

A: Description of the Initiative

The LGCSCI is a research-based policy outreach and capacity building initiative whose goal is to strengthen citizens' demand for effective service delivery and accountability. The initiative represents part of ACODE's response to the perpetual failure in the current public service delivery system and the near breakdown in the mechanisms for accountability. The initiative considers the poor quality of public services as a three-dimensional policy problem: a service delivery model that is built around strong local governments envisaged under the constitution which no longer exist; a national budget architecture that undermines the powers and authority of local governments; and most important, a citizenry that has more or less disengaged from government. The initiative therefore seeks to reconstruct the relationship between citizens and government by providing information on the performance of local government councils as a strategy to build an effective accountability relationship between citizens and elected leaders at all levels.

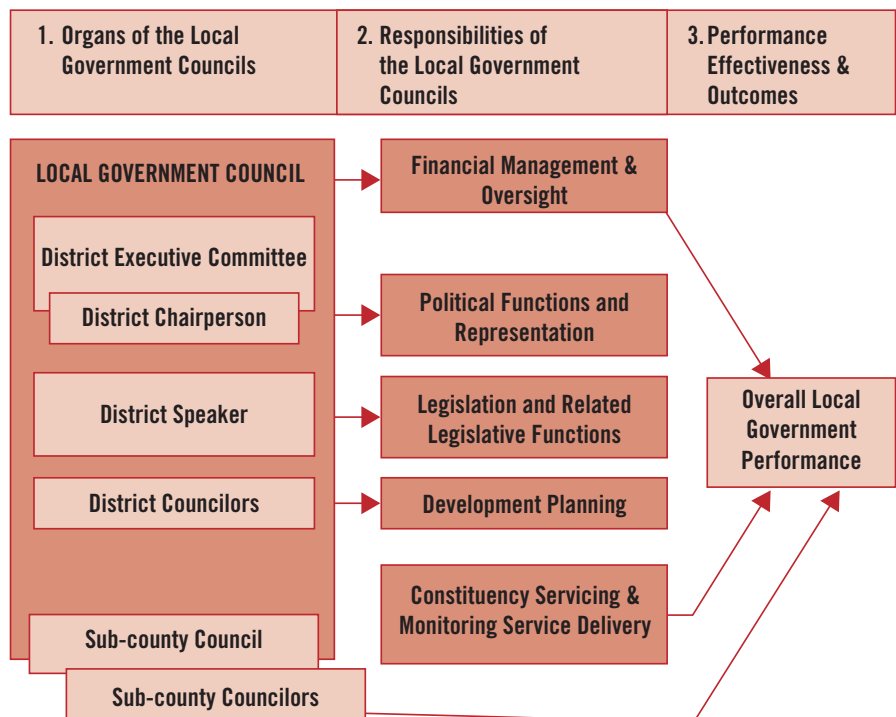
B: The Goal and Strategy of the Initiative

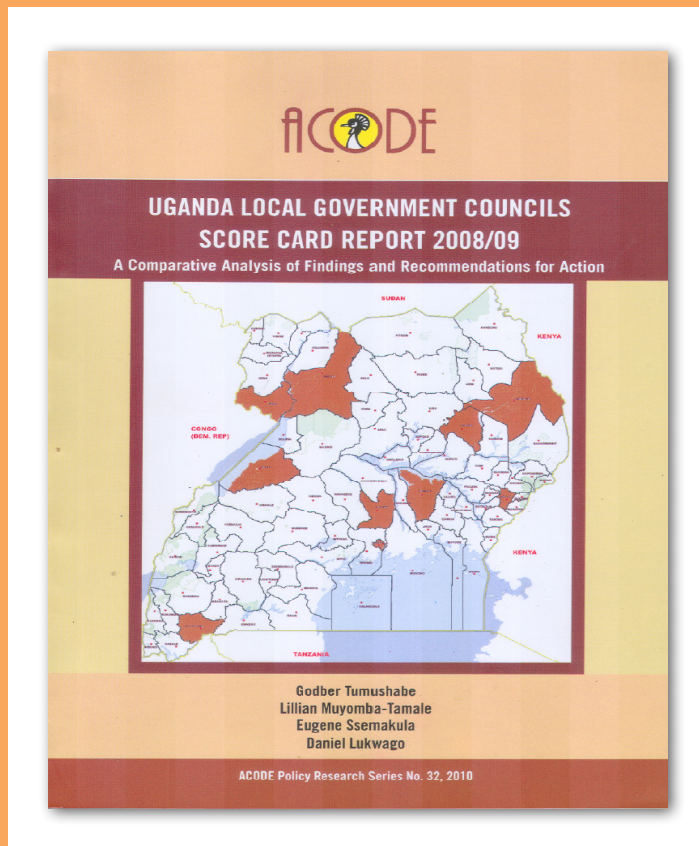
The overall goal of the LGCSCI is to strengthen citizens' demand for effectiveness and accountability in the delivery of public services. This goal is achieved through the following strategies:

B1: Annual Assessment of Performance of District Councils

The overriding strategy for achieving the goal of the LGCSCI is the independent annual assessment of the performance of the local government councils. The assessment uses the Local Government Councils Score-Card (LGCSC) as a tool for measuring whether the councils and their respective organs are performing their statutory roles. The Score-Card also evaluates the causal relationship between the performance of a local government council and the quality of service delivery in the district. The Score-Card was developed based on a detailed analysis of the roles and responsibilities of the local government councils as stipulated in the Local Government Act (2000). The Score-Card assesses the local government council and the various organs of the council that are vested with powers and functions related to the running of a local government as indicated in the figure below.

Key Elements of the Local Government Councils Performance Score-Card





The Score-Card is a flexible tool that will continue evolving and may be further developed through feedback from the annual assessments. The Score-Card was developed based on a background paper which was prepared as part of a process to develop a framework for monitoring and assessing the performance of Local Government Councils in Uganda.

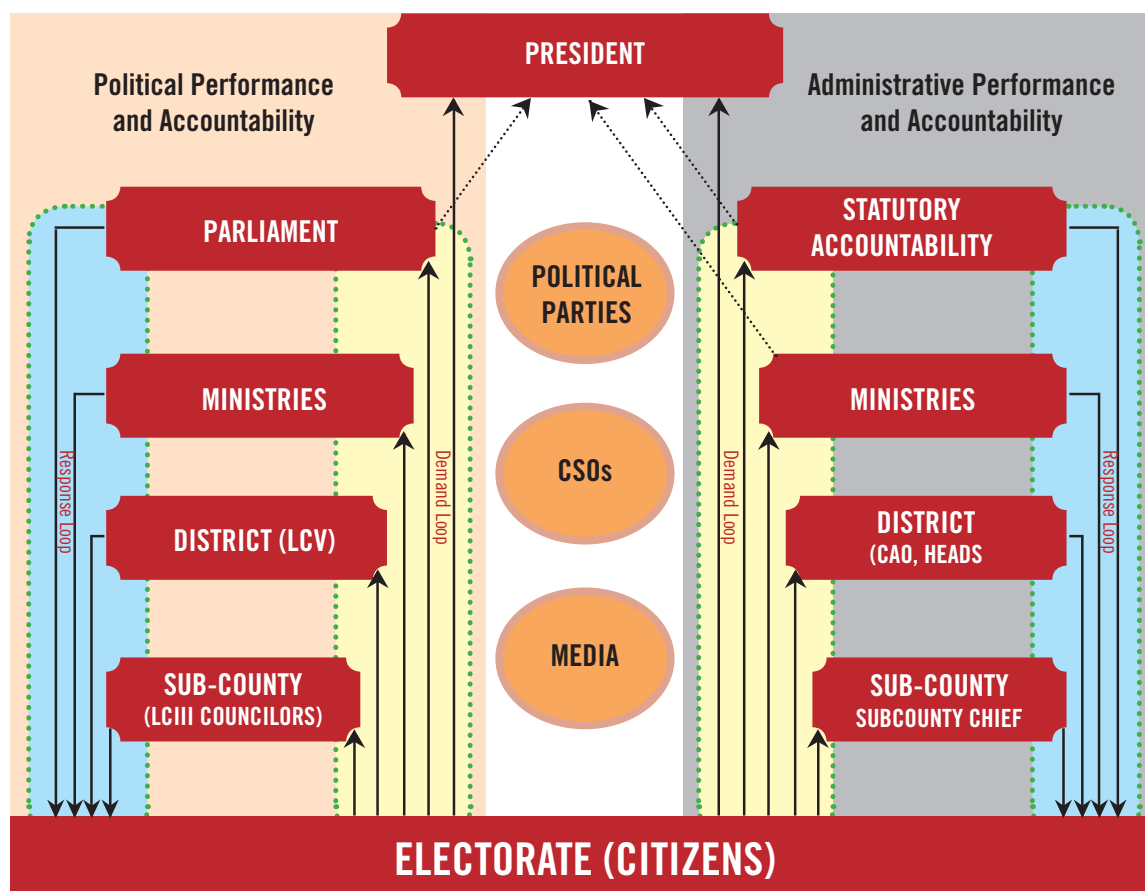
B2: Publication and Dissemination of Annual Score-Cards

There are two major tangible outputs from the Score-Card assessment. The LGCSC Synthesis Report is the main output of the assessment which provides a comparative analysis of the findings from the districts covered by the assessment. The report analyzes the performance of the various councils and their respective organs and the factors affecting performance. The second set of outputs are the specific district Score-Card reports which provide a detailed analysis of the performance of local government councils in the respective district. These reports are published in the ACODE Policy Research Series and disseminated to the respective audiences.

B3: Outreach and Capacity Building

The LGCSC is not a name and shame of poor performance by districts councils. Rather, it is an evidence-based process that seeks to identify key factors that inhibit the capacity of district councils to provide quality services to their electorate so that appropriate remedial actions are taken to improve performance. Consequently, the LGCSCI has robust outreach and capacity building activities aimed at increasing the effectiveness of councils and councilors on the one hand and citizens' demand for accountability on the other hand. Outreach and capacity building are based on the initiative's demand-side model.

Demand Side Model of the Local Government Councils Performance Score-card Monitoring



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In this model, citizens are the primary actors who determine the quality of service through demand for services and accountability for performance. Quality service delivery can be secured by citizens demanding for better services from the political or administrative leadership or both. A number of intermediary agencies such as political parties, civil society organizations, the media and religious institutions act as pressure points ensuring response from the political and the bureaucratic leadership.

Through outreach and capacity building under the LGCSCL, citizens are equipped with knowledge and information to demand for better service delivery and accountability in the case of non-performance. On the other hand, district councilors are equipped with the knowledge and skills that enable them to respond to increased demand for performance and accountability. This is what is referred to as the demand-response loop in the model. Outreach and capacity building are undertaken in partnership with key partners such as the Uganda Local Government Association (ULGA) and partner local Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).

B4: Building a Local Network of Research and Advocacy CSOs

Through the LGCSCI, ACODE is committed to building a network of local civil society organization in the districts covered by the score-card. As part of this agenda, ACODE identifies local CSO partners from which local researchers are selected. The members of the Local Government Councils Score-Card Research Network are provided training in research methodology, report writing, and policy outreach and advocacy.

Member CSOs of the Local Government Councils Score-Card Research Network as at October 2010

1. Media Association of Northern Uganda	Amuru
2. Community Uplift and Welfare Development	Nebbi
3. Nebbi District NGO Forum	Nebbi
4. Public Affairs Centre of Uganda (PAC-U)	Amuria
5. Amuria Civil Society Network:	Amuria
6. Katakwi District Network	Amuria
7. Omaniman Community Development Initiative	Moroto
8. Arelimok Community Initiative	Moroto
9. Development Research Centre (DRC)	Kampala
10. Bugisu Civil Society Network (BUCINET)	Mbale
11. Uganda Christian Institute of Social Research (UCIM)	Mbale
12. Kamuli NGO Council	Kamuli
13. Community Development and Child Welfare Initiatives:	Luweero
14. South Western Institute of Policy and Advocacy SOWIPA	Ntungamo
15. Nature Conservation	Hoima
16. Budongo Forest Community Development Organisation (BUCODO)	Hoima

C: Innovativeness and Value Added

The LGCSCI is a frontier innovative approach to addressing the problems inherent in the current public service delivery system. Over the last decade, central government responded to the problem of service delivery by: creating a complex system of conditional grants in response to corruption and misappropriation of funds at the local level; reversal of decentralized powers on account of alleged lack of capacity; a rural economic policy package comprised of welfarism, tax relief and administrative engineering (creation of districts and a multiplicity of administrative institutions); and increased monitoring of local governments by central government political, constitutional and statutory bodies. These policy responses have largely been guided by the “BIG BROTHER MENTALITY” and the dominant assumption that all solutions come from Kampala.

The LGCSCI departs from this supply-side approach to addressing the problems of public service delivery by seeking to empower citizens to be the primary actors in the public service delivery architecture in the country. The underlying theory of change of the initiative is that by providing to the public information regarding the performance of local councils, citizens will demand for increased accountability on local political leaders hence triggering a vertical spiral of demand for better performance and accountability from the local to the national level. Investing in building civic capacity is essential in activating district councils as new power centers that can create new checks and balances in the current accountability relationships in Uganda.

D: Scaling Up Strategy

The LGCSCI was launched with the assessment of the first 10 districts covering the FY 2008/09. The initiative is designed to expand in coverage on an annual basis. The second assessment covering the FY 2009/10 will cover an additional 20 districts bringing the total districts covered by the Score-Card to 30. In the third year, the number of district councils covered will further increase by 20 bringing the total to 50. Uganda currently has 112 districts and hence 50 local governments would constitute close to 50 percent of the local government councils in the country. Logistical considerations such as financial and human resources will be a key determining factor of this scaling up strategy. A decision will then be made on whether the Score-Card assessment will be expanded to cover all the districts in the country.

E: Acknowledgement of Financial Support

Core financial support from the Think Tank Initiative (TTI) made the design of the LGCSCI possible. ACODE is grateful to the funding partners of TTI including the Hewlett Foundation, the Bill and Mellinda Gates Foundation, the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada and the Netherlands Government. The launching of the Score-Card including the development of the methodology and the first assessment was supported by the Deepening Democracy Programme (DDP). ACODE is indebted to the contributing partners of DDP including the following:- the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), Embassy of Denmark, Embassy of Ireland, Embassy of the Kingdom of The Netherlands, Norwegian Embassy and the Swedish Embassy in Uganda.

F: How You Can Support the Local Government Councils Score-Card Initiative

There are three ways in which partners can support this Initiative. The most strategic and preferable model of support is to make a long-term contribution towards the continuous development of the Score-Card methodology and the annual Score-Card assessments. The second model is to provide project support for the annual assessment. The third approach is direct support to our local CSO partners who undertake fieldwork and outreach activities.

Financial support provided towards this Initiative is used to undertake the following activities:

- **Score-Card methodology development and undertaking the annual Score-Card assessments**
- **Publication and dissemination of the annual Score-Card synthesis report and district Score-Card reports**

- **A robust outreach and advocacy strategy to increase citizens' demand for better service delivery and accountability**
- **Capacity Building to enhance the ability of councilors to respond to citizens' demands and advocate for their electorate**

G: Expected Impact and Outcomes

A combination of evidence-based assessments, a robust outreach and advocacy strategy and innovative information tools such as sms media platforms.

The LGCSCI uses a combination of strategies and tools to build the civic capacity of citizens to demand for performance and accountability from their political leaders. The expected impact of the initiative is that citizens and citizens' groups will be able to express their service delivery demands through various ways including petitions and voting. By the fifth year of the initiative and beyond, qualitative and quantitative improvement in service delivery as well as a civic empowered citizenry are the expected outcomes of this initiative.

For more information, contact:



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