



**VOICES OF IMPACT OF THE LOCAL
GOVERNMENT COUNCILS' SCORECARD
INITIATIVE**

What Other People Say

Abbreviations and acronyms

ACODE	Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment
CAR	Centre for African Research
CEAPs	Citizen Engagement Action Plans
LGs	Local Governments
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
FY	Financial Year
KRC	Kabarole Research and Resource Centre
LGCSCI	Local Government Councils' Scorecard Initiative
MoLG	Ministry of Local Government
MPs	Members of Parliament
NDP III	The Third National Development Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PAC	Public Accounts Committee
RDCs	Resident District Commissioners
SAS	Senior Assistant Secretary
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TAACC	The Apac Anti-Corruption Coalition
TPO	Transcultural Psychosocial Organisation
UAAU	Urban Authorities Association of Uganda
UGX	Uganda Shillings
ULGA	Uganda Local Governments Association (ULGA)
UNATU	Uganda National Teachers Union
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UPE	Universal Primary Education
UWEP	Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Project
YDI-WN	Youth Development Initiative –West Nile

Acknowledgements

ACODE is grateful to the Democratic Governance Facility (DGF) and contributing partners (Austria, Denmark, Ireland, The Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom (UK) and the European Union (EU)) for their generosity and support to the Local Government Councils Scorecard Initiative (LGCSCI). We would also like to extend our gratitude to the Hewlett Foundation, whose support to ACODE's Centre for Budget and Economic Governance (CBEG) enabled us to further deepen civic engagement through the use of Civic Engagement Action Plans (CEAPs). We would also like to appreciate the support from USAID and UKAID to this Local Government Councils Scorecard Initiative (LGCSCI) under the Governance, Accountability, Participation and Performance (GAPP) program we were able to pilot this civic engagement.

ACODE is indebted to the Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Local Government Finance Commission, the District Chairpersons, Speakers of Council, District Councils, Chief Administrative Officers, Resident District Commissioners and the District Clerks to Council for their continued support in the implementation of LGCSCI in all the 35 districts. In the same spirit, we acknowledge the cooperation of the District Councillors have been very instrumental in ensuring that citizen demands are submitted to the right offices in local governments. We are also grateful to the hundreds of community members who attended the Civic Engagement Meetings (CEMs), wrote letters and petitions to their leaders and local councils, participated in community meetings, called in radio talkshows to demand delivery of better services.

ACODE acknowledges the unreserved support of the Uganda Local Government Association (ULGA), a partner in the implementation of the LGCSCI. We also wish to acknowledge ACODE's network of district CSOs and researchers who are responsible for conducting fieldwork in the 35 districts. Lastly, we would like to acknowledge the efforts of the ACODE Management team and Staff for their contribution.

Introduction

This booklet is a compilation of the successes of the Local Government Councils Scorecard Initiative (LGCSCI). LGCSCI is a social accountability initiative that seeks to deepen local governance by strengthening the political accountability of elected local leaders and citizens' demand for excellence in the provision of service delivery by their local governments. LGCSCI was launched in 2009 in 10 districts, Currently, LGCSCI covers 35 districts in Uganda. Through a partnership with Uganda Local Governments Association (ULGA), ACODE is able to reach out and disseminate research findings and policy recommendations to all local governments.

The conceptualization of the initiative was premised on the realization that while the decentralization policy in Uganda had registered significant social, economic and political progress especially in terms of the provision of service delivery and political participation, there were significant gaps that required urgent action across various service delivery sectors. For instance, while progress was recorded in the areas of universal primary education (UPE) construction of several health centres and increased financing for the roads sector; there were a number of deficiencies, which if not addressed in time, could potentially reverse the gains. The introduction of UPE resulted in increased school enrolment of children but completion rates for UPE pupils have not been impressive especially for the girl child. Many health facilities have also continued to experience drug stock-outs, absenteeism of health workers and poor work ethics. While the government increased funding for the roads sector, the quality of roads largely remained very poor across many parts of the country.

More so, local governments' performance in executing their mandates especially in service delivery across the country appears to have been steadily declining. Important to note also is that there was a general lack of political accountability among elected local leaders to the electorate. Over the years, the political discourse in the country seems to have led to a situation where citizens disengaged and became mere receivers of services from the government without the courage and facts to hold their elected leaders accountable. Through the scorecard initiative, it was envisaged that local governance can be improved by complementing the current supply-side of democracy interventions from the government with demand-side solutions.

Through this initiative, it was envisaged that local governance can be improved by complementing the current supply-side of democracy interventions from the government with demand-side

solutions. The goal of the initiative is to strengthen the weak political accountability mechanisms between the citizens and their elected local leaders. It is clear to us that what prevents citizens from receiving efficient service delivery is mainly overcoming information-related barriers and boosting councillor's professionalism and performance. The interventions include annual assessments through policy research and advocacy, capacity building for political and technical leaders at the district level, peer-to-peer learning among local government's civic engagement meetings at the local government level as well as strategic meetings and engagements with key stakeholders.

Thus, the Local Government Councils Scorecard Initiative (LGCSCI) has been implemented since 2009. The main purpose of LGCSCI has always been to improve the quality and effectiveness of district councils and embolden elected leaders to fulfil their mandate as spelt out in the Local Government Act. The implementation of the initiative has always been guided by an expert task group that is composed of stakeholders from; the academia, Ministry of Local Government Officials, Members of Parliament, Local Government leaders, Development partners, ULGA, UAAU and CSOs. The main function of the expert task group has always been to provide strategic guidance to the Initiative. The project has always been implemented from a perspective of a demand-side model of monitoring and accountability, with three major groups of actors. The first group, which has been the primary focus of the project to-date, is the District Council. Individually and collectively, the District Council is the pressure point that is jolted into demanding accountability from the Central Government. The second group is the citizens/electorate who are actively involved in monitoring and demanding better performance from mandated political and administrative institutions and leaders. The third category of actors is comprised of civil society, political parties, and the media. These actors operate in the space between citizens on the one hand and political and administrative leaders on the other hand.

1.2 Objectives of LGCSCI

The overall goal of the scorecard project is to deepen the demand side of democracy through three major outcomes: (i) Effectiveness of citizens to demand political accountability and effective service delivery; (ii) Enhanced capacity of civil society organisations (CSO) partners to act as mediators between citizens and Local Government councils to improve service delivery;

(iii) Enhanced capacity of government to respond to citizens demands at local and central government levels.

1.2.1 LGCSCI 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 demand 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 organisations 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 the local and central government, and the Local Government are some of the aspects of the project that ensure that both the supply and demand sides are reminded of their duties and responsibilities and their capacities to deliver on their part of accountability are built.

The overall impact expected from the project is that of having strong and highly performing local councils accountable to citizens. It is envisaged that Civil Society Organisations like ACODE engage in creating a balance of power between the state and the citizens so that the government becomes more responsive to citizens' demands for better service delivery. Through the scorecard initiative, it is envisaged that local governance can be improved by complementing the current supply-side of democracy interventions from the government with demand-side

solutions.

1.3 Implementation of LGCSCI

1.3.1 Research and analysis

ACODE's theory of change posits that by undertaking and availing timely evidence-based research on relevant policies, national governments and policy makers will utilise this research to improve policy-making processes. ACODE under the Local Government Council Scorecard has undertaken several research studies to influence the narratives of decentralisation policy.

1.3.2 The Local Governments Scorecard Assessment

Through the LGCSCI, ACODE assesses the elected local government leaders on governance issues, particularly their mandate as spelt out in the Local Governments Act. The assessment covers political leadership, legislation, supervision of lower local governments (oversight), and representation role; inter-local government exchange visits /collaboration, and participation in communal and development projects. 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/duties. The parameters in the scorecard are based on the core responsibilities of the Local Government Councils. The assessments are based on several indicators specific to (i) the councillor; (ii) the chairperson; (iii) the speaker; and (iv) the local government council, with a specific focus on legislative duties, contact with constituent citizens, participation in lower levels of government, and efforts at improving public service delivery. The indicators evaluate the causal-effect relationship between the scorecard performance of a local government council and the quality of public service delivery in a given district local government.

2. What people say about the Impact of LGCSCI

This booklet is about what other people especially key stakeholders in local governance in

Uganda say about the impact of ACODE's work under the Local Government Councils' Scorecard Initiative (LGCSCI). For purposes of this booklet, the key stakeholders include the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG), Members of Parliament of the Republic of Uganda, Uganda Local Governments Association (ULGA), Urban Authorities Association of Uganda (UAAU), Resident District Commissioners (RDCs), District Chairpersons, Speakers of District Councils, District Councillors, former members of District Councils, and CSOs and implementing partners at the sub-national level. The key highlights of the impact of the scorecard on the performance of local government leaders have been; i) encouragement of healthy and positive competition among the leaders, ii) reorganisation of standing committees of council, iii) improvement of documentation and record keeping, iv) improvement in the quality of debates in council, v) reduced role conflict in local governments among others. Civil society organisations at the subnational level on their part say that their capacities have been built to act as intermediaries between the citizens and the local governments. Individual implementing partners on their part say that their career growth has been enhanced through the project.

2.1 Enhanced capacity of government to respond to citizens' demands at local and central government levels

One of the outcome areas of the LGCSCI has always been to ensure that the national and sub-national governments are able to respond to the citizen demands raised through various strategies. Through various interventions based on findings in a series of scorecard reports on the assessment of district councils, speakers of councils, district chairpersons, and individual elected councillors; the project enhanced the capabilities of these institutions and individuals to respond to citizen demands and concerns.

Different stakeholders at the national and sub-national shared their perspectives on how the project has built capacity councils as an organ as well as individual elected leaders to respond to citizen demands. For instance, some stakeholders acknowledged that the project created positive competition among elected leaders and thereby making them more responsive to citizen service delivery demands; while others noted that there was improved service delivery in the districts where the LGCSCI is being implemented compared to the districts where the project was not being implemented. Some public service delivery gaps in local governments

were addressed by various local government councils as a response to citizen demands through strategies such as petitions and letters. For example, the statuses of roads, structures of health facilities and primary schools were improved upon as observed by the stakeholders.

Voices of leaders at the national level

Mr. Swizen Kinga Mugyema (2017), the Commissioner for Local Council Development at the Ministry of Local Government, noted that the scorecard has enhanced positive competition among elected leaders at the sub-national level especially in districts where the scorecard is being implemented. Mr. Swizen thinks, this competition ultimately makes leaders more responsive to some of the citizen service delivery demands.

"...The Scorecard initiative by ACODE has enhanced and encouraged competition for better performance among local government leaders, which is positive. There has been a tendency by political leaders covered by the LGCSCI to do their best and be reflected with positive performance or the best performance among the elected leaders. The government does not have a standard assessment for political leaders like there is for traditional public servants or civil servants. The politicians are elected by the people and the best way of evaluating them is by carrying out an assessment of their performance and communicating it to the electorates because they are the ultimate judges. They are the ones who determine whether the people should stay in those offices or shouldn't." The scorecard assessment has kept leaders on their toes to ensure that they deliver services to the people".



Further, Ms. Josephine Kusemererwa, the Ag. Secretary General of the Uganda Local Governments Association (ULGA) (2022), revealed that the LGCSCI has improved the performance of the local governments covered by the project compared to others where the project is not. She noted that

"...I appreciate ACODE because they have taken on the mantle of inducting 35 local government councils. This has made our work as ULGA very easy because capacity building for local government councils is

our mandate as ULGA. If you look at districts in which the scorecard is being implemented and those without the scorecard, there is a huge difference. Districts where the scorecard is implemented have had their quality-of-service delivery greatly improved because the citizens there can hold their leaders accountable and demand improved service delivery."



Voices of District Chairpersons and City Mayors of City Councils

A District Chairperson or Mayor of a City Council is elected through universal adult suffrage and occupies the highest political office within a local government setting. District Chairpersons of different local governments and the Mayor of Gulu City talked about how the initiative enhanced the capacities of their councils to be responsive to citizen demands from their perspective.

Hon. Richard Rwabuhinga, District Chairperson-Kabarole (2017) notes that the local government council scorecard initiative has been able to empower citizens in his district to engage their leaders on issues of service delivery. Mr. Rwabuhinga says that Kabarole District Local Government has been able to respond to and address several issues raised by the citizens especially in the road and health sectors.



"...There is a place called Harugongo, it had the worst road in the district and whenever it would rain, nobody could access it. The citizens have been able to raise this matter with us and if you go to Harugongo now, you will find that it has an all-weather road. If you go to Bukuuku and Kibito health centre IV, the community has always engaged us about service delivery especially as far as maternal health is concerned; with the help of partners like Baylor, we have been able to put up new structures at the facilities, connect electricity and install incubators..."

Hon. Patrick Okello Oryema, former District Chairperson- Nwoya District Local Government.

Hon. Oryema served as District Chairperson of Nwoya District Local Government from 2010 to 2021. He had previously served as Councillor representing Purongo Sub - county in Amuru District Council before Nwoya District was carved out.



"...The Scorecard is a very good initiative because it provides checks and balances for elected leaders. So many leaders take their offices for granted, they do a lot of work yet they are not documented. The scorecard helped me to redirect my efforts while I was in office in terms of planning for my activities and documenting the things that I do; I became very technical in executing my role as a District Chairperson. My council was dominated by young people with a lot of expectations and that was a recipe for conflict. Fortunately, when ACODE took them through the different trainings on the roles and duties of a councillor as well as the operations of the council, it helped to manage their expectations. They realised that the allowances they were being paid in council were a matter of policy and that they had a role to play in revenue mobilisation. The scorecard also helped to build the confidence of our citizens in the leadership of the district because, through the CEAPs, we were able to respond to different citizens' demands for services such as the grading Goro-Poli-St. Thomas Moor Road, grading of Anaka-Lulyango-Lungulu Road, and Coding of Lukayi Primary School among others. Where the demands were not within the priorities of the district, we were still able to provide the petitioners with feedback through our community meetings. Besides building the confidence of the citizens in their leaders, the CEAPs also made the citizens become more responsible in using the services delivered to them by the district leadership. In the end, there is a general harmony in the district." Interview documented in July 2022.

Hon. Christopher Opiyo Ateker, District Chairperson - Gulu District Local Government. Hon. Opiyo, an anti-corruption champion served as councillor for Awach Sub - county for 10 years from 2011 to 2021 before ascending the District Chairmanship. He was the best performing councillor in the local government assessment for FY 2011/2012. Hon. Opiyo says the scorecard helped to build his capacity for much bigger roles in leadership.

"...In the ten years that I served as a councillor, I was trained four times and assessed about six times. This prepared me sufficiently for the role of the District Chairperson because it sharpened my debating

skills and my understanding of the roles of different stakeholders within a local government setting. Through the trainings of ACODE, I also picked some virtues that have become a part of me and my management style. For instance, on time management, when you visit Gulu District Local Government, you will find staff in the office as early as 7:30 am because that is a value that I have extended to them. This has improved service delivery because the staffs have time to accomplish their tasks. I wish the interventions of ACODE at the district local government could be cascaded to the lower local governments as well because in the end, even if the capacities of district leaders are built, lack of capacity at the Sub-counties and Parishes will most likely affect the entire service delivery chain. The CEAPs on the other hand have awakened the civic competence of citizens. After the citizens of Lapeta in Unyama Sub-county successfully petitioned the district for a new maternity ward in 2018, the rest of the sub-counties have been inspired to demand services as well. In March this year (2022), residents of Omel Sub-county petitioned for an upgrade of Omel HC II to HC III and we forwarded this to the central government in April and they are working on it.” Interview documented in July 2022.



Hon. Alex Oremo Alot, former District Chairperson-Lira District Local Government. Hon. Oremo served as the Chairperson of Lira District Local Government for 10 years from 2011 to 2021. Previously, Hon. Oremo had served as the Speaker of Lira District Council from 2006 to 2011. Hon. Oremo attributed his re-election as District Chairperson in 2016 due to his impressive performance in the scorecard assessment for FY 2014/2015 in which he emerged 7th out of the 35 District Chairpersons assessed. He further noted that the scorecard had empowered the citizens who choose performance over every other factor every time they were electing local government leaders.



“... If you now look at the performance of this year's election, districts where the scorecard assessment for local councils was implemented, they performed very well. In Lira District Local Government, 70 per cent of the members of the council were re-elected, in Apac District Local Government, about 65 per cent of the members of the council returned...but if you look at our neighbour Otuke

District Local Government where the scorecard was not implemented, only two councillors out of the many councillors got re-elected. So, it meant that the scorecard educated and sensitized citizens/the voters on how to select leaders... the leaders on the other hand had also learnt how to approach the voters by always emphasising their lawful roles and duties to them so that they in turn know what to expect from their leaders. The relationship between the voters and their leaders had drastically improved. I am happy the scorecard significantly contributed to my re-election...The capacity of district leaders to deliver has been developed, the councillors do evaluations or ask the communities how they are benefiting from the services delivered such as good roads and as a result, they are able to relate well with the citizens and this creates a two-way system of understanding between the leaders and citizens.” Interview documented in October 2020.

His Worship Alfred Okwonga, Mayor - Gulu City. He previously served as a directly elected councillor representing Pece Division in Gulu District Council between 2011 and 2016. In the Local Government Council Scorecard Assessment for FY 2014/2015, Hon. Okwonga was recognised for best practices in record keeping. When asked about his experience with the scorecard, His Worship Okwonga noted that;

“...The scorecard is a very good initiative because it builds the capacities of leaders. When we first came to the council, we didn't know our roles. ACODE trained us and the good thing about ACODE's training is that it is practical. The facilitators went with us to the field for monitoring and we also had mock council sessions. This made our council very vibrant. When the leaders know what to do, it translates into improved service delivery and therefore the citizens will benefit. Even when I was out of council for some time, I used the knowledge from ACODE's training especially on how to draft a petition to lead the process of petitioning Parliament by the Association of Private Health Training Institution and we were successful in our petition. Now that I am back in the leadership of Gulu City, I am still using the same knowledge I got while I was serving in Gulu District Council to manage the city and it is helping me a lot.” Interview documented in July 2022.



Voices of Speakers of Council

According to Section 11 of the Local Governments Act Cap. 243, a district council shall have a Speaker and Deputy Speaker elected by members of the council through a secret ballot. A speaker of council is the custodian of all council documents as well as the enforcement of the rules of procedure of council and therefore his/her role is important in ensuring that citizen service delivery demands inform of petitions are tabled in council and referred to the relevant committee of council to work on it and make recommendations for council resolution. Different Speakers shared their views on responsiveness to citizen demands by their councils.

Hon. John Okwonga, former Speaker of Council, Gulu district. Hon. Okwonga represented Unyama Sub-county in Gulu District Council for 10 years from 2011 to 2021. During this time, he was assigned the responsibilities of Secretary for Education and Health and later Works and Technical Services before being elected Speaker of council in 2016.

Mr. Okwonga notes that the scorecard is impactful in making leaders active.



“This program of ACODE is very important because it makes leaders very active, revisiting their constituency to understand challenges facing the lower people and then be able to bring them to council. The CEAPs have helped to re-awaken the leaders to become accountable to the people. It is a good program because it empowers the leaders to guide council well. I would recommend that it should continue... if possible, it would even go down to the speakers of the lower local councils because they have got a lot of challenges and need training on the rules of procedures for local government councils, and the local governments act.” Interview documented in October 2020.

Hon. Tonny Okello, Speaker of Council - Nwoya District Local Government. Hon. Okello has been the Speaker of Nwoya District Council since 2016. Mr. Okello also represents Lii Sub - County in Nwoya District Council. He says the Local Government Council Scorecard has helped to keep elected leaders reminded about the work they are supposed to do. It is not just about the marks or points that an individual score from the assessment. Whoever has looked at the LGCSCI from that perspective performs well in council.

“...The scorecard is a very good initiative, it is a reminder to all elected leaders that at the end of the day, they have a responsibility to account to the citizens. As a result, leaders have become very active. They perform all their activities within schedule and because of the demands of the scorecard which is evidence-based, councillors invest a lot in doing research for example by monitoring government projects and holding community meetings in their sub-counties in order to have substantial contributions to council. This has improved the quality of council debates and legislation. The scorecard has also improved the quality of service delivery. Councillors are always in their sub-counties soliciting citizens' petitions to come to council. I can give you the example of the St. Thomas-Goro-Poli road which came from a citizens' petition from Tete in Lii Sub-county and the road was rehabilitated.” Interview documented in August 2022.



2.2 Enhanced capacity of local government councils to perform their statutory role

A district council is the highest political authority in a local government with executive and legislative powers to be exercised in accordance with the constitution of the republic of Uganda and the Local Governments Act (Section 9 of the LGA). The district council is also vested with powers to make laws in the form of district ordinances and bye laws in the case of a lower local government provided that such laws are not inconsistent with the constitution. In addition, the councils are vested with powers to employ the district public service staff and generally supervise the delivery of public service in the district.

In the early years of the implementation of the LGCSCI, district councils were characterized by poor qualities of debate in different district councils, lack of decorum, and members not understanding their roles and duties among others. A number of stakeholders such as RDCs, MPs, District Chairpersons, Speakers of councils, District Technical Officers and ACODE's implementing partners in local governments provided their thoughts on the impact of ACODE's building initiatives on the abilities of local government councils and leaders to deliver on their

mandates. Some of the impacts observed include; reduced conflicts between the elected leaders and technical officers of the districts, improved elected leaders' knowledge of their statutory roles, increased involvement of members of council in the administration and management of the different service delivery units such as primary schools, health centres, water sources, roads, agriculture services among others within their electoral areas, improved quality of debate in council, improved understanding and operationalization of the standard rules of procedure for local councils, improved documentation and management of council records, and improved councillors' legislative and constituency roles. Some leaders leveraged the scorecard to ascend to higher political positions both at the national and sub-national levels. While the leaders at the national level say the experience of the scorecard equipped them to be better legislators in parliament.

Voices of Resident District Commissioners (RDCs)

Resident District Commissioners are the President's representatives in each District appointed by the Office of the President. Over the years of implementation of the LGCSCI, we observed tendencies of role conflict between the offices of the District Chairperson (and in some cases Council as an organ) and the Resident District Commissioner in some districts.

Some RDCs highlighted some significant outcomes of the project within their jurisdictions such as Amuru, Arua, Nebbi and Nwoya districts. For instance, Mr. Osborn Geoffrey Oceng who has had the privilege to have served as RDC in two districts where the LGCSCI is being implemented as well as in a district where LGCSCI is not being implemented shared his experience with us and says that the LGCSCI should be rolled out to all local governments in the country.

Mr. Oceng noted that there's a huge difference between districts where the scorecard is being implemented and the districts where it is not. He cited the differences in the district leaders' knowledge of their roles and responsibilities as well as the cordial working relationships between the council and other offices as key aspects missing in districts that have not been covered by the LGCSCI. He reiterated that

"...I have been in Amuru and Arua districts, there are no fights between the political and technical teams,



but where I am now (Lamwo District); there are still a lot of fights and no sense of team work, each leader is burring their heads and doing their things and there is no sense of cohesion. I implore ACODE to consider extending the scorecard initiative to Lamwo District to have the same impact I have witnessed in Amuru and Arua Districts. The councillors in those two districts understand their roles and therefore there is limited conflict in their councils. I have seen them go down to their Sub-counties to monitor and submit their monitoring reports to council and therefore hold the technical staff accountable to act on the issues raised in their monitoring reports. They do a lot of consultations, for instance, they have several times consulted my office on issues of security in their Sub-counties and held me accountable to act or cause action on those issues raised. The scorecard keeps the councillors on their toes to perform because the electorate will always be reminding them that they'll (the electorate) wait and see their performance in the scorecard. Overall, the scorecard is a very good initiative for enhancing the performance of political leaders and subsequently the delivery of quality public services. Therefore, funds allowing, the initiative should be rolled out to cover all local governments." Interview documented in August 2022.

Mr. Christopher Omara, Resident District Commissioner-Nwoya District. Mr. Omara previously served as Resident District Commissioner in Nebbi (one of the 35 LGCSCI Districts) and Otuke before being posted to Nwoya in March 2022. Mr. Omara says because of the scorecard assessment, local government leaders now take their work seriously.

"...Initially, local government leaders had a "laissez-faire" attitude because they believed no body or organisation could assess them but the introduction of the scorecard has triggered the councillors to take their jobs seriously, they now mobilise their citizens to engage in community programmes, give feedback to their electorates and participate in monitoring government services in order to score high points in the assessment because that's where their political survival depends on. In Nebbi where I spent some time as RDC, there was a kind of unity that emerged among the leadership because they realised they couldn't perform in the scorecard assessment as individuals. Also, I witnessed an increased level of



transparency and accountability because the councillors were able to go out and monitor government programmes and also play their oversight roles by demanding accountability from the technocrats. All these led to improvement in the quality of services delivered to the citizens of Nebbi District” Mr. Omara revealed, August 2022.

Voices of members of parliament

It should be noted that there are members in the 11th Parliament of the Republic of Uganda who were formerly leaders at the local government level, who were mentored through the LGCSCI and who have used the acquired knowledge and skills to execute their roles and duties in Parliament.

By the time of documenting this booklet, Hon. Betty Naluyima Ethel, Woman MP for Wakiso District, was the Shadow Minister for Local Government and a member of the Public Service and Local Government Committee. Hon. Naluyima had previously served as councillor for Bweyogerere and the Vice Chairperson for Wakiso District Local Government from 2016-2021. Hon. Naluyima attributes her impressive performance in Parliament to the numerous trainings and assessments by ACODE while she served in the district council. In July 2022 she revealed that

“...First of all, I want to appreciate ACODE for the different trainings. Up to this day, you will recall that minimal resources are allocated towards training and induction of councillors by the Ministry of Local Government, one of the main challenges we still have in the country is the induction of councillors. When I was in Wakiso District Council, the inductions we had and the continuous assessments were mainly from ACODE, which facilitated us in the performance of our roles and duties. When I got to Parliament, and did my work based on the trainings that I had acquired from ACODE while in Council, there are a few basics that I look back at when carrying out my Parliamentary work. Rarely were we told to look out for issues in our daily interactions in Parliament. When I go out to execute my work, sometimes I post them on different platforms including social media and my



colleagues in Parliament wonder how I am able to uniquely do the things I do. I attribute this to ACODE's capacity building trainings.”

Hon. Basil Bataringaya Rwankwene, Member of Parliament- Kashari North Constituency, Mbarara District. Hon. Bataringaya previously served as a councillor for Rubindi Sub-county and Secretary for Finance, Planning, Administration and Investment in Mbarara District Local Government. Hon. Bataringaya says that the induction trainings he received while in council sharpened his debate and leadership skills. He says this has enabled him to exhibit a stellar performance on the floor of Parliament. In July 2022, he revealed that

“...ACODE helped to build our capacities as councillors. When you look at records in Mbarara District Council at the time I was a councillor, my performance in the first year of the scorecard was not impressive, however, my performance improved in the subsequent assessments because I was already equipped. The peer-to-peer learning for our council supported by ACODE enabled us to visit Gulu District Local Government, which was consistently among the top performers in ACODE's scorecard assessments and helped to build the capacity of the Mbarara District Council. The knowledge I acquired following the numerous trainings by ACODE sharpened my leadership and debate skills and ability to undertake my oversight role. In Parliament, I am one of the main contributors on the floor of Parliament and an active member of the Public Accounts Committee. Besides, I went to Parliament well equipped and because of that, I was made a whip for my Party Caucus and leader of the Greater Ankole Parliamentary Group”.



Voices of District Chairpersons

Established by Section 12 of the Local Governments Act, the District Chairperson is the political head of the district. Several District Chairpersons weighed in on the impacts of ACODE's capacity-building initiatives on the abilities of local government councils and leaders to deliver on their mandates. Some District Chairpersons revealed that the capacity-building trainings prepared them to run for the highest office in the district.

Hon. Okello says the Local Government Council Scorecard Initiative propelled him to the helm of Omoro District leadership because, by the time he expressed interest to run for the highest political office in Omoro, the citizens had developed confidence in his leadership based on his performance in the scorecard assessment while he was still a member of the council in Gulu District Local Government.

“...During the five years that I served as councillor for Lalogi and Speaker of Council in Gulu District Local Government, I was rated as the best performing Speaker in three assessments and the second-best Speaker in two assessments and this information was in the public domain. When I expressed interest to become the District Chairperson of Omoro, the people of Omoro already had information about my performance and therefore thought I was the best-placed person to lay the foundation for the new district that was carved out of Gulu. Because of my experience during the time I served in Gulu and the knowledge from the scorecard parameters, I realised we needed to set systems and guiding principles for the new district based on collective responsibility and strong institutions for the district which we have set. Our guiding principle is; how we are experimenting with our different experiences to meet the expectations of our citizens.” Interview documented in August 2022.



Hon. Mohammed Mafabi, District Chairperson, Mbale District Local Government. Hon. Mafabi had previously served as the Speaker of Council, Mbale District Local Government in the period between 2011 and 2021.



“...First, I would like to thank ACODE for the induction training of Mbale District Council conducted in December 2021. When I got elected to office as the District Chairperson, I had a big challenge with the Council. Only 4 out of the 53 former members of the council had returned from the 2021 general elections. The new members came in with different interests and this caused conflict in council. The lack of knowledge of the operations of the local government also escalated the conflict. Councillors didn't know where their jurisdiction started and ended. When ACODE came and conducted the training,

a team of councillors particularly those who had sworn to make it had for me to perform my duties as the political head of the district walked to my office for reconciliation because they had learnt their roles and duties and realised that what they were doing to fight me was not going to amount to any good but rather affect development and service delivery in the district. My Councillors and I sat down and we reconciled. Following the induction training, I also observed that the quality of debate in council also improved; councillors now follow the standard rules of procedure and their debate are centred on issues of service delivery. Previously, through the ACODE scorecard assessment, I was ranked as the best-performing Speaker for the financial year 2016/17 among the Speakers of Councils that were assessed in the country. ACODE should not stop its work in local governments. It is this empowerment that made me gather the courage to contest for the office of the District Chairperson in the 2021 general election. ACODE should continue being a partner with Mbale and I can pledge that Mbale will be the best-performing district. I can assure you that the training impacted a lot on our district council. Previously, there was a lot of conflict in the district council.” Interview documented in March 2022.

Hon. Emmanuel Urombi, District Chairperson-Nebbi District Local Government. When asked about his experience with the LGCSCI, Hon. Urombi noted that;

“...I just came into the leadership last year of the political term of office on 25th July 2019 through a bye-election and barely four months into office, ACODE had resumed the scorecard assessment for local councils. During that assessment period, I had access to the Chairperson's scorecard which reshaped my thinking as well as my lifestyle about the highest political office that I was occupying, I realised that what I had entered into was a unique challenge. I realised that from then on, I had to remain accountable to my voters. It made me think and also know that it's not about winning an election, even though winning an election marks the beginning of a new challenge, to serve the people. Based on the scorecard performance parameters in the assessment, I got to know which of my councillors to consult since I was a debutant in Nebbi District Council. ... Politically, the scorecard helped me to attract fewer opponents because I understood the demands of my office based on the parameters of the scorecard and performed exactly those functions. In NRM party primaries, I went through unopposed for heading into the 2021 general election. ...I thank ACODE for the opportunity to help me understand my roles as a District Chairperson.” Interview documented in August 2020.



Hon. Richard Okello Cox McOrik, District Chairperson- Lira District Local Government.

"...ACODE has been so supportive in capacity building for local government councils, which helps leaders particularly the new ones to understand the procedures of council and how to conduct themselves. I have seen this has led to improvement in the quality of debates in our council. However, as you may be aware, people learn through repeated examples and therefore ACODE should have held these inductions regularly to consolidate the impact already achieved. If you conduct the trainings once and get out without a follow-up, you may not get the impact that you desire." Interview documented in July 2022.



Hon. Alfred Okuonzi, District Chairperson-Arua District Local Government who was serving his first term as the District Chairperson of Arua District Local Government. Hon. Okuonzi says the interventions under the local government council scorecard initiative, particularly the inductions, have helped his council to be more accountable and able to deliver to their people. He says through the induction, councillors under their roles and responsibilities and can conduct the business of council more maturely. He further notes that the induction has helped strengthen the synergy among different actors in Arua District Local Government. He for instance notes that the induction has inculcated in him a culture of copying in key officers of the district like CAO, Speaker of Council, RDC and Sub-county chairpersons in all his communications as a way of ensuring team work.



"..The interventions under the scorecard initiative are important to keep leaders accountable and ensure that they deliver to the people. Through the trainings that ACODE gives to local government leaders, they understand their roles and responsibilities. I have seen a great difference in my council after the induction training; the contributions on the floor of council are more mature and the councillors know how to raise the point of orders, procedures and information. Now I consider my council better than the national Parliament. The intervention has also enhanced teamwork and coordination in council for instance in any of my correspondences I make sure I copy in the CAO, Speaker, RDC and the sub-counties for

purposes of coordinating our actions and follow-up." August 2022

Voices of Speakers of District Councils

A District Council is the highest decision-making organ in a Local Government and is charged with the responsibility of approving the district budget and other planning documents of the district such as the Local Government Development Plan, Revenue Enhancement Plan, Budget Framework Paper, and Capacity Building Plan among other documents. Council has the powers to do budget reallocation and virement as well as come up with lawful resolutions on the delivery of public services such as education, health, roads, water and sanitation, functional adult literacy, agriculture, protection of the environment and natural resources among others. Therefore, the Speaker of council plays a very critical role in convening and presiding over orderly council meetings where members attack ideas and not individuals and adhere to standard rules of procedure for local government councils and the different laws of the country in the execution of their duty, which is no easy task. Before the intervention by ACODE, many district councils were characterized by conflict and were struggling to perform their duties.

While conflict is inevitable and cannot be avoided in any given setting, a council that is informed with reduced or minimal tendency of conflict is a dream of every Speaker. Different Speakers of Council weighed in and spoke about the impact of LGCSCI capacity-building intervention on their respective councils.

Hon. Morris Okello Adem, Speaker of Council, Lira District Local Government. By the time of documenting this impact, Hon. Adem was the directly elected councillor for Wiodyek Sub-county in Lira District Council from the 2021 general elections. He also doubled as the Speaker of Lira District Council and was serving his first elective term in the district council. About the LGCSCI, he reiterated that:

"..On the 25th and 26th of November 2021, we were inducted by ACODE at the district council hall. The 2-Days induction training by ACODE was far better than any others that we had received because the facilitators were friendly, interactive and above all had great command of the issues in local governments.



During the training, we realized that there are things we had not done correctly as a council. For instance, we had four committees instead of three and technically we had five secretaries instead of three. We observed that this was in contravention of Sections 16(2A) and 22 of the Local Governments Act as amended and Rule 91(A) of the Standard Rules of Procedures for Local Government Councils. When this was brought to our attention by facilitators from ACODE, we made a commitment to address it and we did that in our council meeting held on 30th November 2021. Now we have three committees and three secretaries as per the law. I thank ACODE for the knowledge they gave us during the training.” Interview documented in January 2022.

Hon. Alice Kataike, Speaker of Council, Budaka District Local Government. Hon. Kataike represented Nansanga Sub-county and Lyama Town Council in Budaka District Council. She was serving her first term as councillor and Speaker of Council. Hon. Kataike who had been invited by her counterpart in Mbale District Council, Hon. Robert Wangwe to attend the induction of Mbale District Council by ACODE in December 2021 was appreciative of the opportunity and the knowledge she received. She said that the induction enhanced her confidence as the presiding officer of council and improved her ability to guide council. Hon. Kataike used the knowledge she acquired to guide councillors in the budget process for FY 2021/2022.

“...Now, I don't have a feeling of panic when presiding over council. I got to know that in leadership there are ups and downs. I got to know that as a leader and Speaker, you don't need to always rush in your decisions, because someone has insulted you in council, you shouldn't take a decision when you are so pissed or based on emotions. I also got to know that in everything, for the five years I have stayed in this office, I have to keep expecting different new challenges, but what matters is how I handle each upcoming challenge. As Budaka District Council, we have not been fortunate to have any such kind of induction. When I came back from Mbale, I shared my experience with members of the Executive Committee as my way of inducting them. I am relying on the same knowledge I gained from the induction in Mbale to preside over my council. Recently when we were laying on the table our budget estimates, I coordinated with the heads of departments to organise a mini-induction of councillors on their roles in the budgeting process, and



what their role was in council and committees, in terms of scrutinising the budget. The result of this mini-induction was that the budgeting process was made simple and seamless because the councillors knew what to do” Interview was documented in July 2022.

Hon. Peter Obong Acuda, Speaker of Council, Apac District Local Government. Hon. Acuda was serving his second term of office both as Speaker of Council, and Councillor for Akokoro Sub-county.



“...ACODE has continuously built the capacity of members of Apac District Council. This has greatly improved the councillors' performance in their legislative and constituency roles. Based on this improvement, the majority of the members of the previous council were re-elected back to council in the 2021 elections. This has made my work as the presiding officer of council very easy because now I am dealing with experienced members. Recently, the Association of Speakers of Council of Northern Uganda rated our council among the best councils in the region. In the times that I have served in Apac District Council, different partners have come to offer us training but none of them matches the expertise of ACODE.” Interview documented in July 2022.

Hon. Moses Kiirya, Speaker of Council, Masindi District Local Government and the directly elected councillor representing Karujubu Division. Hon. Kiirya was serving his second term as the Speaker of Council and third term as the directly elected representative of Karujubu Division.

“...We have had ACODE working with Masindi District for almost eight years now. Within this period, we have had a lot of capacity-building trainings and exposure visits as well as assessments of our performance. Before the assessments, ACODE trains us on our roles and this has improved our performance over time. Because the results of the assessments are disseminated to the public/citizens/electorate, individual councillors always put a lot of efforts in improving their performance because they know that the citizens will vote them out if they don't perform well. My work as a Speaker of Council has been made easy because I don't have to struggle to get councillors to debate in council, they are always eager to debate because they know they will be assessed. In the last term, I enjoyed my office



as the Speaker of Council because I had everything that I needed such as a tailor-made councillor's diary and law books provided by ACODE." Interview documented in July 2022.

Hon. Robert Wangwe, Speaker of Council, Mbale District Local Government. Hon. Wangwe is also the directly elected councillor representing Busoba Sub - County in the District Council. Hon. Wangwe was appreciative of ACODE's induction training of Mbale District Council which he says was responsible for thwarting conflict in council caused by ignorance of the rules of procedures of council.



"...As one of the pioneer districts under the Local Government Council Scorecard Initiative, we want to thank ACODE for its interventions both in council through the scorecard, the induction training as well as the provision of the local government legal documents; and within the community through the citizens' engagement. Before the training in November 2021, and especially after the local government elections, Mbale District Council was drowned in conflict because the council was dominated by new councillors who lacked knowledge of their roles/duties and responsibilities, the rules of procedure in council and the Local Governments Act. Because of this, the new members were filled with a lot of untenable expectations and often conducted themselves in council in total contravention of the rules of procedures hence causing conflict in council. After inducting and equipping the councillors with the knowledge on their roles and responsibilities and the operations of council, these conflicts have died out, the quality of our debates have improved and so has the quality of our resolutions in council." Interview documented in August 2022.

Hon. Simon Nsubuga, former Speaker of Council, Wakiso District Local Government Hon. Nsubuga, the former representative of Wakiso Town Council for 10 years (2011-2021) served as Speaker of Council, Wakiso District Local Government for five years from 2016 to 2021. Mr. Nsubuga says the training he got from ACODE focusing on the Council Rules of Procedure enabled him to manage council better during his time as Speaker. He notes that through the training, he learnt how to manage council in time and how to respond to citizens' petitions.



"The capacity building program we got was training in rules of procedure and it was beneficial, it has helped me on how to respond to petitions from Sub County in the district. The training has provided ways of how to conduct meetings at the council for example, I used to have council the whole day but now it takes fewer hours from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. previously it would start from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. This is possible because of ACODEs work." Interview documented in October 2020.

Hon. Kizito Ongan, Speaker of Council-Nebbi District Local Government. Hon. Ongan has served as councillor for Nyaravur Sub-county and Speaker of Nebbi District Council since 2016. Hon. Ongan notes that the scorecard has improved the councillors' knowledge of their roles and processes in council.



"...The scorecard has organised the activities of councillors, they are now documenting their activities knowing that at the end of the year, they will be assessed. Because the information is shared with the community, it has also enhanced feedback to the citizens. The diaries given to councillors have made councillors' work easy because it contains information on service delivery standards which councillors use while carrying out monitoring of government programmes. The information on their roles and council processes like the budget cycle has enhanced the quality of councillors' contribution on the floor of council, the diary is, therefore, an extension of the induction training that happens at the start of every term of council". August 2022

Hon. Ojok is appreciative of ACODE capacity building initiatives in Agago District Local Government since 2011 acknowledging that it had been responsible for his re-elections in 2016 and 2021

"...I am grateful that you have come today to interface with me in my office, I have moved with ACODE for since 2011 when I joined council. For the times, I have served in council, I have been participating in the ACODE score card and other capacity building trainings and now am happy that ACODE has built my capacity to some level which is why I was able to be re-elected in 2016 and 2021. I am confident that, based on my performance, I am destined to climb higher on the political ladder, this is because I don't wish



to stand as a district councillor again.” Interview documented in December 2022.

Voices of District Councillors

A district council is composed of directly elected councillors, women councillors (affirmative action), and councillors representing interest groups such as Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), Youth, Older Persons, and Workers. Directly elected councillors are elected through universal adult suffrage, while councillors representing interest groups are elected through electoral colleges. Apart from the District Chairperson who is supposed to possess the qualification of at least an “A” Level certificate to be nominated as a candidate, no qualification is required to be nominated as a candidate to be elected as a councillor. And yet, they are expected to read and approve documents prepared in technical language by the technocrats. But even those who attained higher qualifications, still had a lot to learn on the job in terms of budget scrutiny, maintaining close contact with the electorate, monitoring service delivery, drafting motions on notice, drafting a petition, and writing a monitoring report among others. Councillors from different parts of the country shared with us their experience and story.

Hon. Rose Amono Abili, former Councillor, Bungatira Sub-county, Gulu District served as the Sub-county Woman Representative for Bungatira in Gulu District from 2011 to 2021. During her time in council, she served as secretary for education, health and community-based services and later as secretary for production. Hon. Abili says the trainings offered by ACODE under the LGCSCI enabled her to understand her roles as a councillor and made it easy for her to represent her constituency effectively.

“ACODE’s training to the district leaders is very key and very important because, as a leader, I now know my roles and responsibilities, I now know how to offer services to the needy people, how to link government programs to the community because we are to bridge that gap between the community and the local government, so, I think ACODE’s training is very key to district leaders.” Interview documented in October 2020.



The former Speaker of Mukono District Council Hon. Emmanuel Mbonye, Councillor representing Mpatta Sub-county says the LGCSCI has transformed the mindset of local government elected leaders.



“...It has dealt with my mind set about leadership and how politics must operate especially while in office. Handling of clients based on what we promise them during election campaigns and in relation to the development plans. ACODE has taught me my roles and duties as a councillor, it has shown me that besides mobilising for votes, there are roles I have to play after being elected in office including legislation, maintaining close contact with the electorate and monitoring the delivery of public services in my electoral area. Through the trainings of ACODE and the experience that I have gained including from the time I served as Speaker of Council, I have now become a trainer myself, I now offer training to the lower local governments in Mukono. Other neighbouring districts also hire me sometimes. I have learnt how to program and organise myself through the tailor-made councillor’s diary given to us by ACODE.” Interview documented in July 2022.

On the outcome of the induction training conducted by ACODE, Hon. Jane Beatrice Akello, the female councillor for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in Lira District Council who was serving her first term having been elected to council in 2021, was one of the 28 members of Lira District Council who benefited from the induction training jointly organised by ACODE, Ministry of Local Government and ULGA in November 2021. After the induction of the District Council by ACODE, she was elected as the Chairperson of the Finance, Planning, Administration and Investment committee. She noted that:

“...Following the induction training conducted by ACODE on 25th and 26th November 2021, we had some changes, first of all, we made improvements in the sitting arrangement based on Rule 9 of the Standard Rules of Procedure for local government councils. Before the training, a person or member holding the floor would stand behind the Speaker to give their submission; but this has since changed. Now, any member holding the floor now stands before the Speaker and addresses the speaker while speaking in council. Secondly, we had changes



on the number of committees which originally were four but we have revised it downward to three as a legal requirement according to sections 16, 22 and 25 of the Local Governments Act as amended 2020. As a result of the induction, we have reduced the number of standing committees to three. As a female and PWD representative, I have also benefited from affirmative action during the re-organisation of the committees of the council and I got elected as the Chairperson of the Finance, Planning, Administration and Investment committee. I thank ACODE for opening our eyes and helping us to comply with the law". Interview documented in November 2021.

Hon. Thomas Jefferson Obalim, former Councillor-Central Division, Lira District Council who was the best-performing councillor in the 2018/2019 local government council scorecard assessment appreciated ACODE for building his capacity to monitor service delivery, write reports and follow up on issues raised. He said his ability to monitor service delivery and follow up on issues in service delivery units to be addressed had endeared him to his electorates.



"...I want to appreciate the scorecard initiative. It has built me, it has shaped me, and I am a very different person from where I came from. Now I have the knowledge. The scorecard has made my electorate my real friends. I represent them adequately and they also like me. Because of the various parameters that are in the scorecard which I have mastered, I now have the capacity to monitor and ... also my report writing has improved. The scorecard has really built me. I want to also request my friends in the different councils in this country to appreciate the scorecard because it will build you and improve your performance in council. Interview documented in August 2020.

Hon. Sarah Elem Aceng, Female Councillor- Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), Apac District Council was contented with ACODE's work under the Local Government Councils Scorecard Initiative and she stated that;

"... I want to thank ACODE so much for the training that I have got during the induction for councillors. ... The training has helped me a lot. One, I now know my role as a councillor. Two, I now know the different types of committees and their roles. Three, I also know-how, as a chairperson for a committee, I can channel my information to cause action on any matter. For instance, from the training, I have learnt that if I have issues under my committee, I can forward them to my secretary and the secretary picks it up and

presents it to District Executive Committee (DEC). And if DEC also has something that needs the committee's intervention, it can be channelled to the committee through the secretary. Four, I know what the budget is about, what planning is and the processes involved in budgeting. I know that, as a councillor and chairperson of a committee, all this knowledge will help me to improve my work" Interview documented in March 2018.



Hon. Cosmas Ayikobua, District Vice Chairperson and Secretary Community Based Services- who also represents Ajia Sub- County in Arua District Council, a position he held since 2011 notes that the scorecard helped him to understand his role as a councillor.



"...The scorecard has helped a lot, we had a knowledge gap which the scorecard addressed. Personally, there were areas that were unknown to me such as monitoring and reporting on issues of service delivery. I used to monitor but would not document or report on the outcome of my monitoring. The dairies that were given to us by ACODE simplified information on our roles and service delivery standards and this acted as our reference book on a daily basis. Furthermore, the scorecard increased the level of participation and competition in council. Previously, there were councillors who would not speak in council but when the scorecard assessment came, they became active and people were competing to raise issues on the floor of council. This way, a lot of issues from the communities found their way to council and the citizens benefitted a lot. I would also like to state that ACODE through the findings of the scorecard has done advocacy on behalf of local governments especially in the areas of late releases of funds by the central government to local governments." Interview documented in July 2022.

On 28th April 2022, Hon. Denis Tyan, LCV Councillor -Akokoro Town Council, Apac District Council moved a motion seeking a resolution of Apac District Council to find an everlasting solution to the alleged illegal extension of the boundaries of Maruzi Hills Forest Reserve contained in a citizens' petition submitted to the office of the Speaker of Council on 2nd April 2022. Apac District Council adopted the motion and later commissioned a committee of council to follow up on the matter and report back to council. Hon. Tyan credits ACODE for building his capacity to be able to effectively represent his electorates. Hon. Tyan says the induction training

conducted by ACODE on 22nd and 23rd November 2021 equipped him with the confidence and knowledge to support his electorates throughout the process of drafting the petition.

"...I would like to extend my gratitude and appreciation to ACODE for the support through the induction training offered to Apac District Council. I have personally benefited from the training in that I have become more active in participating in the different businesses of council. For instance, I was able to support my constituents throughout the process of developing a citizens' petition over the unclear boundaries of Maruzi Hill Forest Reserve which had brought a lot of misunderstanding between the citizens and the forest officers.

I am happy that when I brought the matter to the floor of council through a motion seeking council to adopt the petition, it was taken up by council. Now council is following it up with National Forestry Authority as well as the central government. I strongly believe that without the training by ACODE, I wouldn't have got the confidence and knowledge to be able to guide the citizens throughout the process. I thank ACODE for building my capacity to effectively represent my people". Interview documented in August 2022.



Hon. Mary Mujumura Kihika, former Deputy Speaker-Masindi District Local Government represented Bwijanga Sub-county in Masindi District Local Government Council from 2006 to 2021. She says her re-election for three consecutive terms was due to her impressive performance both in council and the constituency. She attributes this impressive performance to capacity building received under the local government scorecard initiative implemented by ACODE. Hon. Mujumura says the initiative should be extended to other districts as well.

"...I want to take this opportunity to appreciate the scorecard which has really helped me to improve my political career by participating fully in council and giving feedback to the community. Because of this, I have been re-elected for at least three terms now. I want to recommend that the scorecard be extended to other districts that have not had the opportunity to benefit from it as well". August 2020.



During the local councils' elections of 2021, Hon. Lucy Akajo, Workers Representative- Moroto

District Council was elected by an electoral college comprising members of UNATU and the non-unionised workers in Moroto District Local Government then working with UNATU Moroto branch, accessed the Moroto scorecard report for FY 2018/19 and used the information to develop her campaign messages. Also, she used the scorecard results, in which her opponent (the incumbent) had performed dismally, to sway voters in her favour. Hon. Akajo spoke about her experience in the 2021 elections and how ACODE's work contributed to her success in the elections:



"...I got elected in 2021 in an electoral college of 30 members, 20 from UNATU and 10 from the non-unionised members. I am on the council for the first time and it was not something easy to win an election. I used the scorecard to win the election. I looked at the parameters of the scorecard and realised that these are things I am able to do and these are things that could help me to convince the voters. So, I looked at many things in the scorecard like debating in council, moving motions and guiding council using special skills. For that matter, I looked at the performance of my predecessor, photocopied the scorecard and circulated the copies to the voters to look through and vote for a person based on their competence. I appreciate ACODE for the information on the scorecard but also promise that I will stick to the parameters of the scorecard in the conduct of my duties." Interview documented in November 2021.

Voices of Local Government Technical Officers

A typical district local government setting in Uganda is comprised of two blocks (the political and technical wings of the district). Unlike the political wing where leaders are elected into office every five years, the local government technical officers on the other hand form the public service of a district local government. The technical wing of the district is headed by the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and deputised by the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (DCAO) who are recruited by the Public Service Commission and posted to work in a given district. Other technocrats in districts are recruited by District Service Commissions that perform a delegated role of the Public Service Commission. For purposes of this impact story booklet, we placed our focus on two technical officers (the CAOs and the Clerks to Councils) who have a

direct role to play in a district council.

The CAO is a member and secretary to the District Executive Committee that is chaired by the District Chairperson who is also a technical and legal adviser to council. The Clerk to Council is a subordinate of the CAO at the rank of Senior Assistant Secretary (SAS) and performs the assigned role of Clerk to Council as an additional responsibility among his other duties. The Clerk to council is responsible for the timely production of minutes of council under the supervision of the Speaker of council as well as the custodian of all documents of council under the office of the Speaker of Council among other duties.



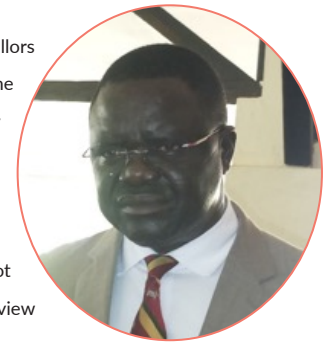
“...At the local government level, the scorecard has deepened democracy. Despite the initial resistance by district councillors at the start of the implementation of the local government council scorecard initiative; the councillors have now fully embraced it. Councillors are now actively debating in council and this has made the process of development planning seamless and the quality of legislation better. ACODE should continue implementing the scorecard to consolidate the gains already made.” Mr. Geoffrey Okaka, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) -Apac District Local Government. Mr. Okaka had previously served as CAO in Nebbi and Gulu districts where the LGCSCI is being implemented. Interview documented in August

2022.

Mr. Luke LL Lokuda, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), Sironko District Local Government who previously served as Chief Administrative Officer in Wakiso and Soroti Districts in which the Local Government Council Scorecard Initiative was implemented attributes the harmony between the technical and political arms of Wakiso and Soroti districts to the Local Government Scorecard Initiative.

“The scorecard has been important and impactful in legislation in local government councils. Because councillors know that somebody (ACODE) is looking out for them; they focus on performing their roles in contact with electorates, monitoring and debates in council. The scorecard has also led to a positive relationship between the technical and political arms of the local government. It is not only about the assessment but the councillors are also oriented on their roles/duties and that of the other stakeholders

in the local government. In the process of this orientation, the councillors get to understand and appreciate their roles/duties and that of the technocrats in the delivery of public services. This creates harmony because once there is an understanding of the roles, there is limited or no clash or role conflict. As technocrats, we implement activities smoothly. But where councillors and technocrats are fighting each other, there can never be better service delivery because you cannot implement activities in an environment of disharmony.” Interview documented in July 2022.



Mr. Raymond Laula, Clerk to Council, Agago District Local Government says that through the LGCSCI, political leaders now understand their roles. He notes that this has facilitated processes like planning and budgeting, reduced wastage of resources and ensured citizens own government projects. He further notes that because political leaders understand their roles and limitations, the working relationship between the technical and political arms of the local government has greatly improved.



“...Through the scorecard, ACODE built the capacities of the political leaders who are the policy makers in the district local government and also trained the citizens on their roles and what they should expect from their leaders. This knowledge has been guiding councillors all along especially during the budgeting processes, it has ensured that the leaders allocate resources to the priority areas because the leaders always go out to consult the citizens on what they want as priorities in the budget. This has reduced the wastage of resources and ensured that citizens own the development programmes delivered to them. As a result, the relationship between the citizens and their

leaders have greatly improved. Secondly, the relationship between the technical and the political leaders have also improved. Initially, because of a lack of knowledge of their role and duties, political leaders used to interfere in the implementation of council resolutions, which was causing conflict between the politicians and technocrats. Agago was one of the most conflict -infested districts. But because of the capacity building programme, the interference by the elected leaders on the work of technocrats has reduced drastically and so has the conflict. We now have the most cordial working relationship between the politicians and the technocrats and many districts are coming to learn from us how we have been able

to overcome the conflicts". Interview documented in August 2022.

"...The scorecard has made the elected leaders realise that they are not just leaders in the district but should be accountable to the people who vote for them. Before Nwoya District Council was enrolled into the Local Government Council Scorecard Initiative, the leaders were not going back to their electorates but when the scorecard started, the leaders started going back to the electorates and also documenting their work. The scorecard demands that you provide documented evidence of all the activities you claim to have undertaken which previously was not the practice of elected local leaders.



Monitoring of service delivery by elected leaders has also improved, as leaders took up monitoring government programmes seriously because it is one of the parameters of the scorecard that is assessed. As a result of this, there is value for money because contractors and service providers no longer have the luxury to do shoddy work without being noticed. Another aspect that has changed is the issue of delegation which is part of the parameters of the chairperson and speaker's scorecard. Before the introduction of the scorecard, the Speakers and Chairpersons would not delegate tasks to their deputies, thereby denying them the opportunity to grow; but also, in case either the Chairperson or the Speaker is not around for whatever reason, the operations of the entire district is likely to be paralysed. The increase act of delegation has promoted a sense of shared responsibility and team work. Furthermore, the rate and quality of debate in council has improved. Because the councillors know that they will be assessed, even the ones who were not active initially have begun to bring issues and debate on the floor of council". Interview with Mr. Geoffrey Axuma Odokonyero, Clerk to Council - Nwoya District Local Government documented in August 2022.

"...Ever since the scorecard was introduced, there has been improvement in the performance of the Jinja District Local Government Council. Firstly, in the quality of debate in council, the councillors ensure that they go back to their constituencies to bring issues on the floor of council because the scorecard follows their activities up to their sub-counties. Secondly, there has been an improvement in the level of documentation. Initially, the councillor used not document their activities. Even technocrats used to take certain things for granted and would not document but because of the emphasis that the scorecard

places on documentary evidence, councillors now bring reports to council after monitoring. This has in effect improved the quality of debate. The overall impact of the scorecard has been an improvement in the quality of service delivery because councillors are able to track how resources come to the district and how they are utilised through monitoring and oversight. The induction trainings conducted as a precursor for the scorecard has equipped both the technical and political leaders with the knowledge of their roles and responsibilities, and their boundaries and limitation. This has improved the working relationship between the technocrats and the politicians since each of them knows their roles". Interview with Mr. Peter Ayazika, Clerk to Council - Jinja District Local Government documented in August 2022.



Voices of LGCSCI implementing partners

Right from the LGCSCI project design, we were very deliberate about working with CSOs based in the districts where the project would be implemented. We did this to ensure sustainability. They too provided their thoughts on the impact of LGCSCI's capacity-building initiative on the district councils.

Mr. David Mugarra, Program Manager - Governance, Peace and Human Rights at Kabarole Research and Resource Centre (KRC), and District Researcher under LGCSCI for Kabarole DLG notes that since the introduction of the scorecard, the performance of local government councils in terms of; documentation and record keeping; and issue-based legislation has greatly improved. He attributes these to the consistent effort by ACODE to assess the performance of local government leaders and offers capacity-building interventions.

"...One of the key things that the scorecard has really helped is the documentation and record keeping for both the councillors and chairpersons. It is very normal for councillors to come and just talk in council and go away, see a problem and keep quiet. But the introduction of the scorecard has shown that councillors are now writing reports such that when a councillor leaves office, he has something he has left in office. They write reports say for instance when they monitor a school, they are supposed to write a report and

that's a parameter in the scorecard. The scorecard also talks of legislation in terms of debate and not only debate because it is very systematic, a councillor must have debated at least four times which, is a threshold in the scorecard. But the other question is what has he debated on, it should be issues of service delivery and not an increment of their allowances. So, when we are reviewing the minutes in our assessment, our focus is on whether the councillor debated issues of service delivery. We observe that there are no longer debates in the district council where someone would just stand up and start talking against someone, and you find the whole debate in council is talking about an individual and not services. But the coming of the scorecard has shown there is a great improvement in the production of the minutes of the district council." Interview documented in March 2017.



Mr. Daniel Samuel Luba, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer- UNDP, who has also been a researcher under the local government council scorecard initiative since the initiative was launched in 2009 notes that the initiative has also improved the quality of legislation in Mpigi District Council, and council's responsiveness to local service delivery issues.

"...In terms of the performance of local government leaders in Mpigi district, LGCSCI contributed to an improvement in the quality of legislation; councillors are able to debate with facts and move motions on service delivery, present bills and ordinances in council. The district council has been able to enact ordinances on enrolment, retention, and provision of midday meals in schools and mainstreaming disability, especially in construction. It also led to increased contact with the electorate, councillors set up functional meeting places with the electorate in their constituencies, and others designated time in the month to meet with the electorate. The scorecard, in line with the Civic Engagement Action Plans (CEAPS), increased monitoring of the Local Government activities in line with the government priority program areas like roads, education, health, agriculture, water, functional adult literacy, and the environment. This activated citizen demand for better services using evidence on service delivery and conduct of leaders to trigger a response from leaders to citizens' demands on service



delivery." Interview documented in August 2022.

2.3 LGCSCI and citizen engagement

Stakeholders at the national and sub-national levels talked about how from their perspective the LGCSCI's citizen engagement and citizen engagement action planning meetings (CEAPs) have built the civic competence of local communities to constructively engage their local government councils and leaders on matters of service delivery and performance of individual elected leaders. The stakeholders observed improved demand for accountability by the citizens, whether in terms of service delivery or performance of their elected leaders. They also observed an improved relationship between the elected leaders and their electorate.

According to Hon. Ojara Martin Mapenduzi, Member of Parliament for Bardege-Layibi Division, Gulu City who formerly served as district chairperson of Gulu between 2011 and 2021, after years of the scorecard, the citizens of Gulu District are able to demand information about the performance of their leaders but also challenge the leaders in case their performance doesn't match the reality of service delivery on the ground.

"...The scorecard has empowered the citizens. The population of Gulu is a very informed population. I have seen the level of interest they have shown in the scorecard initiative where people want to know how their leaders are performing. But they are also able to challenge the leaders. The people also want to see whether what the scorecard results say corresponds with what is on the ground. Somebody may think that they are doing so much but if this is not reflected down in the grassroots, then that becomes a challenge". Interview documented in March 2017.



"Because the citizens have been sensitized by ACODE, they demand feedback from their leaders on service delivery matters. They always call leaders to explain issues that affect them in August 2018, they called LC V Councillors representing Namabasa Sub-county and CAO, LC V Chairman, Secretary Works

and the District Speaker on the issue regarding Kolonyi-Namabasa road, also in Bubyangu Sub-county, residents protested and invited the leaders and demanded answers about the bad state of District roads in Bubyangu especially that they had filed in their petitions and nothing was coming out. Citizens in most cases attend the gallery District Council meeting and see how their Councillors debate on the issues raised by the community.” Interview documented in March 2022.

Hon. Stephen Olebe, Speaker of Council, Soroti District Local Government credits the scorecard for bridging the gap between citizens and their elected leaders; noting that the scorecard has empowered the citizens to be able to hold their leaders accountable. He also lauds the scorecard for building the capacity of councillors making his work as the presiding officer of council much easier.

“...The Local Government Council Scorecard Initiative has bridged the gap between the citizens and their elected leaders. Because the scorecard emphasizes service delivery and community engagement, the councillors are now going back to meet with their constituents more often. But also, by sharing information about our performance with the citizens and training them on how to engage with us, the citizens are now able to hold their elected leaders accountable. Before the introduction of the scorecard, the citizens used to look at us as their bosses but now they understand that we are offering a service to them and that they have a responsibility to hold us accountable. On my part as a Speaker of Council, the scorecard has made my work much easier, I find it easier to preside over a council of informed members because through the scorecard, the councillors now know their roles and responsibility and that they have to function as a team and not as an individual.” Interview documented in August 2022.



Leading into the 2021 general elections, Hon. Nansubuga Deborah, Woman councillor-Bumasikye and Bunambutye Sub-counties Mbale District Council, had led a group of citizens in Bumasikye Sub-county to successfully petition Mbale District Council to demand a health centre to be constructed in their Sub-county. According to Hon. Nansubuga, the CEAP process built her confidence and leadership skills while the success of the petition endeared her to the citizens who elected her to council during the 2021 elections. She noted the following about ACODE’s citizen engagement interventions;



“...I would like to thank ACODE which empowered me through a programme called Civic Engagement Action Plans (CEAPs). I was a lead petitioner in my Sub-county where the citizens were petitioning the district council over a lack of health centre III in Bumasikye sub-county which was eventually successful. When it was time for the election campaign, I offered myself to become the woman councillor for the two sub-counties of Bumasikye and Bunambutye. Given that people already knew my competence from the time of mobilising for the petition, they easily entrusted me with their votes. Through ACODE’s empowerment under the CEAPs process, as chairperson of the women’s council at the sub-county, I was able to climb the ladder to become a district councillor representing two sub-counties. My rise in leadership was only possible through the work of ACODE.” Interview documented in December 2021.

Hon. Lillian Stella Lalam, Woman Councillor- Awach & Pukony Sub-counties, Gulu District Council, says the Civic Engagement Action Plan (CEAPs) implemented by ACODE has improved the relationship between leaders and the electorate. She notes that through CEAPs, leaders are able to highlight their statutory roles to the electorate and that citizens now understand how and where to channel their service delivery concerns.

“The CEAP is a very good engagement because this civic engagement links us the leaders to the community members ... In civic engagement, it is our responsibility to let the community know what knowledge they need as community members. There is a great impact for example citizens can now write petitions, monitor service delivery and government programs, and they know which offices they can channel their issues or concerns in the district.” Interview documented in October 2020.



2.4 Enhanced capacity of civil society organisations (CSOs) and implementing partners to act as intermediaries between citizens and Local Government councils to improve service delivery

It would not have been possible to successfully implement the Local Government Council Scorecard Initiative without the support of our implementing partners in different parts of Uganda. Right from the LGCSCI project design, we were very deliberate about working with sub-national CSOs where the project would be implemented. We did this to ensure sustainability. Beyond civil society organisations, ACODE also outsourced for unique talent from individuals who we worked with in the capacity of researchers or research assistants to implement the LGCSCI and we have over the years of the project implementation mutually benefited from each other.

In this section, CSOs and implementing partners attest that their capacity has been enhanced to act as intermediaries between citizens and LG councils through experience and knowledge earned from different training programs such as the researcher's methodology training for the LG councils' scorecard assessment as well as the experience earned from implementing the scorecard and facilitating citizen engagement meetings in their respective districts. Their understanding of the operations of local governments greatly improved and some partners have gone on to offer guidance to councils upon request. Some CSOs such as TAAC have gone on to replicate the scorecard in their work.

Mr. Tom Opwonya, Executive Director - Apac Anti-Corruption Coalition (TAACC), says in addition to improving the performance of local government elected leaders, the scorecard has also built the competency of local CSOs in issues of local governance.

"...The scorecard has awakened the local leaders to begin doing what is expected of them instead of the things that they thought were their duties but without long-term impact on service delivery like attending social events such as burials and weddings. It has also improved their level of documentation when they go out to monitor service delivery in their electoral areas; they can now draft and submit reports to council. Their level and quality of debate in council has drastically improved. At an institutional level, the scorecard became a big advocacy tool for TAACC. In the 2021 elections, as an organisation we developed a spot message using the information of the scorecard as part of our civic education program. We are planning on



replicating the scorecard in districts in Lango sub-region where it has not been implemented such as Ouke and Dokolo to extend its impacts to those districts. I have also seen that my staff who participated in the scorecard assessment have become grounded in research methodology and they are the ones driving the research processes of the TAACC as an institution." Interview documented in July 2022.

"...I want to thank ACODE for the amazing career enhancement I gained through my work as a research assistant in Apac under the Local Government Scorecard Initiative. Through this, I have been able to understand the operations of local government councils and the role of elected leaders in improving service delivery. The opportunity to implement the scorecard in Apac has also strengthened my role as a member of the civil society in mobilising the citizens for engagement in the local governance process. Through the CEAPs which is a sub-component of LGCSCI, I supported the process of several citizens' petitions some of which were successful. For example, when the community of Ayago in Apoi Sub-county petitioned the district council on the poor state of Ayago HC II, council allocated UGX 41 billion in the FY 2020/2021 to renovate the health centre. The engagement further sharpened my research skills especially because of the numerous research trainings that I attended in the course of implementing the scorecard. At the start of each assessment cycle, ACODE trains its researchers on basic research skills and methodology. This has been a big step in achieving my career goal as a researcher." Interview with Mr. Felix George Ojok Arum, Program Officer-Apac Anti-Corruption Coalition (TAACC) and a research assistant for Apac District under the Local Government Council Scorecard since 2014 documented in July 2022.



"...Due to my engagement with ACODE under LGCSCI, I have benefitted from trainings in basic research methodology and citizens' engagement. The training on Civic Engagement under CEAPs has strengthened my understanding of CSOs roles, as intermediaries, in improving service delivery. In 2019, I supported the communities of Bwambara and Kasheshe Sub-counties for successfully petitioning the district council demanding the renovation of Out Patient Department (OPD) blocks in Kikarara HC II and Kasheshe HC II respectively. These OPD blocks were renovated in the 4th quarter of FY 2020/2021, and



I played a critical role in following up on these petitions from the time of drafting by the citizens through to their discussion in council. I have continued to build the capacity of citizens to demand improved services from their local government leaders. For instance, in April this year, I guided a group of citizens to draft a petition for an electricity connection in the Southern Division in Rukungiri Municipality. Furthermore, the training in research methodologies have honed my research skills and helped me to fit well within my new role in TPO.” Interview with Ms. Assumpta Tumuramy, Economic Strengthening Officer- Transcultural Psychosocial Organisation (TPO), Rukungiri documented in July 2022.

Mr. Bernard Mbereyinka, Programme Coordinator - Kisoro Concern for the Marginalised People Organisation who has been Kisoro’s Lead Researcher under LGCSCI since 2017 notes that the CEAPs has strengthened the relationship between citizens and their local leaders and that the assessment of local government leaders has broadened the local government leaders’ understanding of their roles and responsibility and strengthened local civil society organisations’ capacities to support local governance processes.

“...Through ACODE’s citizens engagement meetings, there has been interface meetings between leaders and the electorates facilitated by partner CSOs in the district. In these meetings, elected leaders explain to the electorates the district plans and budgets and the citizens on the other hand, identify service delivery issues which affect their communities and develop strategies to engage their local government leaders such as writing petitions and letters for the leaders to intervene. Some of these petitions and letters have



been responded to, which has strengthened the partnership between citizens and local leaders. Through the LGCSCI project, local council leaders are also oriented to know their roles and responsibilities which has broadened their scope of understanding on how to debate from an informed point of view and how to bring service delivery issues to the floor of the council. At a personal level, I have gained a lot of experience and knowledge in the operations of local governments and particularly on issues related to citizens’ engagement because of my involvement in the scorecard assessment. This has enabled me to continuously support district councillors. Political leaders have continuously consulted me on how to bring some concerns to the knowledge of responsible authorities, departments and agencies”. Interview documented in August 2022.

According to Mr. Stephen Ssemakula, Executive Director- Community Development Concern, seven years of implementing the scorecard has built his capacity for advocacy. He notes that through his engagement in the scorecard initiative, he understands the operations of local government councils and how to channel community concerns for service delivery. He notes that this puts him in a good position to act as an intermediary between the citizens and local government leaders on matters of service delivery.



“...Having worked with the Local Government Council Scorecard since 2014, my understanding of the Local Government structures and how they operate has greatly increased. I can now differentiate between the elected leaders and the technical leaders as well as the difference in their roles. This has improved my capacity to engage local leaders on matters of service delivery, transparency and accountability. Because of the relationship that I have developed with the district leadership through my engagement with the scorecard, I can now easily access information from the district. During this period, while supporting the citizens to petition the district council for better service delivery, I have learnt how to collect, citizen demands and forward community voices to targeted leaders, something that has helped community members to understand the channels through which their demands can be heard.” Interview documented in August 2022.

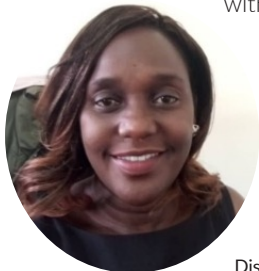
Ms. Edinah Nuwasasira, Coordinator- Greater Mbarara Civil Society Organisation Forum, says that the trainings she has received from ACODE under the local government council scorecard initiative especially in areas of citizen’s engagement has built her capacity and that of her organisation to be able to engage both the citizens and elected leaders in Mbarara District on matters of service delivery.



“...The scorecard has changed the way of thinking the elected leaders. Knowing what their mandate is, it helps them to set goals and what to do for their electorates, and so there has been a change like debates in council. If you peruse through the minutes of council, you can easily track discussions on service delivery. On the part of the citizens, the scorecard has changed the perceptions of the citizens towards their elected leaders. Initially, citizens used to think of their leaders as donors but this has changed. Because of the information from the scorecard, the citizens now view their

leaders as conduits for improved service delivery; so, cases of citizens demanding school fees and other personal benefits from their leaders have significantly reduced. At an organisational level, the scorecard has built our capacity to be able to engage both the citizens and elected leaders to consolidate this new relationship built. For instance, recently there was an issue of citizens failing to repay money got from Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Project (UWEP) which is a revolving fund because some politicians had given beneficiaries the false information that the money should not be repaid. We intervened and talked to the beneficiaries to repay and now the loan recovery under UWEP for Mbarara District Local Government has greatly improved.” Interview documented in August 2022.

Ms Lillian Driwaru Briony, Executive Director, Youth Development Initiative –West Nile (YDI-WN), says the knowledge gained from the researchers’ methodology training has expanded her knowledge of local government operations enabling her to offer guidance to local government councillors in the West Nile Region of the country. She says her engagement under LGCSCI has widened her organisation’s network and enabled the organisation to build a working relationship with key stakeholders in the local governments in West Nile Region.



“...My experience under the local government council scorecard initiative has widened my network and that of our organisation within the local governments in West Nile. Our engagement in the scorecard assessment has enabled us to build a strong working relationship with key stakeholders in the local government such as the Resident District Commissioners, the Resident City Commissioner, District chairpersons, Speakers of Councils and Chief Administrative Officers. Using the knowledge acquired from numerous trainings for researchers under LGCSCI, I am able to offer guidance to local government councillors across the West Nile Region on a number of issues especially constituency servicing and sometimes I accompany them for monitoring to guide them in the monitoring process”. Interview documented in August 2022.

“...Under the Local Government Council Scorecard Initiative, ACODE gives researchers basic trainings in research methodologies, these trainings have buttressed my research skills. The opportunity of publishing in one’s own name that ACODE gives its researchers have also helped me to build my profile as a career researcher. Additionally, I have gained knowledge in the operations of local



governments and now the local governments of Gulu, Amuru, Nwoya and Agago consult me on some key issues which always ably guides them on. That way, I have been able to effectively contribute to improving the quality of governance in these districts.” Interview with Mr. Kenneth Rubangakene, Research Assistant-Centre for African Research (CAR) documented in July 2022.

2.5 Career Growth and enhancement for implementing partners

In this section, a number of researchers attribute their career growth and appointments to serve in different capacities in local governments to the LGCSCI project.

Mr. Amuza Wamono, Chairperson Local Government Public Accounts Committee (PAC), Mbale District, attributes his ascendancy to the helm of the Public Accounts Committee of Mbale District to the knowledge that equipped him through the years of his engagement under the scorecard initiative. Mr. Wamono has been a researcher under the Local Government Council Scorecard Initiative in Mbale and later a Lead Researcher for Mbale and Bududa Districts before he got elected as the Chairperson PAC of Mbale District.

“...I was identified by ACODE as one of the regional implementing partners in Bugisu Sub-region and made part of the research team in Mbale and Bududa districts under the Local Government Council Scorecard Initiative. This developed my thinking, creativity, research skills, interpersonal relationship and writing skills. It has improved my capability in guiding both upper and lower local governments. The knowledge of local government operations that I acquired while working with ACODE has led to my appointment by Mbale District Local Government as a member, and later, the Chairperson of the Local Government Public Accounts Committee. My prayer is for the scorecard initiative to expand to other local governments in order to build competent civic communities in districts to advocate for improved service delivery.” Interview documented in July 2022.



Mr. Richard Odongtoo Lotyang, Senior Assistant Secretary-Parabongo Sub-county, Agago District Local Government, describes his experience and knowledge attained while implementing the local government council scorecard initiative as the foundation for his success in public service.

Mr. Lotyang previously served as Programme Coordinator Wagwoke Wunu Organisation, a Community Based Organisation that partnered with ACODE to implement the scorecard in Agago District for four years between 2012 and 2016. Mr. Lotyang went on to serve as a Community Development Officer and later acting Sub-county Chief for Arum Sub-county in Agago District before being appointed Sub-county Chief of Parabongo Sub-county.

"...I was part of the research team under the local government council scorecard initiative for close to four years while I was still in Civil Society. My participation in the scorecard as a researcher paved way for my entry into public service because it built my capacity and improved my understanding of the local government and how it works. When I joined civil service, first as a Community Development Officer, I had skills and knowledge gained through the trainings I received from the scorecard. Because of these skills and knowledge, I was promoted to acting Sub-county Chief within three months and within three years, I was promoted to and approved as a Senior Assistant Secretary. Based on my competence, I was appointed as the Clerk to Council, Agago District Local Government Council in 2016. Even when the Ministry of Local Government inducted district councillors, induction of lower local councils were not prioritised. Using the knowledge and skills that I acquired during my engagement with ACODE, I have trained my councillors of Parabongo Sub-county and I can say that my councillors in Parabongo Sub-county are better than those of other sub-counties in terms of comparison." Interview documented in August 2022.



Mr. Ronny Robert Rupiny, Program Manager -Alur Cultural Institution, says this has enhanced both his leadership and research skills. He further notes that his understanding of the laws relating to the operations of local government councils have also been greatly enhanced enabling him to easily network and interact with local government actors.

"...I have been involved with ACODE since 2009 as one of the pioneer Researchers under the Local Government Scorecard Initiative and I have benefitted from the internship programme at ACODE which sharpened my skills and knowledge in research, policy and advocacy work at the national level. Under LGSCI I took up the position of Lead Researcher and worked closely with my other researchers; this position enabled me to work in districts of Nebbi, Arua and Moyo further enhancing my leadership

capabilities and networking closely with leaders in these districts. LGCSCI work has tremendously improved my research skills and knowledge which was lacking before engagement in LGCSCI. Besides a number of research trainings organized by ACODE to impart skills to Researchers; the actual implementation of LGCSCI at the districts and community through Community Engagement and Action Planning meetings (CEAPS) greatly improved my research skills to-date. Through LGCSCI my knowledge of laws and policies has been greatly enhanced. LGCSCI involves being conversant with relevant laws and policies such as the Constitution, Local Governments Act, and Rules of Procedure for Local Government Councils. Development plans and budgets among others without engagement through LGCSCI would be lacking. LGCSCI work has also further improved my report-writing skills. The Research reports published by ACODE under LGCSCI are of high quality and a point of reference for many (Scholars, Academia Researchers, Government, CSOs). I have received many positive feedbacks from stakeholders who have read works that I co-authored under LGCSCI. There are moments I have interacted with people who have read the reports and appreciated them, an indication that I am currently at the peak of my career as well as my professional growth due to the vast knowledge, skills and experience, all gained from being associated with ACODE. Without ACODE I wouldn't have gone far or achieved much." Interview documented in August 2022."



Mr. Rupiny previously worked as a Branch Focal Person EPR-Uganda Red Cross Society, Nebbi Branch. Mr. Rupiny has been involved in the local government council scorecard initiative since its inception in 2009, he has implemented the scorecard in Nebbi, Arua and Moyo districts where he has been leading the district research teams.

Like all other researchers and research assistants under LGCSCI, Ms. Agnes Lolem, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer-Karamoja Women Advocacy for Transformation, Moroto District, underwent training to build her capacity in research and impact documentation of CEAPs. Ms. Lolem says this has helped her fit well in her new role as the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer at Karamoja Women Advocacy for Transformation.

"...When I joined ACODE in 2019, I gained a lot of experience in different research activities like administering the scorecard tool to district political leaders, data collection from lower local governments,



service delivery units and the community during community meetings. The training I got also built my confidence in doing interviews. Before then, I used to be very timid and unable to confidently interface with high-profile respondents like the District Chairperson, RDC and CAO, but this has since changed. I am now able to interface with them easily. The skills I gained in documenting the impacts of CEAPs while implementing the scorecard is helping me do my work as a monitoring and evaluation officer of my new organisation, we are now able to track progress and link them to our interventions, I thank ACODE for building my capacity in research." Interview documented in July 2022.

As a Stakeholder Engagement Officer, Mr. Albert Mwesigwa, Stakeholder Engagement Officer -Lutheran Church World's assignments include enhancing citizens' participation in governance processes like planning and budgeting. Mr. Mwesigwa says he has been leveraging on the skills earned while implementing the scorecard and CEAPs, an initiative of ACODE to effectively perform this function at the Lutheran Church World.

"...The scorecard experience has improved my knowledge about the operations of local governments and decentralisation in general. I have gained expertise in local governance and always consulted on matters relating to local government councils' operations. At the Organisation level, the Lutheran Church World for which I work in Masindi, does work around governance, the same area of focus of the scorecard. Basing on the experience gained from ACODE through the scorecard, I am able to deliver on my assignment as a Stakeholder Engagement Officer, some of which assignments include ensuring citizens' participation in the planning and budgeting processes." Interview documented in August 2022.



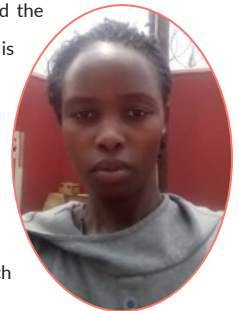
Ms. Angela Opai, District Coordinator-John Hopkin University's Dreamline Project, Obongi District, says the various research trainings she has received from ACODE under LGCSCI has buttressed her expertise in research and deepened her grasp of research ethics.

"...The eight-year experience in the local government council scorecard initiative has enhanced my research expertise especially in research ethics, data management, analysis and report writing. Throughout



the eight years, I have had the opportunity to attend the annual researchers' methodology training which has sharpened my research skills and has enabled me to take up several research works with different organisations and institutions. The opportunity given to me by ACODE has contributed so much to my career growth." Interview documented in August 2022.

"...Through my work with ACODE under the Local Government Council Scorecard, I have been appointed to represent Bududa District Local Government Council on the Mbale Regional Referral Hospital Board and now I am using the knowledge I got to help the board members understand certain things especially in regards to the budgeting process in Local Government. This is because I have a better understanding of the processes than any other member based on my experience with ACODE. I am also a member of the School Management Committee at Bumasata Primary School in Bududa District. Using my knowledge in the budgeting process, in July 2022, I was able to unearth a sinister plan by the head teacher who had claimed that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development had not released the UPE Capitation Grant for the school, yet the school had received the money. I thank ACODE for the opportunity and knowledge instilled in me that is enabling me to serve my local government and its citizens in the effective use of resources". Interview with Ms. Sarah Catherine Watsemba, Independent Researcher documented in August 2022. Ms. Watsemba undertook the Scorecard assessment in Bududa District as a Researcher under ACODE's Local Government Councils' Scorecard Initiative (LGCSCI) and is currently working with Rathe Consult International. She also works with Bugisu NGO Forum which promotes good governance and transparency in Bugisu Sub region.



Conclusion

It is evident from the voices of the different stakeholders who have interacted with the LGCSCI project that the initiative has had an enormous impact across the three main objectives for which it was conceptualised. In the opinion of the stakeholders, the initiative had contributed to i) the Effectiveness of citizens to demand political accountability and effective service delivery; (ii) the Enhanced capacity of civil society organisations (CSO) partners to act as mediators between citizens and Local Government councils to improve service delivery; (iii) Enhanced capacity of government to respond to citizens demands at national and sub-national levels in the 35 local governments where the project was implemented. However, the fact that the initiative was implemented in only 35 out of 145 local governments, its impact was limited in terms of scope, which leaves a gap in the districts where the initiative has not been reached. Expanding the scope of the initiative beyond the 35 local governments could potentially spur these impacts across the country and consolidate the gains registered in the implementation of the decentralisation policy in Uganda.

ABOUT ACODE

The Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE) is an independent public policy research and advocacy Think Tank based in Uganda, working in the East and Southern Africa sub-regions on a wide range of public policy issues. Our core business is policy research and analysis, policy outreach and capacity building. Since the organisation was formed 19 years ago, ACODE has emerged as one of the leading regional public policy Think Tanks in Sub-Saharan Africa. ACODE has been recognised among the Top-100 Think Tanks worldwide by the University of Pennsylvania's 2017 Global-Go-To Think Tank Index Report.