Centre III. The community members decided to hold a community meeting to develop an action plan to seek intervention on a Health Centre III in their area. During the meeting citizens pointed out a number concerns about the health facility, including staff asking patients for money before they were treated, late reporting and absenteeism of health workers, drug stock outs in the health centre, and rude and harsh health personnel at the health centre. This group of community members chose to write a petition to their female councillor representing Kakiri town council and Sub County in order to bring to her attention their discontent with the quality of healthcare services at Kakiri HCIII.

The group through their councillor, Hon Immaculate, convened a meeting on August 31, 2017 to inform the health personnel at the health facility in question. During this meeting, 64 community members were in attendance. In this meeting other leaders and stakeholders were involved including the area Local Council I (LCI) chairperson and the sub county- council speaker, Kakiri. In the meeting it was agreed that the community writes a petition to the Speaker of the Council, Wakiso District Local Government. A petition dated September 7, 2017 was written and delivered to the said speaker. Copies of the same petition were given to the District Chairperson, District Health Officer, and Secretary for Health, the Committee for HESS at the District.

The District Health Officer recommended that the health inspector visit the health centre and investigate the issues raised in the petition. After visiting the health
facility, the health inspector made a recommendation in the visitors’ book for uniforms labelled with each staff’s names. This would ensure easy identification of the health worker for accountability purposes, addressing the concern on absenteeism and unprofessional conduct. Subsequently, the petition was delivered, read and debated on in council on the September 21, 2017. The District Council referred the matter to the Social Services Committee for further action. The Committee visited the health centre and decided to raise the issue of need for uniforms for health workers with the Ministry of Health.

When the Ministry of Health was contacted, the response was that they would deliver one uniform per health worker. The district council also passed a resolution to provide the workers with a second uniform. The district is now in the process of availing funds to be able to purchase uniforms for all the health workers in the district.

5.7 Conclusion

The cases presented here are powerful testimonies to the effectiveness of the CEAP process. To be sure, not every action plan results in a service delivery improvement, as there are many points in the process where the process can end or be stymied. Even with the support of the CSOs, designated point persons can fail to fulfil the responsibility they agreed to, action plan groups can fail to follow through with the process, and local government officials can be non-responsive. This is the case with any action planning process. However, when the community is committed, when government is engaged and responsive, and when CSO facilitators are persistent in their provision of support and monitoring, the process is likely to yield results.
Building the capacity of citizens to use civic technology
6 CIVIC TECHNOLOGY: A MECHANISM TO STRENGTHEN CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE

6.1 Introduction

For over a decade now, civic technology has taken center stage in bridging the relationship between citizens and governments. Civic Technology is often cited as a mechanism in strengthening citizen participation in governance. Technology innovations have seen the development of various new tools such as social media and online interactive platforms that have the potential to bridge communication and interaction gaps between citizens and their local governments. Civic engagement is an essential building block in democratic development of any given society and a number of mechanisms aimed at strengthening civic engagement in local governance are constantly evolving in the civic-technology world.

Civic engagement in local governance includes ordinary citizens being able to assess their needs, contributing to local development and budget monitoring. Involvement of citizens is important for improving public service delivery and reducing corruption, by making civil servants and political leaders accountable to the people. For civic engagement to work, transparency of government information is needed, as well as the inclusion of citizens into decision-making.

Eliminating marginalized citizens from decision-making is one of the causes of poverty and poor service delivery because it denies them their rights and creates unequal power relationships. It is against this background that the Local Government Councils Scorecard Initiative introduced the Local Government SMS platform as a mechanism to enhance civic engagement.

Chapter four of the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda expressly provides for civil and political rights, including freedom of expression and access to information, which is the basis of political participation. Effective civic engagement thrives on trust in local leadership and participation in local governance. In strengthening the participation of citizens in local governance, there is need to empower citizens in understanding their civic duties as citizens and how they can exercise their right to engage in local governance issues. This is where civil society needs to partner with local authorities to build confidence in citizens to participate in governance issues in their communities, and also preparing local authorities to facilitate effective citizen participation.

This participation helps in improving accountability and the ability of local governments to solve public service delivery deficiencies, creates more inclusiveness in decision-making and improves the quality of lives in communities. To increase awareness and empowerment of citizens to have a voice can be effectively enhanced through deliberate access to technology for instance the Local Government SMS platform.

58 LOGIN, (2014). Civic Engagement in Local Governance, Asia, LOGIN
In this digital age, advancements in information technology have offered potentially beneficial effects on the quality of governance. The use of civic technology promotes good governance by way of increasing transparency, access to information, and accountability. It helps in strengthening public participation and accurate decision-making to enhance efficiency in delivery of public goods and services. Accountability as one of the key elements of good governance can be vertical, horizontal or social.  

However, this chapter will focus on social accountability as a form of civic engagement that builds accountability through the collective efforts of citizens and civil society organizations to hold public servants and political leaders accountable. It describes the principle of a vibrant, dynamic and accountable relationship between the state and citizens underpinning efforts to ensure equitable development.  

Additionally, civic engagement is a key aspect in fostering accountability and plays a crucial role in amplifying citizens’ voice as far as participation in decision making, policy making, improving the quality of public goods and services, holding local leaders accountable and to improve government responsiveness in management of public affairs. According to the UNDP Human Development Report 1993, Civic engagement is “a process, not an event that closely involves people in the socio-economic, cultural and political processes that affect their lives. Civic engagement empowers citizens’ ability to identify issues affecting their community livelihoods and demand action from their elected leaders. It also empowers citizens to be agents of social change in communities. 

The focus of this chapter is a discussion of the role of civic technology or “civic tech” as a facilitator of civic engagement, the role of technology in strengthening citizen engagement in local governance, its effectiveness in fostering transparency, accountability and responsiveness of elected leaders and public officers in improving the delivery of public goods and services. Here we focus on ACODE’s local government SMS platform to advance the argument for civic technology use in local governance. Civic tech is defined as the use of Information Technology to facilitate citizens’ engagement with their local leaders on issues of public service delivery. Civic technology is also used to refer to technology that is explicitly leveraged to increase and deepen democratic participation. Civic tech has been embraced by governments, development partners and civil society worldwide to amplify citizens’ voices to demand for better delivery of public goods and services.

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61 Ibid
62 LOGIN, (2014). Civic Engagement in Local Governance, Asia, LOGIN
For close to a decade now, there has been a growing debate concerning civic technology or “civic tech” and the opportunities for leveraging digital tools to benefit the public good. Governments, development partners and civil society organizations are continuing to embrace the use of technology to facilitate civic engagement. Information and communication technology present an opportunity for citizens to communicate from anywhere and anytime hence leading to increased involvement of citizens.\(^{67}\)

In this digital age, information travels fast anywhere around the world and therefore calls for innovations that adapts quickly to the changing environment. According to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) report for 2016, seven billion people that is 95% of the world’s population live in an area that is covered by a mobile cellular network and mobile –broadband networks reach 84% of the global population of which 67% of the population are in rural areas and continues to grow at a rate of 41% in developing countries. The report further shows that more than half the world population is not connected to internet with 75% people being in Africa and 25% in European countries.\(^{68}\) This presents an opportunity for civic tech innovators to develop mechanisms local governments can use to serve citizens better and improve participation.

Technology in governance is being used to improve service delivery, provide a platform to amplify citizen voice, data collection, transparency and accountability in government expenditure, disseminating information, fighting corruption and monitoring human rights. It is important to note that citizens, development partners and civil society organizations which are critical pillars of good governance can use technology in outreach and advocacy, monitoring government programs, holding both political and government officials accountable, providing a platform for amplifying citizens voice.\(^{69}\)

### 6.2 Strengthening Civic Engagement in Local Governance

Strengthening citizen participation by amplifying their voices is important in empowering citizens to hold decision-makers accountable. Civic engagement helps to promote transparency, fight corruption, empower marginalized citizens, and harnessing the power of new technologies to make local governments more effective and accountable.

The use of civic technology helps to ensure that the voices of citizens are heard, and that governments have both the capacity and the incentive to listen and respond in a timely manner. This involves bringing together unusual combinations of people – from the arenas of technology, development, government, social activism and the civil society to work together in unfamiliar ways on new ideas in accountable governance.

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\(^{69}\) DANIDA, (2012). *DANIDA Study :Using ICT to Promote Governance*
There are quite a number of mechanisms that have been employed in strengthening citizen participation in local governance around the world including the following examples from international, regional and local initiatives:

1. **Write toThem**: a web based civic innovation in the United Kingdom developed by “mySociety” whose goals include providing a platform for citizens to contact their political leaders for example councilors, members of parliament and to facilitate a dialogue between the constituents and their representatives. This innovation has registered a high level of user satisfaction although the rate of responsiveness varied depending on the category of leaders.70

2. **Lungisa**: an innovation launched by Cell-Life in 2012. It enables residents of Cape Town in South Africa to submit issues affecting them related to public service delivery using an online form with an aim of improving service delivery by using low cost technology. Lungisa team has established a good relationship with the city of Cape Town and this has led to a high response rate to the issues that are raised through the site. Some of the service delivery issues posted on the site are related to roads and transport, drainage, water and sanitation, street lights and electricity. Though this innovation has high response rate, it registered low uptake according to World Bank evaluation report.71

3. **Action for Transparency (A4T)**: This innovation allows citizens and government officials to act on corruption cases by exposing individuals and institutions that are involved in corruption cases through the media and activist groups. This is done by using mobile phones with internet to access government money releases to different service delivery sectors and track the amount actually spent. This innovation is currently being implemented in Uganda, Kenya and Zambia.72

From the above examples it is widely believed that both citizens and government have a shared expectation as far as the delivery of public goods and services is concerned. Although governments derive their legitimacy and respect from citizens on the account of effective public service delivery systems, citizens on the other hand have a responsibility to hold governments accountable when delivery systems of those services fail and therefore need platforms that amplifies their voice for positive change.

Effective delivery of public services is one way of ensuring that political leaders are consistently elected or re-elected into government. Governments that are perceived by citizens as having failed to deliver public services can be voted out of office. On the other hand, citizens elect their leaders with the expectation that those leaders will represent them and make good policy decisions for them to ensure that they have access to public goods and services such as health care, education, agricultural advisory services, and roads among many others.

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72 Information on A4T is Available at: http://www.actionfortransparency.org/ Accessed on 1st June 2017
However, for this shared expectation to materialize, citizens and their elected leaders must be able to communicate with each other. In particular, there should be mechanisms by which elected leaders can be held to account by the citizens. During the implementation of the Local Government Councils Scorecard Initiative, it was found out that one of the key barriers to effective representation of the concerns of voters at the local level is that citizens have no clear channels of communicating to their elected leaders.

Conversely, it is both difficult and expensive for elected leaders to provide feedback on the efforts they make to ensure that the concerns of their electorate are addressed. In the majority of cases, local elected leaders use social functions such as weddings and burial ceremonies to report back to their electorate and these channels of communication do not give citizens the opportunity to raise their own issues.

6.3 Local Government SMS Platform

As part of the effort to bridge citizens-government relationship gap, ACODE under the Local Government Councils Scorecard Initiative established and launched the Local Government SMS platform in June 2013 to facilitate communication between citizens and their elected local government leaders. The platform allows citizens to report public service delivery deficiencies in their locality or community to their councilors.

Equipped with this knowledge and information, the councilor can lobby the appropriate agencies of government to respond to citizens’ service delivery reports, raise the concerns in the district council and at the same time use the Local Government SMS platform to report back on the action taken. The Local Government SMS platform was initially launched and piloted in 20 districts of Uganda in 2013 and currently it covers 35 districts of Uganda where the Local Government Councils Scorecard Initiative is being implemented. It should be noted that local governments or districts in Uganda are service delivery centers in their respective jurisdictions. The Local Government SMS platform was designed to increase communication between citizens and their elected leaders at local government level on matters of service delivery, accountability and governance. Communication between the electorate and their elected district representatives boost government responsiveness to failures in public service delivery, hence increasing government legitimacy. The platform therefore is offering the following benefits to the users:

1. Enhancing local democracy: in our current electoral democracy, there are few opportunities for citizens to keep in contact with their leaders when campaigns and elections are over. The Local Government SMS platform is a unique tool for ensuring that citizens are engaged as they remain in constant communication with their elected leaders.

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73 Mpigi District Council Scorecard Report 2012/13 Available at http://www.acode-u.org/Files/Publications/PSDA_2.pdf accessed on 30th May 2017
2. **Ensuring citizen empowerment:** the Local Government SMS platform is providing a platform in empowering citizens with the capacity to demand for solutions whenever there is a failure in the delivery of public service.

3. **Facilitating civic engagement:** the Local Government SMS platform is contributing to the deepening of participation of citizens in governance. With such a communication platform, citizens can no longer be silent spectators when their children fail exams, or the teacher fails to show up at school or the health worker fails to show up at the local health center. By constantly seeking answers for these deficiencies in service delivery, citizens are actively engaged in seeking solutions to their problems.

4. **Political accountability:** the platform promotes political accountability of elected leaders to the electorate. When leaders receive information from their electorate about service delivery failures, they respond in different ways. For example, by reporting such failures to the responsible agencies of local government or central government. Political leaders also bring up such service delivery failures in the local government council so that they are debated and appropriate resolutions or actions taken hence political leadership accountability.

The Local Government SMS Platform enables citizens to send issues about service delivery in their communities to their local government political leaders. The platform is SMS based and a message is sent to a short code. The Platform supports different local languages in Uganda therefore citizens can send issues about service delivery in their local languages. Once a message is received on the platform, it is routed to the area district councilor who can in turn provide a response in real time. Both citizens and councilors incur a cost once they send messages to the platform.

The Local Government SMS platform is based on a built-in database of councilors’ names, mobile numbers, the districts, constituents they represent and their mandates (chairperson, directly elected councilor, woman councilor representative, persons with disabilities representative, councilor for the elderly, and youth counselor). Councilor mandates like youth, elderly and person with disability that have both male and female representatives, both councilors receive the same message when a message is sent to the platform to any of these mandates then councilors can each choose to respond accordingly.

It also contains a database of key words that represents different service delivery categories such as water, roads, health, agriculture and education among others. Feedback from different citizens is available on the website through an interactive map that shows issues received from different districts for the public to view. To protect confidentiality of both the citizens and councilors, mobile phone numbers of both parties are kept confidential and cannot be viewed by the public. The platform also receives anonymous messages therefore citizens who are trained can leave their name if they wish their leaders to know but can also chose to remain anonymous.

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74 This information is available at [http://216.104.204.91/acode/admin/](http://216.104.204.91/acode/admin/)
ACODE staff compile reports of all messages received per district at the end of each quarter and these are shared with the district technical and political leaders including the district councilors. The district chairperson receives a report of all messages received from citizens in that particular district as a means of providing oversight to the follow up processes. These reports help to deal with different excuses from councilors such as a loss of a mobile phone, access to network connectivity, and faulty mobile phones that may lead to one not receiving the SMS.

The Local Government SMS platform has been effective in disseminating information about service delivery standards to citizens and as such citizens are able to compare the standards of public services they are receiving in their communities and if not, then they are able to inform their leaders through the platform. Political leaders’ scorecard performance is disseminated through the platform so that citizens also know how the leaders they elected are performing.

Service delivery Issues raised on the SMS platform have been taken serious by political leaders who have gone ahead to make sure that solutions are offered to the citizens for example an SMS sent to both the directly elected councilor and special woman councilor of Butansi sub county about Bugeywa primary school where the iron sheets of one of the school blocks that also accommodates the head teachers office was blown off by a storm .The councilors mobilized the LC V chairperson Kamuli district to visit the school.

After an on-site assessment the chairman revealed that prior to the incidence of the roof being blown off, Bugeywa primary school had been selected among the 10 government aided primary schools in Kamuli district to benefit from the construction of 5 classrooms and 5 teachers houses under the social action plan of Isimba dam project. He made a commitment that some money would be spared from what had already been allocated to the school under the Isimba project to buy iron sheets to roof the classroom block – from the on site assessment, the chairman observed that not only was the roof blown off, but that the classroom block itself was weak having served for many years.

Sample of messages received by the councilors about Bugeywa primary school in Kamuli district on the Local Government SMS Platform:

- **Bugeywa Primary School ebati livudeko era amabati ekizimbe kya head master tekiyina * Kamuli * Butansi * Woman.**

- **Bugeywa Primary School ebati livudeko era amabati ekizimbe kya head master tekiyina * Kamuli * Butansi**

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75 The above SMS means that the iron sheets of one of the classroom blocks in Bugeywa primary school were blown off and this particular block also houses the headmasters’ office.
Though the Local Government SMS platform has registered quite low uptake and responsiveness from councilors, its successes have also been hindered by infrastructural issues such as poor or no network coverage in some districts of Uganda. Illiteracy rate of citizens especially in local communities is also high in that many citizens cannot read and write and therefore cannot even type a message on their phones following the right instructions on how the SMS should be sent.

Lack of appreciation of the technology is still a hindrance in local communities where citizens are not exposed on the benefits of technology. Limited SMS characters also affect the way citizens express themselves. Financial constraints and poverty have also negatively impacted the platform in that both citizens and local leaders have expressed reservations with having to incur a cost to send a message. In addition limited funds to facilitate continuous advertising and marketing has impacted uptake negatively. However, to address these challenges, ACODE is continuously training both citizens and councilors on the benefits of integrating technology in improving public service delivery through other project activities.

Despite the challenges facing technology today, a look at the future is promising. There is evidence of a transformative potential of technology in shaping the future of our civic engagement. Governments in developing world are waking up to the realization that technology can no longer be ignored. In the last decade, for the first
time in years, governments are allocating funds in their national budgets to spend on technology solutions that can transform the way they operate, serve their citizens better and make decisions based upon data.

Citizens are increasingly demanding for accountability from their leaders. Technology is presenting an opportunity for the public to participate in election monitoring, budgeting, communicate with their political leaders and government officials, fighting corruption and improving service delivery. With both online and mobile technology tools facilitating citizens to participate and take part in decision making process, identifying and sharing with their leaders issues concerning public service delivery, there is no doubt that to some extent the aspects of transparency and accountability are being positively improved by technology.
Monitoring by Local Government Officials improves the quality of services.
As the findings presented in Chapters Four, Five and Six make clear, local government leaders and the citizens they represent are willing and increasingly able to do their parts to activate the demand and supply sides of local governance in Uganda. Citizens are engaging with their elected leaders about pressing service delivery issues through community meetings and civic technology, and by writing letters and petitions that are submitted to council through the speakers. Moreover, the systems of local government, through the capacity building initiatives associated with LGCSCI, are becoming increasingly responsive to citizen demands. The data gathered through the scorecard assessment and CEAP processes attest to service delivery improvements. However, local governments can only do so much with the resources they have. This chapter provides a broader analysis of local government financing in Uganda, and the ways that it both enables and constrains effective service delivery. A rich and nuanced understanding of how resources are budgeted and allocated, and the efficiency with which they have been allocated to local governments is critical to effectively channeling the demands for more effective and efficient service delivery upward to central government, and ensuring that local governments have the resources they need to engage with their constituents and respond to their concerns.

The level of financing of local governments continues to dominate the discourse on decentralization in Uganda. While the amount allocated to local governments in the national budget has been increasing in nominal terms, the level of funding remains far below the required level for meeting service delivery needs districts. There is concern that the share of the budget accruing to local governments has been reducing amid a rapidly increasing resource envelope. This is not surprising given that highly centralized sectors like infrastructure and energy, dominate the budget. This chapter examines financing of local governments and allocation of resources in Uganda in the FY 2016/17.

### 7.1 Resource envelope for FY 2016/17

The total resource envelope gives the total amount of resources available for public expenditure for a given year. It is a major determinant of the level of public service provision and investment. The resource envelope is determined within the macro economic and fiscal framework. Interest payments, which have been steadily rising over the last five years, are projected to hit UGX 2,023 Tn for FY2016/17. The total resource envelope for FY 2016/17 is estimated at UGX 20,793.5 Tn up from UGX 16,748.2 Tn realized in FY 2015/16.

Economic performance and prioritization of public expenditure are critical determinants of budget allocation. For countries like Uganda that run a cash budget, economic performance determines the periodic budget releases while keeping an eye on its impact on revenue performance. The period under review FY2016/17 saw a slump in
Uganda’s economy. This point is critical because it has had far reaching implications on public expenditure and releases to local governments. The economy grew by only 3.9% compared to 5.2% and 4.7% in 2014/15 and 2015/16 respectively and poverty had increased to about 27% of the population from 19.7% in 2012/13 (UBOS, Household Survey 2016/17). This poor economic performance has been blamed on both external and internal factors.

Externally, there was tapered global growth at 3.4% coupled with low commodity prices on the international market. The continuation of the conflict in South Sudan, a major export market for Uganda, also negatively impacted the economy. Internally, low production in the agriculture, forestry and fishing sectors due to prolonged drought that affected many parts of the country was a factor (MFPED, Background to the Budget 2017/18). The effect of the 2016 general elections also cannot be overlooked.

Uganda’s expansionary fiscal policy stance fuelled by an ambitious infrastructure development agenda persisted through FY 2016/17. This, in combination with a poor economic performance, resulted into a budget deficit of 3.6% of GDP. This deficit level was, however, far below the budget projection of 6.6% of GDP. Expenditure and net lending for FY2016/17 is estimated at about 19% of GDP compared to 22.4% projected in the approved budget. This reduction in expenditure is related to under performance in domestic revenue and grants. Another important feature of public expenditure for FY2016/17 was front-loading with 53% of the budget being released in the first half of the fiscal year (BoU, State of the Economy December 2016).

Revenues comprising tax and non-tax revenues were projected to contribute the most to the resource envelope followed by financing (domestic and external) and grants, as shown in Table 2. The amount of resources available for sharing between central and local government for FY 2016/17 were thus estimated at UGX 17,280.5 denoted by the resource envelop net of interest payments and project support indicated in the table 7:1 below.

Table 7:1 Resource Envelope 2012/13 to 2016/17 (UGX’ Billion)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Revenue</td>
<td>7,340.9</td>
<td>8,167.9</td>
<td>10,114.0</td>
<td>11,498.7</td>
<td>12,914.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Grants</td>
<td>936.2</td>
<td>702.5</td>
<td>930.8</td>
<td>1,146.4</td>
<td>1,766.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Budget support</td>
<td>198.7</td>
<td>191.4</td>
<td>258.2</td>
<td>339.6</td>
<td>276.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Project support</td>
<td>737.5</td>
<td>511.1</td>
<td>672.6</td>
<td>806.8</td>
<td>1,490.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Interest payment</td>
<td>889.7</td>
<td>970.1</td>
<td>1,213.0</td>
<td>1,681.7</td>
<td>2,023.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Financing</td>
<td>2,244.4</td>
<td>2,811.9</td>
<td>3,333.9</td>
<td>4,103.1</td>
<td>6,113.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Resource envelope (A+B+F)</strong></td>
<td><strong>10,521.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>11,682.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>14,378.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>16,748.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>20,793.5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resource envelope net of interest payments and project support (A+B+F)-D-E</strong></td>
<td><strong>8,894.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>10,201.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>12,493.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>14,259.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>17,280.5</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: MFPED Background to the Budget FY 2016/17
7.2 Inter-governmental budget allocation

The last five years have seen both the resource envelope and allocation to LGs double in nominal terms. The share of the LGs as a proportion of the resource envelope, however, remains below 20% as shown in figure 7:1. The share allocated to LGs goes up slightly (3%) when the resource envelope net of interest payments and project support is considered as shown in figure 7:1. While discussions about intergovernmental revenue (including the budget and tax revenues) sharing rage on, underfunding of local governments is increasingly straining operation of LGs and service delivery. Finding an acceptable solution to this problem requires urgent attention. Local governments demand that at least 38% of the budget be allocated to local government programmes.

Figure 7:1 Inter Governmental Budget Allocation FY2012/13 to FY2016/17

Source: MFPED Background to the Budget FY 2016/17

7.3 Budget allocation by function

External financing accounted for 37% of the national budget, FY 2016/17. This pattern was mirrored by the central government budget to which external financing accounted for 43%. For local governments, external financing accounted for only 4%. The allocation of government (own) resources was dominated by domestic development, which accounted for 24% of the total budget and 27% of the central government budget. Domestic development accounted for only 11% of local government programmes. Non-wage recurrent expenditure and wage accounted for 20% and 18% of the national budget respectively. Similarly, non-wage and wage accounted for 20% and 10% respectively of the central government budget. Wages dominated budget allocation to local government programmes at 63% whole non-wage recurrent accounted to 21% as shown in figure 7:2. This pattern of allocation of local government budget resources is a major point of concern. Dominance of wages meant that there was little left for other service delivery inputs beyond labour.
In terms of allocations by sector, the works and transport sector claimed the largest share of the national budget for FY 2016/17 at 19% as has come to be the tradition. This was followed by education at 12%, energy and mineral development at 12%. Interest rate payments due accounted for 10% while health accounted for 9%. Agriculture, which is a key sector of the economy in terms of contribution to GDP and employment, accounted for only 4%. Figure 7:3 shows the national budget allocation for FY 2016/17 by sector.
For Local Governments, education claimed the largest share at 56% of funds allocated. Public Sector Management, and Health followed with 24% and 14% respectively. Water and Environment, which is critical to health, claimed only 3%. Agriculture that is faced with high expectations pinned on Operation Wealth Creation (OWC) claimed a mere 2%. The Works and Transport Sector, which comprises of over 27,500 KMS of district and community roads, was allocated a mere 1% of the budget (UGX 22.84Bn).

Figure 7:4 shows the allocations of Local Government transfers for FY2016/17 to different sectors. This pattern of allocation does not depict the development strategy articulated in the Second National Development Plan (NDPII). It is indicative of the imbalance in implementation of the NDPII, which is limited to Central Government and little action at Local Government level.

![Figure 7:4: Allocation of Local Government Budget for FY2016/17 by Sector](image)

Source: MFPED Approved estimates of revenue and expenditure FY 2017/18

### 7.5 Timeliness of funds

The MFPED is committed to timely release of funds to all Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). The MFPED announces releases to LGs by the 10th day of the first month of each quarter. However, there are indications that funds still take a long time to reach service delivery units. A Budget and Service Delivery Monitoring Exercise (BSDME) by ACODE in 24 of the districts covered in this assessment for Q3 FY2016/17 found that it took up to 12 weeks from the beginning of Q3 for funds to reach the service delivery units. The funds that recorded the shortest lag to reach service delivery units for the period include unconditional grant non-wage for districts and conditional grant for production and marketing for sub-counties, and UPE capitation for primary schools. Table 7:2, shows the time taken for different grants to reach service delivery units.
Table 7:2  Timeliness in the Release of Fund for Selected Service Delivery Units

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transfer</th>
<th>Number of units</th>
<th>Minimum Number of Weeks</th>
<th>Maximum Number of Weeks</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LGMSD funds by District</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGMSD funds by Sub County</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District unconditional grant non-wage</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional grant Production and marketing by District by District</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional grant Production and marketing by District by Sub county</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional Grant to Primary education by District</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional Grant to SFG by District</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional grant to Primary Salaries by District</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional grant to Secondary Salaries by District</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional Grant to Universal Secondary Education by District</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional grant to PHC development by District</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roads rehabilitation grant</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPE Capitation Grant</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ACODE BSDME Q3 FY 2016/17

The delay of funds can be attributed to the funds transmission mechanisms for different grants, and at times the accounting officers. The accounting officers often fall short of the requirements for disbursement of funds. There is need to examine both the funds transmission mechanism and compliance with funds disbursement requirements by accounting officers for purposes of informing interventions to improve timeliness of transfer of funds to service delivery units.

7.6 Submission of performance reports to MFPED by districts

Reporting to MFPED is part of bureaucratic accountability as provided for under the Public Management Regulations 2016. The LGs are required to submit quarterly budget performance reports among other reports. The reports are uploaded to the online budget library, which is a public repository for budget information. The budget library is therefore a tool for transparency and well as accountability. By the time of compiling this report only 12 out of the 35 (34%) districts covered by this assessment had their performance reports for Q3 for FY 2016/17 uploaded on the ministry of finance’s budget library. The include Agago, Amuru, Buliisa, Jinja, Kabarole, Kaliro,
Lira, Mbale, Moyo, Mukono, Rukungiri and Wakiso. Failure to submit performance reports more than six months after the end of the period (Q3 FY 2016/17) negatively impacts on both transparency and accountability of local governments.

7.7 Local governments budget performance

The local government budget performance reports for Q3 FY 2016/17 for the 12 districts show that districts had received an average of 76% of the approved central government transfers for the financial year. The districts had realized on average 61% of projected local revenue collections for the financial year while the average for donor contributions was 43% of the projections. Table 7:3 presents a summary of budget performance of ten districts whose reports were uploaded on the online budget library (budget.go.ug).

Table 7:3 Sources of Revenue for Local Governments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Local Revenue</th>
<th>Central Government Transfers</th>
<th>Donor</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Amount accrued ‘000</td>
<td>Performance</td>
<td>Amount accrued ‘000</td>
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<td>Agago</td>
<td>162,323</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>14,106,319</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amuru</td>
<td>267,146</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>12,395,102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buliisa</td>
<td>465,442</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>8,065,859</td>
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<td>Kaliro</td>
<td>320,494</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>13,387,944</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wakiso</td>
<td>5,840,220</td>
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<td>50,625,391</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rukungiri</td>
<td>449,108</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>20,796,940</td>
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<tr>
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<td>284,501</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>27,628,060</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lira</td>
<td>307,176</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>22,660,704</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kabarole</td>
<td>310,239</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>23,730,350</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moyo</td>
<td>525,124</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>14,873,336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mukono</td>
<td>1,005,713</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>25,805,057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jinja</td>
<td>4,528,568</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>22,857,137</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>76%</td>
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</table>

Source: Quarter 3 Local Government Budget Performance Report FY 2016/17

The table above also demonstrates the heavy dependence on Central Government transfers by LGs. It also emphasizes the unsatisfactory performance of local revenue and the uncertainty of direct donor funding of LGs. The LGs need to improve local revenue administration as a means of improving performance. The Tax Registration Expansion Project (TREP), which is being implemented in partnership with Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) and other agencies, is a step in the right direction. There is also need to strengthen local economic development as a means of widening the local revenue base as well as attracting donor funding and private sector investment.
7.8 Funding challenges and their implications for service delivery by LGs

Local governments continue to face myriad of challenges related to service delivery. The challenges facing local governments are usually connected with limited capacity to deliver services, due to underfunding, low levels of staffing, and inadequate infrastructure. These three challenges give rise to many other challenges. Inadequate funding often means that the required inputs for service delivery are in short supply. For instance, ACODE found that BSDME for Q3 identified several challenges facing primary schools under the Universal Primary Education (UPE) program. This included, inadequate classrooms facilities, under staffing, inadequate and or lack of accommodation at schools at schools, as shown in table 7:4.

Table 7:4 Challenges Facing Schools

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<tr>
<th>Challenge to Service Delivery</th>
<th>Mentions</th>
<th>Proportion of mentions %</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate classrooms and sitting facilities</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understaffing</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate staff accommodation</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delay in release of UPE funds/low funding</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunger/Poor feeding</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative attitude towards Education by parents</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate toilet facilities</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of scholastic materials</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absenteeism</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: BSDME Q3 FY 2016/17

The other important challenge found was low staffing levels in LGs due to inadequate funding coupled with meagre local revenue collection. The Ministry of Public Service in its comprehensive review of LGs found that various LGs had un-filled positions ranging from 25% to 65% of the approved structure. The problem was compounded by stringent measures put in place by Central Government Ministries for clearance of either recruitment or utilisation of local revenue beyond certain thresholds.

Delays in the release of funds to LGs is also a major challenge to service delivery in general. The head teachers, during the BSDME, cited delays of UPE funds as a major impediment to service delivery under the program. The head teachers also linked absenteeism of teachers to lack of funds for supervision and at times lacked staff to effectively supervise service delivery in the entire district. Beyond these challenges, there were also unfavourable attitudes by citizens. For instance, parents failing to provide scholastic materials and lunch for their children.
7.9 Politics and its implications for LG service delivery

Politics also infringe on the ability of Local government to make interventions that would increase local revenue and service delivery. The wanton splitting of districts reduces their geographical tax bases. Closely related to this is the grading of townships into Town Councils and later, Municipalities. This denies districts significant sources of revenue as these new entities get the mandate to collect local revenue in those jurisdictions where the original district thrived. Moreover, most of the newly created districts and urban councils are not viable and largely result in increase in public administration costs. Wakiso District, has three Municipalities and has recently seen several areas up-graded to Town Councils. It is one of the most affected districts by this creation of the new entities. It was reportedly left with six rural sub-counties hardly with any viable sources of revenue.

Also, the political pronouncements that infringe on space of LGs to levy dues, as was the case with the recent pronouncement on public transport dues, has significantly impacted on the local revenue base of local governments. Wakison District reportedly lost 400m due to a Presidential Order stopping collection of levies from public transport operators (The New Vision Newspaper June 23, 2016). The same challenge was also presented in relation to UPE where parents were told not to contribute financially yet there were no resources for feeding school children. Such a policy pronouncement has become very costly and nearly impossible to reverse.

7.10 Policy Options for Increasing LG Resource Envelope

The local revenue base must be widened and deepened by supporting local economic development initiatives that attract investment to districts, create jobs, and streams of revenues for the LGs. The nascent Local Economic Development (LED) program is a good opportunity, but it must be owned and driven by the districts as opposed to being seen as a central government program.

The policy environment for decentralization must be reviewed and corrective measures taken. The piece meal interventions have not been effective and they must be ditched for more comprehensive reform. The fiscal decentralization architecture and intergovernmental fiscal transfer reforms may improve transparency and accountability but they may not increase the capacity of local governments to deliver on their mandates. For instance The UGX 22.84 Bn for maintenance of over 25,000 km district and community roads is simply not enough for a whole year. Several reviews have been under taken, just like the most recent comprehensive review of LGs by the Ministry of Public Service, 2016, has hardly generated any debate let alone influencing related policies.

The economic performance and the development agenda will continue to impose hard budget constraints for both central and LGs at least in the foreseeable future. It is therefore important that available resources are used effectively and efficiently. This will require strategic planning by LGs and deft implementation of the plans. The era of treating planning at LG level as a less important function must come to
an end. Both financial and human resources should be deployed to ensure plans are developed and implemented effectively, without losing resources to corruption or negligence. Moreover, horizontal and vertical accountability structures will need to be strengthened. As the subsequent chapters will show, the activities of the Local Government Councils Scorecard Initiative has confirmed successes in this area, and will add much value to this work.
Our children are the promise of decentralization
8  CONCLUSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Conclusions
As the information presented in this report conveys, local government’s capacity to respond to citizen voice was indeed strengthened. ACODE took its work with citizens to a different elevation altogether. Civic engagement was not only popularised but entrenched. Many more citizens caught up with the innovation of developing Civic Engagement Action Plans (CEAPs). Citizens’ awareness on how to develop CEAPs and the role these CEAPS play in enforcing the social contract between elected local leaders and the electorate on the delivery of public services reached a higher level as this innovation was implemented in all sub-counties in all 35 districts. In the districts where LGCSCI operates, citizens are becoming better able to use their voices to demand for improved service delivery and local governments are better positioned to respond.

The success of the scorecard model in Uganda has indeed captured the attention of other countries in East Africa and beyond including Botswana, Kenya and South Sudan where ACODE and ULGA have been invited to establish a similar initiative. ACODE signed an MOU with BALA (Botswana Local Government’s Association) and African Centre for Transformational Leadership (ACTIL) at Kenyatta University to conduct the assessment of their local governments. The East African community has also recommended the scorecard model as the best practice to be replicated across the region.

The findings from the scorecard initiative, the scholarly literature, and the eagerness of other countries to adopt the LGCSCI model all confirm the relevance of decentralisation as a framework for deepening democracy in Uganda, and points to the critical role that systems of social accountability have in strengthening it. Uganda, like others who have implemented comprehensive decentralisation, has made progress with decentralisation and also experienced stagnation and even reversal. The work towards perfecting democratic decentralisation, with all its challenges, is ongoing and critical, since it is one of the best options for delivering local democracy. This year’s assessment points to the power of civic engagement to activate and ultimately realize the promise of decentralisation. The recommendations that follow, if enacted, would go a long ways toward ensuring that the full potentials of local governance are indeed activated and that the citizens of Uganda reap the full benefits of decentralisation.

8.2 Policy Recommendations
8.2.1 Provide adequate and unconditional financing to local governments
Local government financing, which is extensively discussed in the previous chapter, is very critical for the effective performance of local governments. Although the amount of funds allocated to local governments in the national budget has been increasing
in nominal terms, the level of funding remains far below the required level to meet service delivery needs. There is concern that the share of the budget accruing to local governments continues to reduce amidst a rapidly increasing resource envelope. This is not surprising given that highly centralized sectors such as infrastructure and energy dominate the budget.

Furthermore, the budget ceiling on local governments set by the centre limits their capabilities to address critical and special needs in their jurisdictions, and respond to the citizens’ demands. In order for local governments to execute their mandates as provided for in the decentralization policy, including localized planning and provision of service delivery, local governments require adequate resources. It is recommended that government considers and prioritises adequate financing of local governments as an affirmative action. While it is important for government to plan for the whole country. Some districts have unique challenges and needs. To this end, it is also recommended that some of the funding should not be conditional but flexible to allow local governments to prioritise their key strategic areas of investment. This way, local governments will be able to undertake localised planning and perform their other mandates better, as was envisaged by the decentralisation policy.

### 8.2.2 Put a moratorium on creation of districts

While the creation of new districts is largely seen as a move to bring services closer to people and to occasionally address historical and geo-political injustices, the birth of new districts has become problematic. In many cases, new districts tend to hemorrhage the mother district(s) due to reducing not only the population but also breaking away with socio-economic and cultural resources. Others are so unviable that even when they break off from the mother districts, they remain an economic burden in terms of the provision of services and social amenities. Some districts are economically unviable and unsustainable in the long-run. The existing districts in the country already receive inadequate resources; creating new districts dilutes those funds even further. Government needs to impose a moratorium on the creation of new districts and to make strategic investments in building the capacity of weaker districts to deliver on their mandate.

### 8.2.3 Deepen decentralization by reviewing the recentralized functions

After years of assessments, LGCSCI continues to demonstrate that decentralisation is a viable mechanism for building local democracy and delivering services to the citizens. Unfortunately, over time, there have been steady and increasing cases of recentralization with the centre blaming it on deficiencies in decentralization. After experiencing decentralization in Uganda for some time, there is some resistance at the centre to it by some technical people who feel threatened by loss of power and resources. These technocrats have worked hard to frustrate and undermine decentralisation and prove that it cannot work. In most cases, these technocrats are
behind efforts to recentralise certain functions from the local governments. Instead of recentralising, government should address identified capacity limitations of local governments.

In the management of finances at a local government level, a number of roles have not been fully decentralized and some have been recentralized. For example, recruitment of primary teachers was left to the local governments, the management of the payroll remains a centralized function. As such, there are concerns from district officials about how to hold teachers accountable since they have no authority over the payment systems. In fact, district officials complain about the non-existent authority line between the district and secondary schools, which directly report to the centre.

There has also been recentralization of some roles and funds as part of central government measures to improve effectiveness and efficiency as well as accountability in the public financial system. In ACODE’s view, any identified deficiencies should be tackled by building the capacity of local governments rather than diluting their authority through recentralisation of roles with their attendant offices. It is recommended that government reviews the recentralized functions with a view to returning them to local governments and concentrate on capacity building.

8.2.4 Explore avenues for increasing revenue generation and halt creation of town councils and municipal councils

By and large, local governments continue to be constrained by inadequate local revenue generation. Local revenue is important for not only according greater discretion by local governments but it also supplements the central government transfers and donor contributions. The biggest proportion of funds that districts can access is from the central government releases, most of which are conditional. The conditional central government transfers makes addressing local issues difficult. This in the long-run erodes the confidence that citizens have in local governments and decentralisation. While local revenue is associated with greater discretion and flexibility, districts persistently perform poorly on its collection. The most important sources of local revenue for districts tend to be property related charges, user charges, business licences and Local Service Tax (LST), which are by far menial in terms of raking in enough funds to efficiently and effectively run a district. The solution to the low revenue generation conundrum is to review the entire fiscal decentralisation system, including the allocation of taxes between central government and local governments. There is also need to strengthen local economic development as a means of widening the local revenue base as well as attracting donor funding and private sector investment. Also, government should consider putting a moratorium on the creation of municipal councils and town councils which cream off avenues for local revenue generation for districts.
8.2.5 Poor facilitation of councillors to monitor service delivery

One of the important pillars of LGCSCI is the premise of monitoring the performance of local government councils and providing information about their performance to the electorate. The expectation is that citizens should demand for accountability from their local elected officials. One of the major issues that inspired the design of LGCSCI was poor monitoring of service delivery by elected leaders. Districts often lack funds to facilitate the monitoring and supervision necessary for prevention of shoddy work and leakage of funds. Supervision and monitoring the performance of duty bearers by elected leaders is essential to improved service delivery. Unfortunately, there is inadequate local revenue to finance effective and sustained monitoring of service delivery units. Many elected leaders, especially councillors, have perennial complaints regarding the lack of adequate facilitation to carry out monitoring of PDAs. Councilors representing special interest groups require even greater facilitation to reach the wider geographic area they cover as representatives of special interest groups. Thus, to effectively monitor PDAs, councillors should receive adequate resources in order for them to meet their unique responsibilities as enshrined in the Local Government Act.

8.2.6 Resolve rampant conflicts within the council and between districts

Over the course of LGCSCI implementation, it became clear that one of the most significant factors affecting public service delivery in districts was and remains endemic conflicts within district councils and between districts. While some conflicts have been of a political nature, others have been and are caused by economic and social factors. Political and administrative conflicts have a significant impact on the performance and functioning of local governments. In districts where there are persistent conflicts, council performance greatly declines, functioning of elected leaders plummet, and technical staff loaf and loiter. When conflicts arise, ACODE and ULGA have found it prudent to resolve them before they get out of hand through round table meetings and advocacy clinics.

8.2.7 Strengthen affirmative action for women councillors and other special interest groups

It is recommended that women are given more support to enable them to compete fairly with their male counterparts in the councils. While decentralization has provided opportunity for women to participate in local council politics, the assessment reveals that they still face male domination in council debates which affects their legislative effectiveness. As this year’s findings show, council typically performs well when the speaker is a woman, as all councilors, both male and female, have the opportunity to participate in debates. District speakers should be gender sensitive and ensure equal participation.
8.2.8 Strengthen systems of civic engagement

It is recommended that government invests in creating civic awareness of citizens in order to hold elected leaders and the technical staff accountable. Although Uganda has over 20 years of experience of various forms of decentralization as espoused in local governance, the extent of public participation both in local planning and in holding local politicians to account remains inconsistent. To strengthen accountability at the local governance level, it is necessary to have a civically competent citizenry equipped with the knowledge and tools of civic engagement. Moreover, local government officials need to have the resources needed to engage with their constituents. As the CEAP methodology has demonstrated, when true engagement of citizens and their elected leaders takes place, improvements in service delivery are more likely to result from citizen demand.

8.2.9 Government should increase funding for environmental management to mitigate against climate change in local governments

It is recommended that government increases funding for Environment and Natural Resources Management (ENR). Local governments bear the brunt of food insecurity, devastating weather conditions, pestilence, and diseases of all types all of which are associated with changing climatic conditions. Yet, ENR remains the most underfunded sector in local governments.

Although climate change looks like a global issue, disasters associated with climate change are local; hence, the need for local governments to find their niche in responding to this challenge. Incidentally, evidence shows that responses to climate change by local people and/or communities in local governments are slower and lackluster. Persistently disempowered and ill-equipped people in local communities in disaster prone areas have not and cannot handle emergencies in their own settings. Consequently, the state of food insecurity across the Uganda is deteriorating and more Ugandans are in food stress. The need for building climate-resilient communities cannot be overstated.

8.2.10 Establish a stabilization fund for local governments to respond to economic slowdown in the country

Government should establish a special fund to respond to the economic shocks in local governments. During the period between 2000 and 2010, the Ugandan economy was growing at an average annual growth rate of about 8%, mostly driven by private investments and exports. Since then, economic growth has been more erratic ranging from a high of 6.8% in the financial 2010/11 to a low of 3.9% in the financial year 2016/17. The sluggish and uneven growth has resulted in government failure to meet its desired 7.2% annual growth rate as targeted in the National Development Plan 1 (NDP 1) over the period 2010/11 - 2015/2016. This trend has persisted into the current
five-year period of NDP II. Such slow economic activity at national levels is certainly a consequence of poor economic performance in district local governments.

Ultimately, the ability of local governments to either raise local revenue or to receive substantial financial releases from central government is not only meagre but also highly constrained, which affects the functioning of local governments.
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<table>
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<tr>
<td>Gertrude Rose Gamwera</td>
<td>Sec. General – Uganda Local Government Association (ULGA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hon. Raphael Magyezi</td>
<td>Member of Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin Muwereza</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Kyakwise</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof. Mwambutsya Ndebesa</td>
<td>Lecturer-Makerere University</td>
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<td>Mpimbaza Hashaka</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luke Lokuda</td>
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<td>Richard Rwabuhinga</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ronah Ainembabazi</td>
<td>Lead Researcher (Lwengo)-Researchers’ Representative</td>
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## Annex 2: Local Government Scorecard Researchers and Research Assistants - 2017

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<td></td>
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<td>Ronald Ogen Olot</td>
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<td>Miriam Gabrilla Aabo</td>
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<td>Amuru</td>
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**Local Government Councils Scorecard Assessment 2016/2017**

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## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: ACTIVATING THE POTENTIAL OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN UGANDA

**Region**

- **Busoga Region**
- **Central Region**

### District

- **Kamuli**
- **Jinja**
- **Kalirio**
- **Mukono**
- **Mpigi**
- **Lwengo**
- **Wakiso**
- **Luwero**
- **Rukungiri**
- **Wangweri**
- **Ntungamo**
- **Kampala**

### Lead Researcher

- **Emmanuel Engoru**
  - Partner & Legal officer, **iOrsusN Co. Ltd.**

### Researcher

- **Geoffrey Namukoye**
  - Team Leader, **Uganda Development Service - Kamuli**

- **Stephen Ssemakula**
  - Chief Executive Officer, **Community Development Concern, Mukono, Uganda.**

- **Joseph Ddamaba**
  - Operations Manager, **Nakawuka Water Supply & Sanitation.**

- **Martin Kitambuzi**
  - Independent Researcher

- **Christopher Musisi**
  - Field Officer, **Mukono District NGO Forum.**

- **Assumpta Tumuramye**
  - Independent Researcher

- **Topistah Kiconco**
  - Advocacy Officer, **South Western Institute for Policy & Advocacy (SOWIPA).**

### Associate Researcher

- **Peter Achilu**
  - Field Extension Officer, **Volunteer Efforts for Development Concern (VEDCO).**

- **Abdu Muyingo**
  - Legal consultant, **Lasmotec Consults, Mukono, Uganda.**

- **David Ssemalala**
  - Child Sponsorship and Development Assistant, **World Vision Uganda (ADPs: North Rukiga, Kasangombe and Kamengo).**

- **George William Bukenya**
  - Project Officer, **Lwengo District NGO Forum.**

- **Ronah Alinembazzi**
  - Independent Researcher

- **Ronah Alinembazzi**
  - Independent Researcher

- **Sunday Silver Muhwezi**
  - programmes coordinator, **Rukungiri Civil Society Forum.**

### Volunteer

- **Asha Namulawa**
  - Volunteer, **Hope For Women In Crisis (HoFWIC).**

- **Deoson Kigoonya**
  - Lead Partner, **Lasmotec Consults, Mukono, Uganda.**

- **Ronah Ainembabazi**
  - Independent Researcher

- **Martin Kitambuzi**
  - Independent Researcher

- **Topistah Kiconco**
  - Advocacy Officer, **South Western Institute for Policy & Advocacy (SOWIPA).**

### Child Sponsorship and Development Assistant

- **Joseph Ddamba**
  - Operations Manager, **Nakawuka Water Supply & Sanitation.**

- **Susan Namara**
  - Part time Lecturer, **Management training and advisory center (MAC).**

- **Edward Nataresa**
  - Executive Director - South Western Institute for Policy & Advocacy (SOWIPA).
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<td>Projects Support officer (P.S.O); Kanaama Interactive Community Support Organisation (KICS)</td>
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## ANNEX 3: COUNCILLORS’ PERFORMANCE BY DISTRICT

### Agago District

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<th>Constituency</th>
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### Maximum Scores

- **Total Score**: 100
- **Legistlative Role**: 8
- **Contact with Electorate**: 8
- **Monitoring PDAs**: 5
- **Education**: 4
- **Health**: 2
- **Agriculture**: 2
- **Roads**: 2
- **Water**: 1
- **ENR**: 1
- **Fal**: 0
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Maximum Scores:
- Santo Sans Ongom: 100
- Denish Bua: 89
- Santo Opoka: 88
- Teddy Lalam: 86
- Santo Opoka: 86
- Aquilino Lokoch Ongayo: 86
- Pamela Denis Akur: 78
- Pamela Ochan Ayot: 76
- James Opio: 73

Average:
- Total Score: 45
- SubTotal: 6
- Legistlative Role: 7
- Contact with Electorate: 6
- Health: 7
- LLG Meetings: 3

Local Government Councils Scorecard Assessment 2016/2017
## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: ACTIVATING THE POTENTIAL OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN UGANDA

### Amuria District

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**COUNCILLOR ASSESSED USING SECONDARY DATA**

| Sub Total | 100 | 8 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 25 | 11 | 9 | 20 | 10 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 45 |
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**CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: ACTIVATING THE POTENTIAL OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN UGANDA**

**Amuru District**

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**COUNCILLOR ASSESSED USING SECONDARY DATA**
## Local Government Councils Scorecard Assessment 2016/2017

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**COUNCILLOR ASSESSED USING SECONDARY DATA**
### Bududa District

#### CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: ACTIVATING THE POTENTIAL OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN UGANDA

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## Civic Engagement: Activating the Potential of Local Governance in Uganda

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### Maximum Scores

- Total: 45
- Legislative Role: 7
- Contact with Electorate: 7
- Sub County Meetings: 7
- Sub Total: 7
- Plenary: 7
- Motion: 7
- Special Skill: 7
- Education: 7
- Agriculture: 7
- Roads: 7
- Water: 7
- Health: 7
- Total: 45

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### Score Breakdown

- Total: 45
- Legislative Role: 7
- Contact with Electorate: 7
- Sub County Meetings: 7
- Sub Total: 7
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- Motion: 7
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- Total: 45

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## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: ACTIVATING THE POTENTIAL OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN UGANDA

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** Maximum Scores:

- NRM: 100
- FDC: 40

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** Legislative role **

** Monitoring PDAs **

** Subcounty meetings **

** Total scores **
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### Civic Engagement: Activating the Potential of Local Governance in Uganda

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**COUNCILLOR ASSESSED USING SECONDARY DATA
# Civic Engagement: Activating the Potential of Local Governance in Uganda

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**CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: ACTIVATING THE POTENTIAL OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN UGANDA**

**Lira District**

**Identifiers**

- **LLG Monitoring DPAs**
  - **Health**: 37, 39, 42, 38, 38, 38, 38, 38, 38
  - **Education**: 20, 10, 7, 7, 7, 7, 7, 7, 7
  - **Agriculture**: 25, 11, 9, 10, 7, 7, 7, 7, 7
  - **Water**: 4, 2, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5
  - **Roads**: 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1
  - **FAL**: 8, 8, 8, 8, 8, 8, 8, 8, 8
  - **ENR**: 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5

**Total Score**

- **Name**: Thomas Jeffason Obalim
  - **Legislative Role**: 90
  - **Meeting electorate**: 80
  - **Contact with electorate**: 11
  - **Sub Total**: 25
  - **Total Score**: 100

- **Name**: Denis Francis Oweria
  - **Legislative Role**: 79
  - **Meeting electorate**: 8
  - **Contact with electorate**: 8
  - **Sub Total**: 5
  - **Total Score**: 90

- **Name**: Mustafa Okuli
  - **Legislative Role**: 79
  - **Meeting electorate**: 8
  - **Contact with electorate**: 8
  - **Sub Total**: 5
  - **Total Score**: 90

- **Name**: Raymond Odongo
  - **Legislative Role**: 79
  - **Meeting electorate**: 8
  - **Contact with electorate**: 8
  - **Sub Total**: 5
  - **Total Score**: 90

- **Name**: George Ayo Okello
  - **Legislative Role**: 79
  - **Meeting electorate**: 8
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  - **Sub Total**: 5
  - **Total Score**: 90

- **Name**: Medina Akello Okeng
  - **Legislative Role**: 79
  - **Meeting electorate**: 8
  - **Contact with electorate**: 8
  - **Sub Total**: 5
  - **Total Score**: 90

- **Name**: Carol Okello Okach
  - **Legislative Role**: 79
  - **Meeting electorate**: 8
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  - **Sub Total**: 5
  - **Total Score**: 90

- **Name**: Mathew Nyan Vaale
  - **Legislative Role**: 79
  - **Meeting electorate**: 8
  - **Contact with electorate**: 8
  - **Sub Total**: 5
  - **Total Score**: 90

- **Name**: Betty Okello
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  - **Meeting electorate**: 8
  - **Contact with electorate**: 8
  - **Sub Total**: 5
  - **Total Score**: 90

- **Name**: Lilly Okwir
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  - **Meeting electorate**: 8
  - **Contact with electorate**: 8
  - **Sub Total**: 5
  - **Total Score**: 90

- **Name**: Kevin Aduk
  - **Legislative Role**: 65
  - **Meeting electorate**: 1
  - **Contact with electorate**: 1
  - **Sub Total**: 15
  - **Total Score**: 100

- **Name**: James Omara Elen
  - **Legislative Role**: 55
  - **Meeting electorate**: 1
  - **Contact with electorate**: 1
  - **Sub Total**: 15
  - **Total Score**: 100

- **Name**: Moses Okiel
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  - **Meeting electorate**: 1
  - **Contact with electorate**: 1
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  - **Total Score**: 100

- **Name**: Florence Adong
  - **Legislative Role**: 48
  - **Meeting electorate**: 1
  - **Contact with electorate**: 1
  - **Sub Total**: 15
  - **Total Score**: 100
## Local Government Councils Scorecard Assessment 2016/2017

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### Maximum Scores

- **Legislative Role:**
  - Plenary: 10
  - Motion: 6
  - Committee: 9
  - Special skill: 14
  - Sub County meetings: 20

- **Contact with Electorate:**
  - Office: 10
  - Meeting electorate: 25

### Total Score

- **Total:** 25
- **Average:** 2
## Civic Engagement: Activating the Potential of Local Governance in Uganda

**Luwero District**

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**Note:** COUNCILLOR ASSESSED USING SECONDARY DATA
## Lwengo District

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**Identifiers**

- **Name**: Jane Nantume, Edith Mukankaka
- **Political Party**: NRM
- **Constituency**: Older Persons, Kisekka
- **Gender**: F
- **Terms**: 1

**Maximum score**

- Plenary: 16
- Meeting: 15
- Health: 1
- Education: 4
- Agriculture: 3
- Water: 1
- Roads: 1
- Contact with electorate: 0
- LLG meetings: 0
- Total Score: 100

**Average**

- Plenary: 1.00
- Meeting: 1.00
- Health: 1.00
- Education: 4.00
- Agriculture: 3.00
- Water: 1.00
- Roads: 1.00
- Contact with electorate: 0.00
- LLG meetings: 0.00
- Total Score: 100.00
## Civic Engagement: Activating the Potential of Local Governance in Uganda

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### Monitored DPAs

- Health
- Education
- Agriculture
- Water
- Roads
- Fal
- Enr
- Sub County Meetings

### Total Score

- Sub Total: 100
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- Sub County Meetings: 100 8 8 5 4 25 11 9 20 10 7 7 7 7 7 5 5 45
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| Monica A. Mwegonze           | 24              | 0            | 6      | 0     | 0         | 0      | 6             | 0       | 0                   | 0      | 0               | 0                   | 24            |
| Pascal Businge               | 21              | 0            | 6      | 0     | 0         | 0      | 6             | 0       | 0                   | 0      | 0               | 0                   | 21            |
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| Beatrice Bigirwenkya         | 28              | 0            | 6      | 1     | 0         | 1      | 9             | 1       | 0                   | 0      | 0               | 0                   | 10            |
| Monica A. Mwegonze           | 24              | 0            | 6      | 0     | 0         | 0      | 6             | 0       | 0                   | 0      | 0               | 0                   | 24            |
| Pascal Businge               | 21              | 0            | 6      | 0     | 0         | 0      | 6             | 0       | 0                   | 0      | 0               | 0                   | 21            |
| Gladys Matwara               | 18              | 0            | 8      | 0     | 0         | 0      | 6             | 0       | 0                   | 0      | 0               | 0                   | 18            |

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| Monica A. Mwegonze           | 24              | 0            | 6      | 0     | 0         | 0      | 6             | 0       | 0                   | 0      | 0               | 0                   | 24            |
| Pascal Businge               | 21              | 0            | 6      | 0     | 0         | 0      | 6             | 0       | 0                   | 0      | 0               | 0                   | 21            |
| Gladys Matwara               | 18              | 0            | 8      | 0     | 0         | 0      | 6             | 0       | 0                   | 0      | 0               | 0                   | 18            |</p>
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## Civic Engagement: Activating the Potential of Local Governance in Uganda

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- Water
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- Legislative Role
- Contact with Electorate
- Meeting electorate
- Plenary
- Sub county meetings
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CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: ACTIVATING THE POTENTIAL OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN UGANDA
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**COUNCILLOR ASSESSED USING SECONDARY DATA**

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**COUNCILLOR ASSESSED USING SECONDARY DATA**
## Nakapiripirit District Council Scorecard Assessment 2016/2017

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### Legislative Role

- **Contact with Electorate**
  - Subtotal: 8
  - Special Skill: 8
  - Motion: 5
  - Committee: 2
  - Plenary: 1
  - Total: 5

### Total Scores

- Terms: 17
  - Monuita: 8
  - Older Persons: 2
  - Kakomongole Tc: 4
  - Lorengegotele: 2
  - Nabiatuk: 1
  - Nabiatuk/Lolachat: 3
  - Loregae: 3
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### Legislative Role Scores

- Contact with Electorate: 2
- Plenary: 3
- Special Skill: 3
- Committee: 3
- Motion: 3
- Total: 17
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## LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS SCORECARD ASSESSMENT 2016/2017

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### Notes
- "Total Score" includes subtotals for Legislative Role and Contact with Electorate.
- "Meeting electorate" includes subtotals for Sub total, Special skill, Mission, Meeting electorate, Plenary, and Total Score.
- "Legislative Role" includes subtotals for Plenary, Motion, Committee, Special skill, and Legislative Role.
- "Contact with Electorate" includes subtotals for Meeting electorate, Office, Subtotal, and Total Score.
- "Identifiers" includes subtotals for Name, Political Party, Constituency, Terms, and Contact with Electorate.
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- Office
- Meeting electorate

**Legislative Role**
- Plenary
- Committee
- Motion
- Special skill

**Identifiers**
- Total Score

**Sub Total**
- Meeting electorate
- Office
- Plenary
- Motion
- Special skill
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**Sub Total**

**Plenary**

**Meeting electorate**

**Office**

**Sub county meetings**

**Special skill**

**Motion**

**Committee**

**Plenary**

**Total score**

**Maxium Score**

**Name**

**Political Party**

**Constituency**

**Gender**

**Terms**
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**Identifiers**

- **Name**: The name of the councilor.
- **Political Party**: The political party of the councilor.
- **Gender**: The gender of the councilor (M = Male, F = Female).
- **Constituency**: The constituency of the councilor.
- **Term**: The term of the councilor.

**Contact with Electorate**

- **Meeting Electorate**: Meetings held with the electorate.
- **Office**: Office used for meetings with the electorate.

**Legislative Role**

- **Plenary**: Meetings held in plenary.
- **Motion**: Meetings held in the motion.
- **Special Skill**: Meetings held in a special skill.
- **Sub Total**: Total meetings held in all categories.

**Score**

- **Sub Total**: The total score for each councilor.
- **Total**: The total score for all councilors.

**Maximum Scores**

- **Sub Total**: The maximum possible score for each category.
- **Total**: The maximum possible score for all categories.
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### Maximum Scores

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Dr. Arthur Bainomugisha is the Executive Director, Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment, a leading public policy research think-tank in Eastern and Southern Africa. He was a Technical Advisor for Uganda Peace Support Team on South Sudan and was involved in brokering a peace agreement between SPLA (IO) and Government of Uganda, after war broke out in December 2013. He lectures Peace and Conflict in the Department of Religion and Peace Studies at Makerere University College of Humanities and Social Sciences. He was a Civil Society Fellow at the International Peace Institute (IPI), a New York-based public policy think-tank. He has authored several publications, book chapters and articles on Peace, Security, Natural Resources and Governance. A holder of a PhD and Masters in Peace and Conflict Studies from University of Bradford (UK), Bainomugisha has a Diploma in National Security from Galilee Institute (Israel) and a Bachelor of Mass Communication from Makerere University.

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Prof. Wilson Winstons Muhwezi is a Director of Research at Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment and Professor of Behavioral Sciences and Mental Health at Makerere University College of Health Sciences. He was jointly awarded a PhD by Karolinska Institutet and Makerere University in 2007. He is a social worker with expertise in community-based work, public policy, advocacy, evaluation and mentorship. His competencies straddle design of curricula, managing vulnerability, building resilience; and research in mental health, psychosocial functioning, natural resource use and local governance. He has run workshops and trainings in research approaches, data management and analysis, scientific writing and public policy analysis. He has taught and examined students in several global universities. What sets him apart from professionals in his field is his niche associated with involvement in matters straddling social and health sciences. His publications include textbook chapters and numerous scholarly articles published in international peer reviewed journals.

Prof. Kiran Cunningham is Professor of Anthropology at Kalamazoo College (USA) and a Research Associate at Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment (Uganda). She received her Ph.D. in Anthropology at the University of Kentucky in 1992. She is an applied anthropologist with expertise in action research, community-based research, gender analysis, community development, institution building, deliberative democracy, transformative learning, and international & intercultural education. She has worked in collaboration with a wide variety of organizations and institutions to design and implement action research projects in areas such as land use, local governance, youth needs and services, and women’s economic empowerment. She has designed workshops and trainings for numerous groups and organizations on leadership development, gender analysis, transformative learning, and mindset change. She uses participatory research methods to bring the full range of stakeholders into the change process. Her publications include two books and numerous journal articles.
Eugene Gerald Ssemakula is a researcher who for the past 12 years has undertaken various social research assignments with interests in Monitoring and Evaluation, Local Governance, financing and accountability. His other works in the field of decentralisation include: Process/Formative Evaluation of Decentralisation Policy; Local Economic Development Policy; Profiling the Nature of Conflicts Affecting Local Service Delivery and Development of Strategic Interventions. He is currently a research officer with the Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment, where for the past 8 years has conducted annual capacity building and assessment of political leaders under the Local Government Councils Scorecard initiative. Eugene’s training background is Social Work and Social Administration from Makerere University.

George Bogere is a Research Fellow and Manager of the Center for Budget and Economic Governance (CBEg) at the Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE). He holds a MA Economics Degree from Makerere University. His areas of areas of interest include Economic Growth and Development, Poverty, Decentralization, Governance and Service Delivery as well as Natural Resources Management particularly land. George has over ten years’ experience in public policy research. Before joining ACODE in 2011, George was a Researcher at Makerere Institute of Social Research (MISR) - Makerere University. His work at MISR focused mainly on property rights, gender and land management. He has undertaken several consultancies in the area of involuntary resettlement related to public infrastructure projects.

Jonas Mbabazi is a Research Officer with Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE), a Policy Research and Advocacy Think Tank in Uganda. He has been a policy and governance analyst with over 10 years of consistent contributions in developing and analysing policies of government agencies and multinational organizations. He is adept at Policy Research, Advocacy and Capacity building of Local Councils. He has widely published policy research papers, policy briefs and opinion articles on decentralization and local governance in Uganda. He is passionate
about governance ideals. Well-versed in good governance and performance management of public institutions, conflict management, research, policy formulation and analysis. He has extensive hands-on experience in projects’ design and evaluations, qualitative and quantitative research from working with multiple organizations and agencies. He is a passionate Social Work and Social Administration graduate of Makerere University, currently pursuing a Master of Arts degree in Peace and Conflict Studies.

Phoebe Atukunda is a Research Officer at Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE) - one of the leading public policy research think tank in Eastern and Southern Africa Sub Region. Phoebe is in charge of ACODE’s Information and Communication Technology innovations namely the Local Government SMS Platform that facilitates communication between citizens and their elected local leaders on matters of public service delivery, accountability and governance; A Citizen Monitor -Mobile Application which is used to strengthen the demand side of accountability in Uganda; and the online Citizen Budget Database that provides national budget data to citizens. Phoebe holds a Masters Degree in Business Administration and a Bachelor of Science Degree in Computer Science both from Makerere University Kampala. Phoebe has also contributed to ACODE’s research work and published in ACODE’s policy research series.

Naomi Asimo is a teacher, trainer and researcher currently working with ACODE as a research officer. Over the last 7 years she has worked broadly within one of her interest areas - local governance - with speciality in performance monitoring for political accountability; civic engagement and project implementation. Her other areas of interest include public administration and public health. Naomi has engaged in numerous qualitative research and capacity building initiatives for policy advocacy mainly geared towards strengthening the capacity of local communities and governments for better governance. She has experience and keen interest in Civic Engagement Action Plans, a unique approach for communities to engage government on service delivery and promote accountability. She has published under ACODE’s series on Local Governance. She is at the tail end of her Master’s program in Public Administration at Uganda Management Institute. She also holds a Bachelors’ Degree in Education from Makerere University, Kampala.
ACODE Policy Research Papers


Decentralization and citizen democracy continue to be a work in progress in Uganda and other African countries. The Local Government Councils’ Scorecard Initiative (LGCSCI) Report 2016/17 titled Civic Engagement: Activating the Potentials of Local Governance in Uganda explores a wide range of actions for holding governments accountable for executing their mandate and providing effective services to citizens. The book highlights an innovative methodology grounded in evidence-based performance scorecards and social accountability practices for direct citizen engagement. While other studies focus on the effects of participatory budgeting and monitoring of public expenditure, evidence-based evaluation of government performance by civil society has received less attention at the level of practice. This book fills that gap.

Civic Engagement: Activating the Potentials of Local Governance in Uganda highlights the civic engagement action plan process, a mechanism for activating the demand side of local governance. The book analyzes the most effective mechanisms for building issue-based civic consciousness of citizens as well as cementing the social contract between the elected leaders and their electorate.

The LGCSCI methodology will inspire practical ways for innovators in the fields of social accountability, civic engagement and development to build on successes and address challenges in the decentralization process. The lessons learned provide an invaluable guide for government officials and politicians, academics, civil society and development practitioners to grasp how to implement and strengthen local governance, democratic mechanisms for citizen engagement, and positive social change. This study should be on bookshelves everywhere, representing an important contribution to the case study literature on decentralization and accountability in Africa and beyond.

Professor Russell D. Rhoads
Grand Valley State University (USA)