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LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS' PERFORMANCE AND PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY IN UGANDA

Amuru District Council Score-Card Report FY 2013/2014

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OVERVIEW OF AMURU DISTRICT DURING FY2013/14

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

This brief presents findings from the score-card assessment conducted during the FY2013/14 for Amuru District Local Government under the Local Government Council Score-Card Initiative (LGCSCI). This initiative is an evidence based project implemented by ACODE in partnership with Uganda Local Governments Association (ULGA) with support from the Democratic Governance Fund. The initiative seeks to enhance the effectiveness of elected leaders in fulfilling their mandate and build the capacity of citizens to demand better services. LGCSCI uses a scorecard as an assessment tool to complete annual performance assessments on the district council, district chairperson, speaker and councillors by focussing on their roles and responsibilities as stipulated in the Local Government Act (as amended, 2010).

The annual assessment process is conducted by teams of researchers across the 30 districts partaking in the LGCSCI assessment. The research process involves a review of key district documents, interviews with key respondents and consultations with citizens through focus group discussions (FGDs). Following the data collection process, data is cleaned and analysed to identify key themes and patterns wherein a district report detailing the findings is produced for each of the assessed districts (full reports are available online; <http://www.acode-u.org/>). LGCSCI also produces and disseminates a 'National Synthesis Report' that provides trends analysis for all 30 of the assessed districts. Both reports are disseminated nationally with districts receiving copies of both their specific reports and copies of the National Synthesis Report.

Amuru has five lower local governments¹ and one county² and the leadership for FY2013/14 was comprised of 14 councillors including the speaker and headed by Chairman, Hon. Anthony Omach. The technical wing of the district was headed by Ms. Martine Unzia, the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), who worked with a team of 13 Heads of Department and additional staff to ensure the implementation of district council resolutions. The entire District Local Government team is tasked with ensuring that district and national service delivery targets are achieved in a financial year.

With an annual growth rate of 3 per cent, the population of Amuru District has been increasing over the years from 135,723 in 2002 to approximately 183,600 in 2013.³ The majority of the population (98 per cent) is engaged in agriculture as it is the major economic activity. The district is endowed with notable natural features which include the hot water springs in Amoyokoma ward, Amuru Town, and the famous Guru-Guru in Lamogi Sub-county which is significant in the history of Uganda's struggle to attain political independence.

A report on the preliminary geological investigation carried out by the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development revealed evidence of mineral deposits throughout Amuru district. These include kynite which was found in north of Atiak trading centre, quality rocks at Keyo hill (found a few miles north-east of Patiri hill), gold in the Atiak-Bibia area on the Sudan border and clay suitable for good quality roofing tiles and building bricks.

- 1 Lower Local Governments: Amuru, Atiak, Pabbo, Lamogi and Amuru Town Council.
- 2 County: Kilak
- 3 Population and Housing Census (2002)

The extension of the national power grid to Moyo and Adjumani districts via Lamogi, Pabbo and Atiak sub-counties was in an advanced stage at the time of assessment. The extension of the national power grid is expected to help Amuru District extract and market its resources and boost locally-generated revenue. The Great Juba Road that passes through Amuru District provides access to the South Sudan market and, with the plan to construct a modern border market at Elegu in Bibia parish, is likely to be a catalyst to Amuru's economic growth through cross-border trade.



Figure 1: Children drawing water from one of the boreholes in Kal Parish, Atiak Sub-county (Credit: ACODE Digital Library)

In partnership with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Amuru District Local Government constructed classroom blocks under NUDEIL in Kaladima P7 and drilled eight shallow and ten deep wells with support from World Vision and JAICA. The district also registered a slight improvement in the performance of the national priority programme areas (NPPAs).⁴ In the education sector, there was general improvement in PLE examinations with most pupils passing in Division I, 2 and 3 and pupil enrolment was 133.9 per cent.



Figure 2: Overcrowded P4 classes in Reckiceke P7 School, Amuru Sub-county (Credit: ACODE Digital Library)

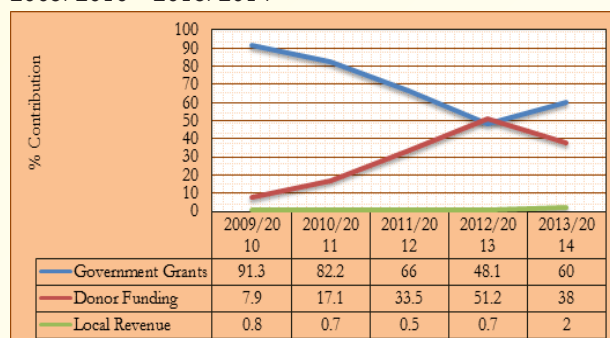
In the health sector, there were 30 functional health centres with maternal and infant mortality rates showing significant reductions in FY 2013/2014 when compared to FY 2012/13.

In terms of sanitation, household pit latrine coverage was 72 per cent; an improvement compared to 63 per cent household pit latrine coverage in the financial year 2012/2013. The pupil-latrine ratio in schools was at 58:1 compared to 70:1 in the previous year, demonstrating another substantial improvement.

FACTORS AFFECTING SERVICE DELIVERY IN AMURU DISTRICT

- (a) **Budgetary Constraints:** The district budget for FY 2013/14 was UGX 21, 777, 593, 873 wherein Central Government funds accounted for 60 per cent; locally-generated revenue accounted for only 2 per cent and donor funds accounted for 38 per cent (as shown in Figure 3). Amuru District continues to rely heavily on central government and donor funds to service its budget. Although market fees and licenses were the major sources of locally-generated revenue, the tax compliance rate was only 20 per cent.

Figure 3: Percentage Revenue Contribution Trends 2009/2010 – 2013/2014



Source: Amuru district Approved Budget; Financial Year 2013/2014

- (b) **Limited Support Supervision:** limited support supervision across service delivery points led to absenteeism in most public service delivery units throughout Amuru district. Without the regular supervision of staff in a supportive manner, low staff motivation coupled with inadequate housing units, the low level of service facilities and nonfunctioning vehicles and ambulances, saw many staff fail to carry out their jobs.

- (c) **Poor Contract Works and Late Procurement:** In the year under review, there were some cases of poor contract works, particularly under the road sector. The district only achieved 33.5kms of road works despite outlining the need to complete periodic maintenance on 54kms of road. This was partly attributed to the late

procurement of necessary equipment, goods and services

SCORE-CARD PERFORMANCE

The score-card parameters are derived from the mandate of the organs assessed as stipulated in the Local Governments Act. While all the four categories of Amuru District Local Government political staff are evaluated on their legislative and monitoring functions, the district chairperson, speaker and council are assessed against additional roles.

As the political head of the district, the district chairperson is also assessed on their political leadership as well as the initiation of and participation in development projects in their electoral area. The speaker is assessed primarily as a councilor with an additional scoring requirement of presiding over and the preservation of order in council. The district council, the highest organ in the district, is assessed against planning and budgeting requirements and in providing accountability to citizens.

Table 1: Amuru District Council Score-card FY 2013/14

		2011/12	30	100	
Performance	2012/13	40	100		
	2013/14	61	100		
	% change	53			
Parameter	Indicator	Score	Max Score	Explanatory Remarks	
LEGISLATIVE ROLE	Rules of Procedure	2	2	Standard rules of procedure were adopted. The DEC sat 8 times, the standing committees 5 times, the social services committee 4 times and the business committee 6 times. Evidence was provided regarding council debate about the ULGA AGM in Apac. Motions passed by council include those on district vehicles parked at the Head Quarter and ventures for joint revenue enhancement collection. Evidence of conflict resolution initiatives was also availed.	
	Membership to ULGA	2	2		
	Committees of Council	2	3		
	Motions passed	2	3		
	Ordinances	0	3		
	Conflict Resolution	1	1		
	Public Hearings	0	2		
	Legislative resources	2	4		
	Petitions	0	2		
	Capacity building	3	3		
	Sub total	14	25		
ACCOUNTABILITY TO CITIZENS	Fiscal Accountability	3	4	Council debated and resolved on modalities of revenue sharing including a resolution to allocate 2.4m to Gulu Juvenile Centre and to blacklist Kaladima-Guru-Guru road contractor over shoddy work. Council adopted standard operation procedure (SOP) in response to gender-based violence (GBV) although there was no evidence of council discussion of Internal Audit and PAC reports.	
	Political Accountability	6	8		
	Administrative Accountability	3	8		
	Involvement of CSO	2	2		
	Principles of accountability	0	3		
		Sub total	14		25
PLANNING & BUDGETING	Plans, Vision and Mission	5	5	The capacity building plan, work plan and revenue enhancement plan were all discussed and approved whilst the budget was also laid.	
	District Budget	4	4		
	Local Revenue	9	11		
		Sub total	18		20
MONITORING SERVICE DELIVERY ON NPPAS	Education	3	5	The District Council monitored a substantial number of service delivery facilities especially in education, health and ENR sectors however, monitoring in agriculture and FAL sectors was lacking.	
	Health	3	5		
	Water and sanitation	2	4		
	Roads	2	4		
	Agriculture	1	4		
	FAL	1	4		
	ENR	3	4		
		Sub total	15		30

Table 2: Chairperson's Score-card FY2013/14

Anthony Omacha Atube					NRM				
Trends in performance	2011/12	54	100						
	2012/13	78	100						
	2013/14	61	100						
	% change	-28							
Parameter	Indicators	Score	Max Score	Explanatory Remarks					
POLITICAL LEADERSHIP	DEC	3	3	The Chairman chaired 7 DEC meetings and delegated once and presented a record of meeting held at Elegu border on 23 August 2014 which indicated that chairman participated in district security meeting.					
	Monitoring admin	4	5						
	State of affairs	1	2						
	Oversight civil servants	4	4						
	Commissions/Boards	2	2						
	Central gov't	4	4						
	Sub Total	18	20						
LEGISLATIVE ROLE	Council	0	2	The Chairman attended only 3 council meetings and there were no motions and bills presented in council by DEC.					
	Motions Executive	0	6						
	Bills by Executive	0	7						
	Sub Total	0	15						
CONTACT WITH ELECTORATE	Meetings Electorate	4	5	The Chairman appeared on Mega FM to appeal to community members on issues of service delivery.					
	Issues by electorate	5	5						
	Sub Total	9	10						
PROJECTS	Projects Initiated	3	3	The Chairman initiated a tree planting project in Pabbo S/C and the construction of Elegu border market. MoUs were signed between Amuru district and Action Aid, Uganda and Ministry of Trade, Industries and Cooperatives.					
	Communal Projects	1	2						
	NGOs	5	3						
	Sub Total	9	10						
MONITORING SERVICE DELIVERY ON NATIONAL PRIORITY PROGRAMME AREAS	Agriculture	0	7	The Chairman mainly concentrated on monitoring schools, roads and water; monitoring in agricultural, health, FAL and environment sectors was lacking.					
	Health	1	7						
	Schools	6	7						
	Roads	7	7						
	Water Sources	6	7						
	FAL	2	5						
	Environment	3	5						
	Sub Total	25	45						

Table 3: Speaker's Score-card FY 2013/14

Name		Christopher Odongkara							
District		Amuru							
Political Party		NRM							
Constituency		Pabbo							
Gender		M							
Terms		1							
Trends in Performance	2011/12	51	100						
	2012/13	69	100						
	2013/14	66	100						
	% change	-4							
Parameter	Indicator	Score	Max Score	Explanatory Remarks					
Legislative Function	Chairing council	2	3	The Speaker chaired 6 meetings and was unable to delegate because the position of deputy speaker was vacant. Rules of procedure were adopted. The Speaker chaired the business committee which sat 6 times and records of 4 motions presented to council were availed however, there was no evidence of him having presented a paper.					
	Rules of procedure	9	9						
	Business Committee	3	3						
	Records book	0	2						
	Record of motions	3	3						
	Special skills	0	5						
Sub Total	17	25							
Contact with Electorate	Meetings Electorate	7	11	Records of community meetings held were availed and the Speaker gave official communications on service delivery, specifically on the construction of a maternity ward and laboratory.					
	coordinating center	9	9						
	Sub Total	16	20						
LLG	Participation in LLG	4	10	The Speaker attended only 2 Council meetings and shared information about Otong health centre II.					
Monitoring NPPAs	Health	7	7	Apart from FAL, water and environment, the other service delivery facilities were well monitored by the Speaker.					
	Education	7	7						
	Agriculture	5	7						
	Water	1	7						
	Roads	7	7						
	FAL	0	5						
	Environment	2	5						
	Sub total	29	45						

Table 4: Summary performance of Amuru District Councilors FY 2013/14

Identifiers	Sub-county		Trends in Performance			Legislative role				Contact with electorate		Monitoring NPPA												
	Name	Political Party	Terms	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	% change	Plenary	Committee	Motion	Special skill	Sub total	Meeting electorate	Office	Subtotal	LLGs	Health	Education	Agriculture	Water	Roads	FAL	ENR	Sub Total
			Maximum score	100	100	100		8	8	5	4	25	11	9	20	10	7	7	7	7	7	5	5	45
Martin Akena	NRM	Amuru T.C	M	24	58	74	28	8	8	0	0	16	9	9	18	6	7	7	3	7	3	5	2	34
Stanislaus Owachi	NRM	Atiak	M	42	47	71	51	8	8	5	0	21	7	9	16	4	7	7	3	7	3	3	0	30
Catherine O. Apio	FDC	Pabbo	F	33	40	64	60	8	8	0	0	16	7	9	16	4	2	7	3	7	1	3	5	28
Tito Okello	NRM	Youth	M	33	63	64		8	8	0	0	16	9	9	18	5	3	7	7	5	1	0	2	25
Josephine Atim	NRM	Atiak	F	44	23	50	117	8	8	5	0	21	9	5	14	0	1	5	1	5	1	1	1	15
Concy Alvel	NRM	Amuru	F	18	33	36	9	1	8	0	0	9	4	6	10	2	3	3	1	7	1	0	0	15
Ceaser Oketayot	NRM	Amuru	M	31	36	32	-11	8	8	5	0	21	2	0	2	0	1	3	3	1	1	0	0	9
Beatrice Okiya Lamoyo	NRM	Amuru T.C	F	17	23	31	35	5	0	5	0	10	6	4	10	4	1	1	3	1	1	0	0	7
Alex Bongomin	NRM	PWD	M	17	25	25	0	8	8	0	0	16	0	2	2	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
Jane Naku*	NRM	Youth	F	23	23	23	0	8	8	0	0	16	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
Margaret Akot*	FDC	Lamogi	F	38	46	23	-50	8	8	0	0	16	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
Denis Rom*	FDC	Lamogi	M	36	24	21	-13	8	8	0	0	16	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	5
Nighty Aparo*	NRM	PWD	F	18	27	16	-41	1	8	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7

NB: *Councilors marked were scored using secondary data, as they declined to turn up for the assessment.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVED SERVICE DELIVERY

From the Amuru District Council Scorecard Report, it is recommended that:

1. Central Government should increase budgetary allocation for Amuru District Local Government to meet service delivery priorities.
2. Amuru District Local Government should intensify monitoring by both political leaders and administrative workers to check shoddy works carried out by contractors, especially road works.
3. Amuru District Local Government should include more capacity building initiatives for council members and elected leaders on report writing, record keeping and minute taking.
4. Amuru District Local Government should strengthen civic education to community members based on the ACODE 'Intensive Dissemination' (ID) approach to provide information on the roles of citizens and encourage them to pay taxes and attend council meetings both at the sub-county and the district level to observe how council deliberates on issues that affect them.
5. The current tax compliance rate in Amuru is only 20 per cent which makes it difficult for Amuru District Local Government to collect meaningful local revenue. To improve on the tax compliance rate Amuru District Local Government should mobilise local community members to engage in meaningful and productive activities like commercial agriculture to enhance household incomes; citizens cannot contribute taxes when they are financially limited.
6. Amuru District Local Government leadership should increase accountability to the people who do pay taxes in terms of budget transparency and the quality of public services offered to the people. Citizen should get the feeling of satisfaction that their money is being put to good use. If citizens feel that they are not getting value for money, they should be able to demand for accountability from their leaders. Unfortunately majority of citizens lack civic competence and do not have the capacity to hold their leaders accountable.

The full report on these findings can be accessed on ACODE's online information center at:

<http://www.acode-u.org/>

About the Authors

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