



# LAUNCH OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS SCORECARD REPORT FY 2018/2019



## Theme

**The Next Big Steps: Consolidating Gains of  
Decentralisation and Repositioning the Local  
Government Sector in Uganda**

ACODE Policy Dialogue Report Series No.34, 2020

With Support from:



Published by ACODE

P. O. Box 29836, Kampala

Email: [library@acode-u.org](mailto:library@acode-u.org); [acode@acode-u.org](mailto:acode@acode-u.org)

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

Citation: Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment. (2020). Launch of the 8th Local Government Councils Scorecard Report FY 2018/19. Summary Report of the Proceedings, Kampala: ACODE, Policy Dialogue Report Series No.34.

© ACODE 2020

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the prior written permission of the publisher. ACODE policy work is supported by generous donations and grants from bilateral donors and charitable foundations. Reproduction or use of this publication for academic or charitable purposes or for purposes of informing public policy is excluded from this restriction.

**ISBN:** 978-9970-567-16-4

# **LAUNCH OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS SCORECARD REPORT FY 2018/2019**

## **Theme**

**The Next Big Steps: Consolidating Gains of  
Decentralisation and Repositioning the Local  
Government Sector in Uganda**

**March 10, 2020 Kampala Uganda**

**ACODE Policy Dialogue Report Series No.34, 2020**

The information in this publication does not necessarily reflect the official view of the Democratic Governance Facility, Hewlett Foundation or their partners or any other person acting on their behalf may not be held responsible for the use of the information contained herein.

# Table of Contents

Acknowledgements .....	lii
Summary & Key Issues .....	Vi
<b>1. BACKGROUND TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS SCORECARD INITIATIVE (LGCSCI).....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. ABOUT THE LAUNCH .....</b>	<b>2</b>
2.1 Objectives of the Launch .....	3
2.2 Participant Attendance .....	3
<b>3. OPENING STATEMENTS.....</b>	<b>4</b>
3.1 Opening Remarks from Executive Director, ACODE .....	4
3.2 Remarks from Secretary-General, Uganda Local Governments Association.....	6
3.3 Remarks from the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Local Government .....	7
3.4 Keynote Address from the Minister of Local Government.....	9
<b>4. PRESENTATIONS .....</b>	<b>12</b>
4.1 Background, Evolution of the Scorecard and Decentralisation .....	12
4.2 The Scorecard Methodology .....	14
4.3 Successes of Civic Engagement under LGCSCI .....	16
4.4 Local Government Financing .....	17
4.5 Local Governments Scorecard Performance .....	19
4.6 Policy Recommendations .....	21
<b>5. RESPONSES AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS .....</b>	<b>22</b>
5.1 Response from the Minister of Local Government.....	22
5.2 Response from ULGA President .....	23
<b>6. WHAT ELECTED LEADERS SAY ABOUT THE SCORECARD.....</b>	<b>25</b>
6.1 Statement from Richard Rwabuhinga, Chairperson, Kabarole DLG.....	25
6.2 Statement from Hellen Kabajungu, Councilor, Rukungiri District.....	26
6.3 Statement from Owinyi Bor, Councilor/Deputy Speaker, Soroti District.....	27
6.4 Statement from Sam Nyakua Wadri, Chairperson Arua District .....	28
<b>7. CLOSING STATEMENT FROM THE PERMANENT SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT .....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>8. CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>APPENDICES.....</b>	<b>32</b>

## Acknowledgements

ACODE acknowledges the contribution of both individuals and organizations that made this work possible. We are grateful for the financial support from the Democratic Governance Facility (DGF) and Hewlett Foundation that made conducting the Local Government Councils Scorecard Assessment FY 2018/19 and the convening of the Launch of this report possible. The support from the Ministry of Local Government during this process is equally acknowledged. The several consultations and preparatory meetings with the MoLG under the guidance of Minister of Local Government, Hon. Raphael Magyezi and Mr Ben Kumumanya, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Local Government were very vital for the success of this conference.

ACODE appreciates the contributions of individual project staff in preparation for this launch for the local government councils scorecard report FY2018/19. Oscord Mark Otile, Phoebe Atukunda, Rebecca Nalwoga-Mukwaya, Walter Akena, Richard Ayesigwa, Fred Kasalirwe, and Eugene Gerald Ssemakula, your contributions to this process are very much appreciated. We acknowledge Dr Sebastiano Rwengabo, the main rapporteur at the conference. In the same vein, we acknowledge Jonas Mbabazi, the Project Manager for the Local Government Councils Scorecard Initiative (LGCSCI) for the contributions to this report. We recognise the participation and contributions of various stakeholders at the conference. Their views and perspectives were pivotal in raising issues and proposing the direction for the Local Government Sector.

## SUMMARY AND KEY ISSUES

On 10th March 2020, the Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE), launched the 8th Local Government Councils Scorecard report for the Financial Year 2018/2019. This report presents the proceedings of the launch held at Hotel Africana in Kampala. The theme of the launch was: “*The Next Big Steps: Consolidating Gains of Decentralisation and Repositioning the Local Government Sector in Uganda.*” It was collaboratively convened by the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG), the Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE) and the Uganda Local Governments Association (ULGA). The scorecard assessed the performance of elected district local government leaders in 35 districts strewn across the country, in the context of the decentralisation policy. The assessment revealed *tremendous improvement in the performance of targeted district leaders in the execution of their mandates across the selected 35 District Local Governments (DLGs) in the country*, across all the four parameters of the scorecard; (a) execution of their legislative function; (b) accountability to the electorate; (c) planning and budgeting for service delivery and other programmes in the district; and (d) monitoring the delivery of public services in their electoral areas.

The launch attracted practitioners from different stakeholders, namely, MoLG, ULGA, Parliament, DLGs, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), media, academia, and development partners. It involved opening remarks and keynote address, presentations of the assessment methodology and findings, and plenary discussions. The challenges that still limited the capacity of local government authorities to deliver on their mandates, such as financing gaps, inter-governmental relations, and new problems of maintaining sub-national cohesion, were highlighted.

### Key Issues

During the launch, some *key issues* were raised from presentations and discussions:

- ***Gains Made, Improved Performance:*** The assessment revealed tremendous improvement in the performance of targeted district leaders in the execution of their mandates across the selected 35 DLGs in the country, across all the four scorecard assessment parameters.
- ***Decentralisation still faces challenges:*** Uganda’s decentralisation policy still has to contend with issues of over-politicisation, sub-national fragmentation<sup>1</sup>, financing gaps, limited capacity, poor work ethic, and infrastructure underdevelopment.

---

<sup>1</sup> In many respects decentralisation has created incentives and demands for creation of more and more unviable local government structures, leading to national fragmentation, political pressures, increases in costs of public administration, and fragmentation of state resources.

- ***Inter-Governmental Relations:*** IGRs between national and district authorities are not consultative, participatory, and the District Local Governments (DLGs) rely on the Uganda Local Governments Association (ULGA)'s advocacy efforts.
- ***Collective Efforts, Common Benefits:*** The collaboration between ACODE, ULGA, MoLG and development partners (e.g. DGF, Hewlett Foundation) have enabled a decade-long effort to assess the performance of elected districts leaders in the 35 districts where the scorecard is undertaken.
- ***Toward Development Work:*** Given the recent transition of the MoLG from a regulator to a development sector, DLGs and other local governments will no longer be taken as recipients of central-government resources. They have to actively take part in the production of economic value, with local leaders to be assessed on the extent to which they have enabled their people to improve their socio-economic conditions. Local Economic Development (LED) has to be construed as the responsibility of DLGs and other local governments.
- ***High-level Policy Interest:*** The Minister of Local Government, Hon. Rafael Magyezi, together with the Permanent Secretary of MoLG, Mr Ben Kumumanya, have not only expressed gratitude and readiness to support these efforts, but the Minister promised to deliver a copy of the report to the President, while the Permanent Secretary promised that the MoLG would study the recommendations, implement some and consult on others where necessary
- ***Merge with other Assessments to Widen and Deepen Reach:*** State officials from suggested that the scorecard be linked with ongoing assessments of the performance of local governments, undertaken by Office of the Prime Minister and MoLG, to ensure that all districts can be covered by the scorecard. This may necessitate harmonisation of methodologies, balancing academic independence of the think tank with fusion into government monitoring work, and allocation of sufficient resources to ensure efficient and effective work while maintaining scientific rigour and research ethics.
- ***Education Qualifications Important:*** a recurrent challenge in local governments, which Parliament has to comprehensively address, is the issue of minimum qualifications for different local government's leaders. There is an observed direct relationship between levels of education and the performance of elected leaders.
- ***Funds retained at Centre:*** The idea that considerable amounts of funds (more than UGX 1 Trillion), which would be allocated to local governments to fund decentralized service delivery and local development, are retained by the central government was re-echoed with concern.

- ***District Council Performance Linked to Leadership Performance:*** a direct positive relationship was observed between the performance of District Leaders, specifically the Chairperson and Speaker, and the performance of the District Council as an institutional structure. This indicates that leadership is key to institutional capacity, performance, and possibly to district-wide development and service delivery.

## Policy Recommendations

1. Financing of local governments should be prioritized
2. The Local Government Sector should play a greater role in spearheading and championing policy reforms that impact on the functioning of local governance through conducting targeted research Review of relevant legislation and other frameworks to strengthen local government as a sector and production system
3. The Ministry of Local Government and other stakeholders should focus on strengthening social accountability and oversight at the Local Government level for improved service delivery Establish clear service-delivery standards and rewards and sanctions for performance
4. The Local Government sector should design mechanisms for sharing resources within the local government setting and between Central Government and DLGs.
5. Review inter-governmental relations to ensure proper coordination, cooperation and minimisation of conflicts between the Central Government MDAs and the district, the district and the sub-counties, districts and municipalities.
6. Local governments should establish smart partnerships with other stakeholders to attract financial resources, technical expertise, and other forms of support needed by local governments to effectively deliver services to the people.
7. Rationalise LG responsibilities to bring the in line with existing government structures, technological changes and systems
8. Revive the intergovernmental revenue sharing system, which would incentivize Local Governments to collect local revenue as well as foster cooperation among different levels.
9. Enhance citizen engagement and participation in all local governance processes, by strengthening frameworks for their participation by rationalizing approaches and costs involved and leveraging advancements in information communications technology.
10. District Councils should have deliberate conflict resolution arrangements to minimize the adverse impact of skirmishes on the functioning of the district bodies.



11. Empower local structures within districts, e.g. youth and women councils, then leverage existing ones (SMCs, WUMCs, HMCs) to enhance local governance
12. Capacity strengthening of local government structures - the Ministry of Local Government and Stakeholders ought to focus on strengthening accountability and oversight at the Local Government level for improved service.
13. Strengthen the role of the District Council in Public Financial Management by clarifying the role of LGPACs in audit and reporting Monitoring compliance with LG governance frameworks to address impunity.
14. The ministry of Local Government needs to develop a mechanism for monitoring compliance with guidelines including budgeting, rules of procedure among others and provide support services to assist Local Governments that are not meeting the minimum standards.

# **1. BACKGROUND TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS SCORECARD INITIATIVE (LGCSCI)**

The Local Government Councils Scorecard Initiative (LGCSCI) is a social accountability initiative that seeks to deepen local governance by strengthening 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 and currently covers 35 districts in Uganda. Through our partnership with the Uganda Local Governments Association (ULGA), ACODE can 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 provision of service delivery and political participation, there were significant gaps that required urgent action. For example, while progress was recorded in the areas of universal primary education (UPE) construction of several health centres and increased financing for roads sector there were several 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. The health sector has 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 remained very poor across the country.

Local Governments performance in executing their mandates especially in service delivery across was 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 led to a situation where citizens were disengaged and became mere receivers of services from the government without the courage and facts to hold their 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.

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 organizations (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.

Currently, the scorecard 35 districts across the entire country including Agago,

Amuru Nwoya, Gulu, Lira, Apac, Arua, Nebbi, Moyo, Tororo, Amuria, Soroti Moroto, Nakapiripirit, Bududa, Mbale, Jinja, Kaliro, Kamuli, Mpigi, Luwero, Mukono, Lwengo, and Wakiso, Kabarole, Kabale, Kisoro, Ntungamo, Rukungiri, Kanungu, Mbarara, Sheema, Hoima, Masindi and Buliisa. The LGCSCI uses various strategies to achieve the project goal including research (scorecard assessment); capacity building; and local and national advocacy. This project is currently being implemented with support from the Democratic Governance Facility (DGF) and the Hewlett Foundation.

## **2. THE LAUNCH OF THE SCORECARD**

This report contains the proceedings of the launch of the Eighth Local Government Councils Scorecard, for Financial Year 2018/2019, held at Hotel Africana, on 10th March 2020. The launched report, titled *“The Next Big Steps: Consolidating Gains of Decentralisation and Repositioning the Local Government Sector in Uganda”*, is the first LGCSCI report since the Ministry of Local Government became a sector. This should provide policy pointers for improving local government sectoral performance based on evidence of local government councils’ performance.

The Launch was moderated by Mr Maurice Mugisha. The Scorecard Report, which was launched, presents findings and results of the assessment on the performance of elected political leaders at the district level during the Financial Year 2018/2019. The assessment was conducted in 35 District Local Governments (DLGs), ensuring equal regional representation across the country. The assessment was guided by performance indicators based on the roles, responsibilities, and functions of elected district leaders as articulated in the Local Governments Act and the decentralization policy. The scorecard needed to be empirical and detailed. So, the assessment followed a rigorous verification process as quality control. The process was supported with funding from Democratic Governance Facility (DGF) and Hewlett Foundation and was undertaken as a joint endeavour between ACODE, the Uganda Local Governments Association (ULGA) and the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG).

The FY 2018/2019 scorecard assessment reveals tremendous improvement in the performance of targeted district leaders in the execution of their mandates across the selected 35 DLGs in the country. The performance of district executives and councils were assessed based on four parameters: (i) Execution of their legislative function; (ii) Accountability to the electorate; (iii) Planning and budgeting for service delivery and other programmes in the district; and (iv) Monitoring by elected leaders of performance in service delivery. These parameters are derived from the functions and powers of Local Government Councils as provided for in the Local Governments Act, 1997 (as amended). The observed positive change in the functionality and performance of district councils is partly attributed to sustained capacity building programmes for elected district leaders, and may equally indicate possible underperformance in

districts where the capacity building has been lacking or inadequate.

## 2.1 Objectives of the launch

- a. To disseminate scorecard results from the Local Government Council Scorecard assessment for FY 2018/19
- b. To share policy recommendations with various stakeholders in the sector
- c. To brainstorm on the current trends of Local Government Financing and showcase proposals for improving Local Government Financing in Uganda.
- d. To provide a forum for representatives of government, local government practitioners; CSOs, academia, development partners and the private sector to share lessons and experiences learnt during the implementation of decentralisation policy.

## 2.2 Participant Attendance

Participation at the launch of the 8th Scorecard Report was drawn from different stakeholders and development partners, some of whom included; Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), Members of Parliament, Development Partners, Civil Society Organisations, ULGA Executive Committee, Leaders of OWC, Media and Local Government leaders from the 35 districts where the Scorecard Assessment was undertaken (District Chairpersons, CAOs, Speakers of Councils and Clerks to Councils). A total of 324 participants attended and participated in the event; 65 were female while 259 were male. A summary of participants' attendance is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Participants attendance

Participants	Gender	Age Group			Total
		18-30	31-59	59+	
Development Partners, CSOs	M	1	13	4	18
	F	3	10	2	15
ULGA EXCOM	M	0	8	1	9
	F	0	2	0	2
Media	M	11	9	0	20
	F	3	2	0	5
District Researchers	M	4	26	4	34
	F	5	12	0	17
District Chairpersons	M	0	18	6	24
	F	0	1	1	2

Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs)	M	0	18	4	22
	F	1	6	0	7
Speakers of District Council	M	2	21	0	23
	F	0	3	0	3
Clerks to Council	M	2	19	0	21
	F	0	6	0	6
ACODE Staff	M	3	12	0	15
	F	2	5	0	7
Others	M	15	58	0	73
	F	1	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>53</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>324</b>

Source: ACODE's registration forms for the launch of the 8th Scorecard Report, 10th March 2020

### 3. OPENING STATEMENTS

In their remarks, the different officials expressed gratitude for the dignitaries who attended from a different state and non-state institutions. They were happy about completion of the 8th LGCSCI Scorecard process, and stressed the following:

#### 3.1 Remarks by Dr Arthur Bainomugisha, Executive Director, ACODE

- Thanked state and non-state dignitaries present, and revealed that the Minister of Local Government would be present to deliver the Keynote Address and also grace the event.
- He welcomed all participants for the lunch of the 8th LGCSCI Scorecard Report and thanked them for finding time to come and share ideas for the transformation of Uganda
- Revealed that the LGCSCI has been implemented since 2009, to build leadership capacity across Africa “so that the 21st century can be a century for Africa.”
- He stressed that leadership is key and exemplified with Napoleon Bonaparte whose presence in the battlefield was equated to 40,000 armed forces. Leadership will be critical for this African century
- We are all leaders in our respective responsibilities, ordained by God. Everyone should pick one or two lessons to be efficient leaders
- His experience in England and the USA revealed that the strength of England and USA is leadership – ad “Africa has what it takes to provide leadership...”

- He said the scorecard is an enviable process across the region and has been invited in South Sudan, Kenya is benchmarking the scorecard and seeks to utilize it to strengthen Kenyan local government. ACODE directors recently returned from Sierra Leone where they met the Prime Minister and President, and have been asked to export it to Sierra Leone. In Botswana, a memorandum of understanding exists under which the scorecard will be exported to Botswana.
- Time management is one of the deficits afflicting Africa – time mismanagement is one of the reasons why Africa fails. “We waste a lot of time as Africans.” “I think if we make a decision to transform this country and this continent, we must be able to pain ourselves” – to cross the Red Sea so that we may possess the promised land – by dealing with time management, to read more, to document successes and failures, and continuously educate ourselves to empower ourselves with knowledge-based ambition.
- It is now our responsibility to take on the mantle and develop our continent. He thanked the 35 chairpersons who have withstood the scorecard for 10 years and be assessed on their performance.



Figure 1: Dr. Arthur Bainomusha, the Executive Director of ACODE giving his opening Statement

### 3.2 Remarks by Ms Gertrude Rose Gamwera, Secretary-General, Uganda Local Governments Association



Figure 2. Ms Rose Gamwera, the Secretary-General, ULGA giving her statement

- Took cognizance of the Local Governments Committee of Parliament, Coordinator of Operation Wealth Creation (OWC), ACODE, ULGA President, development partners and Local Governments leaders.
- Was happy to be back again after a one-year recess from the scorecard
- Looked forward to the outcome of the assessments
- She said ULGA is happy to associate with the scorecard as a tool for assessing local government performance. “It has a lot of meaning for us as an association...”
- She revealed that 11 years down the road, they have been working with leaders, and is keen to know the outcome of the 2018/2019 assessment, given that a lot has changed over time.
- She inquired: “How connected is the assessment by ACODE to the national assessment system?” What do we pick from the scorecard to enrich as a tool what the sector can do to strengthen the capacity of local leaders

- She revealed that there has been a lot of capacity-building investment in local leaders, and looked forward to seeing what this has led to regarding the assessed performance.
- ULGA has grown more efficient in costs, dealing with evidence-based engagement as an association, and ACODE has been a very good and internationally acclaimed think tank. This relationship with ACODE has also “helped them (ACODE) pick up on the strengths of advocacy”
- She revealed that initially there were lots of reservations about the scorecard, but indicated that whatever comes out is good for local governance in Uganda. She appealed to everyone to listen attentively to the presentation, and ensure that linkages are created with all stakeholders to improve the performance of the local government sector.

### **3.3 Remarks from the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Local Government presented by Mr John Walala, Director Local Governments Inspection**

Mr Walala recognized all dignitaries present in their respective capacities, including the leaders of OWC, development partners, and colleagues from state departments and agencies (MDAs)

- He delivered apologies on behalf of the Permanent Secretary whom he said was held up by some other official duties
- Almost 10 years ago, when there was an interface with Mr Godber Tumushabe, and ULGA, “it was like we were competing for something we did not know... I am happy that so far the two speeches I have heard from Dr Bainomugisha and Rose reveal that we have moved a long way.”
- He added that the things that ACODE was pointing out then were factual but local government was resistant. Now the local governments that were resisting this initiative are the ones inviting ACODE to go and assess them and help them in capacity in governance and financial areas.
- The ministry pledges to study, analyse the report critically, and “we shall implement the recommendations provided ... within circumstances, if we face challenges” there will be dialogue on how to ensure that these recommendations are implemented.
- He asked: How do these assessment reports help the 68 per cent of Ugandans move into the money economy? How can researchers help interpret this information to the benefit of people in local governments? How can we move



beyond academics and address issues that improve the conditions of our people? Where is Local Economic Development (LED) in our communities to address the challenge of transforming the 68 per cent peasants into the money economy? Do we understand what LED is (in reality and practice)?

- On LED, the Ministry is insisting that every able-bodied Ugandan should provide oneself with enough basic needs and also have a surplus for sale. The MoLG is working with OWC to ensure that LED is embraced in the local governments.
- Every part of Uganda, where there are local governments, should embrace LED. Thus, the districts, sub-counties and parishes should be transformed, down to the village and local person.
- He added that the question of how technocrats, researchers, CSOs, are serious about what they tell the world in terms of implementation. “Do we walk the talk”, are we LED-compliant? He exemplified with the hypothetical instance: if all of us were fired from our jobs, how many of us would survive decently?
- “If all of us commit that we can be able to change this country, I think there is nothing impossible.” He promised that the MoLG will work with all partners to improve the lives of Ugandans.



Figure 3: Mr John Genda Walala, Director of Local Government Inspection giving a statement on behalf of the Ministry of Local Government

### 3.4 KEYNOTE ADDRESS from Hon. Raphael Magyezi, Minister for Local Government



Figure 4: Hon Raphael Magyezi, Minister of Local Government Giving his Statement

Mr John Genda Walala welcomed the Minister to the launch, summarized his welcome remarks made before the Minister’s arrival, and invited him to deliver his Keynote Address. During the Keynote Address, Hon. Raphael Magyezi, the Minister of Local Government highlighted the following issues:

- Recognized all dignitaries in their respective capacities, and wished them a good morning.
- Was thankful for the invitation to the launch of the 8th Local Government Councils Scorecard Report under the theme “The Next Big Steps: Consolidating Gains of Decentralisation and Repositioning the Local Government Sector in Uganda.” – he also thanked ACODE, ULGA and Development Partners who have been carrying out the initiative
- Hon. Magyezi revealed that he had been part of the scorecard team for the last 11 years when he was a member of ULGA. He added that making him a Minister of Local Government is a vote of confidence in the scorecard.

- Asked everyone to use the scorecard findings to make deliberate steps and strengthen decentralisation
- He highlighted the current advantages available to local governments: (a) local government sector (approved consisting of MoLG, LGFC, and Local Government Associations), and development partners which support decentralisation. This is an opportunity to reposition local governments as a key player in the democratisation and development of our country”. (b) Policy and legal frameworks. (c) Structure of local governments, from LCI to LCV – “there is no other ministry/sector with such a structure.” He asked stakeholders to make use of this structure to develop the country. (d) Availability of resources at the local level – especially increasing financing, ongoing infrastructure developments, and other resources which “have increased over time”. (e) Will of the central government to strengthen and maintain decentralisation, as an instrument to improve local democracy and building local competence for governance broadly conceived. “Government will continue to strengthen decentralisation...” (f) Civic awareness and engagements at the local level, seen in public media engagements, human rights defender networks working with local governments across the country.
- The challenges facing LGs today include: inadequate financing of decentralized services, especially low local revenues which constrain service delivery and development; under-staffing of LGs which spells failure to modernise service delivery and use modern technologies; limited capacity engage the public in planning and budgeting, monitoring and evaluation, accountability and transparency and corruption, and meaningful debates; increased splitting of LG administrative units in response to requests for political representation rooted in ethnic tensions (“this fragmentation of local government units imposes a heavy burden” on governance at the local level).
- He proposed repositioning the LG sector, in realignment with global trends, for better management of localities, including rebranding local governments to achieve the objectives of decentralisation as envisaged in the Constitution.
  - a. Strengthening the legal and policy frameworks for decentralisation, including the Constitution, PFMA and the Local Governments Act.
  - b. A new, separate, Local Governments Finance Bill/Act to separate central government from local government financial rules.
  - c. Enhanced financing of local governments via more transfers from the Centre and through local revenues, using better technology and innovation, specifying and increasing percentage allocations of central budget to local

- governments and embedding this in the law, enhancing local revenue collection (retaining a share of revenues from exploited natural resources, by improving local revenue databases using technologies).
- d. Provision of adequate, well-trained staff for local governments – “a different staff configuration from the Mother district”: an inter-ministerial dialogue has been started to ensure full and efficient staffing for local governments.
  - e. Focus on Service delivery – “the reason for the existence of local governments is to provide services to the local communities”, and is losing focus on this. The shift toward Local Economic Developments is intended to ensure that LGs become producers of wealth and economic value, not consumers. LG leaders should ensure that the socio-economic conditions of their areas are improving, using available resources, partnerships, and communities, “to see how to uplift our societies.”
  - f. Continuous capacity building for LG leaders – especially political leaders – who are being voted/measured based on raising false hope among the people, how much one criticizes the government, and buying votes. “But it is one thing to be a good person in terms of society and to be a good leader; these are different things.” He wondered as to why there is no requirement of minimum qualifications for some local government leaders, and yet sub-county chairpersons, district chairpersons, members of parliament, are subjected to have minimum academic qualifications – “who understand medium time frameworks.”
  - g. Urbanization: one-third of the population will live in urban areas in the next 10-15 years. The population is increasing and more and more of it is staying in urban areas, hence demanding serious urban government and developments “so that we can have better towns tomorrow... we need to plan these towns early enough”, including town boards.
  - h. Strengthening transparency and accountability which erodes local accountability and service delivery – and promised to strengthen responsible bodies, councils, and communities – so that cases of mismanagement can be reported – and rewarding good performance
- He proposed that future scorecards should measure the extent to which LG leaders have enabled their communities to improve their poverty conditions.
  - “We need to prepare a capacity building program for elected local leaders even before they are elected”, and insisted that technical leaders, the Managers of Local Governance, also need continuous training.

- The scorecard is a vital step in the direction of improving local governance and promised that the MoLG would study and implement some of the recommendations made in the report.
- He concluded by thanking everyone, expressing gladness that colleagues from Parliament were present, and promised to deliver a copy of the Scorecard Report to the President.

## **4. PRESENTATIONS**

### **4.1 Background, Evolution of the Scorecard and the Decentralisation**

Dr Bainomugisha presented the background and revealed that:

- The MoLG is now a partner of ACODE and ULGA, and an agreement is about to be finalized with the LGFC.
- ACODE is a public policy research think tank operating in the region but based in Uganda and with globally-acclaimed ranking and recognition.
- The scorecard is a huge and expensive undertaking, conducted now for 9 years, with support from development partners such as DGF, Hewlett Foundation and GAPP, supported by USAID and UK-Aid. GAPP, supported by USAID and UK-Aid, also funded a study on local government financing; the report was launched in 2019. That report, he said, was ranked globally and revealed to be one of the best advocacy reports at the time.
- He acknowledged that the minister's speech captured most of the findings of the 8th scorecard report, and summarised the content of his presentation.
- The motivation is to contribute to the economic and political transformation of African societies.
- ACODE has been ranked among the top think tanks in the world (8/93 globally; 1/6 in Africa)
- Decentralisation has been defined as the transfer of power, resources, responsibility, and authority to sub-national units. This was a bold decision by the NRM government. This was to empower local governments to engage in localised planning and development, strengthen citizen capacity to participate in governance, and bringing power to the people to exercise control over governments through democratic processes.

- The history of decentralisation; since the 1992 Policy, the constitutionalisation and legalisation, all indicated that decentralisation was critical to enable the country transition from war to peace faster. This partly broke the conflict trap as people were enabled to access power.
- In 2009, ACODE undertook the study, which revealed that 3 decades of implementing decentralisation were being short-changed by serious challenges related to the socio-economic development of sub-national locales: education, health, funding for local infrastructure, corruption, rampant conflicts, and the crisis of environment and natural resource governance.
- ACODE designed the LGCSCI intervention following the realisation: that building democracy requires protracted processes of ensuring accountable governance. The LGCSCI sought to strengthen the capacity of LGs to perform their roles, and build the civic competence of citizens to hold their elected leaders accountable through demands for efficient services.
- ACODE conceived of LGCSCI as a long-term initiative. This is a democracy project consisting of building the demand side of democracy, to enable the wheel of democracy to rotate, by strengthening citizen and leaders' capacities simultaneously. The Local Government Parliamentary Forum, for instance, is intended to ensure advocacy for LGs in the appropriation of funds from national coffers.
- The scorecard is not a name-and-shame project. It does and will show best-performing local leaders, but is not intended to expose failures. It offers capacity building interventions, which has increased the capacity of leaders. Some of the previously worst-performing districts have become the best performers due to capacity building interventions under LGCSCI. This has been achieved through monitoring local development processes, contact with electorate, responses to local demands, and feedback mechanisms.
- The theory of change behind LGCSCI: democracy consists of both the demand and supply sides of democracy. Regular monitoring of LG councils and individual councillors, and providing feedback, citizens will demand more from leaders. This motivates leaders to work harder and provide oversight. This demand will be channelled upward to the national level, activating both horizontal and vertical accountability at all levels to complete the demand and supply sides of democracy. The demand-supply cycle creates a wheel of continuous and meaningful interaction between leaders and the led, leading to transformation.
- He revealed the processes involved: scorecard assessment, capacity building for leaders, development of civic engagement action plans (CEAPs), and advocacy.

The impact of the scorecard, he added, have been positive to both the citizens, leaders, and in terms of service delivery – a kind of feedback mechanism that strengthens local governance broadly conceived. ACODE’s recent study on local government financing revealed that over UGX 1 Trillion, which ought to have been allocated to local governments, was held in central government MDAs.

- LGs should monitor the utilisation of monies sent to them to ensure efficient allocation of these funds. Diaries provided to councillors should be used to plan and document LGCSCI-related processes. The culture of non-reading, non-documenting, non-writing is also being broken. Equally, citizens have been enabled to voice their demands more and more.

## 4.2 The Scorecard Methodology

The scorecard methodology, as presented by Assoc. Prof. Muhwezi revealed that:

- The LGCSCI research process is multi-level – national, district, below-district
- The scorecard is hinged around: citizens, the institution of local government, and civil society and media
- LGCSCI is action research, that uses both qualitative and quantitative methods, follows conventional scientific norms of data management and analysis, and adopts scientific good research processes
- The Assessment covers 35 districts, chosen based on regional balance, length of existence of district (old vs. new), hard-to-reach (remoteness), and perceived position of influence.
- Parameters are defined in the law and available policy. Four sets of scorecards were designed to assess the chairperson, speaker, councillors and the district council. These 4 scorecards are combined into a district assessment.
- Secondary information is acquired from other relevant and well-placed technical leaders in districts, data elicited from citizens, and the scorecards capture the 5 points already-listed – financial management, political functions, legislation, development planning, monitoring and service delivery.
- Major instruments used to collect data are structured interview schedules (scorecards), civic engagement meeting guides, key informant interviews, observation checklists, photography, and analysis of key documents (budgets, planning documents, minutes of the executive and council proceedings) to look for corroborative evidence to determine scores.
- Scientific data management processes are undertaken with the help of district-based researchers, entered in relevant software for data analysis. Quality

control includes periodic reviews, expert task group looks at these data, district research teams, researchers' guide, multi-layered verification process, technical backstopping, external review and synthesis, and final production of the report.

- The ethical issues considered are conflicts of interest, the politician who refuses to be scored (assessed using secondary information), the potential for compromised research, confidentiality, informed consent, spot-checks and regular visits to the field, and voluntary participation.
- Strengths of this methodological effort: follow a very rigorous scientific methodology, relies on the multi-skilled team, involves triangulation of methods.
- Key limitations include: it is very laborious and time-consuming, municipalities and sub-counties are excluded from the assessment, district executive committee is not assessed, uniform treatment of all councillors (yet representing different sizes and area of coverage or special interest groups), and coverage of less than 50% of districts.
- The report produced and ranking reached is an outcome of a highly-dedicated bulletproof system that should be reliable to everyone.



Figure 5: Prof. Winstons Wilson Muhwezi, Director of Research making a Presentation on the Scorecard Methodology



### 4.3 Successes of Civic Engagement under LGCSCI

The notion of civic engagement, under the LGCSCI, consisted in:

The revelation that this assessment is intended to build capacity, not a name-and-shame process

- Definition of civic engagement – participation of private actors in the public sphere to influence decisions and policies to reach common goals. Promotes transparency and accountability of public expenditure (prompting the demand side of democracy)
- ACODE conducts CEMs at the sub-county level, to inform them about their civic roles and service delivery standards; a platform for citizens to raise their voices and demand common goods, then develop social accountability tools called CEAPs.
- Three major actors are involved: citizens, LG leaders, and CSOs. Participants are mobilized (inclusiveness considered), organized into CEMs to identify community problems and service delivery gaps, agree on community priorities, and develop an action plan (CEAP). The community focus on two strategies to constructively engage their leaders that is through writing petitions and letters to the district council for deliberation by the council. Support is provided in writing the petitions and letters, which are forwarded to LG councils then follow-up is made to ensure that response is achieved.
- Most concerns were in **health** (access to health care, staffing in health centres, quality of staff and professionalism, distances, drug stock-outs, and infrastructure), **education** (learning environment and infrastructure, scholastic materials, staff housing, few classrooms, content and quality of education, and teacher absenteeism), **roads** (maintenance and construction, quality of roads), and **water and sanitation** (access to safe water, the functionality of water sources), with limited concerns about **agriculture** (agricultural inputs quality and timing, and advisory services).
- Success efforts include: Moroto, where responses to citizens petitions led to the procurement of 30,000 virals of vaccines for foot and mouth disease; Mukono responded to a petition about Namuaba primary school which had no enough classrooms, and LG agreed to allocate funds to construct more infrastructure there (bid was sent out); Nwoya DLG rehabilitated the road to Goro-Pili; and in Gulu because of a women’s petition, a maternity ward was constructed at Lapeta Health Centre II.

- Some challenges have been faced. Leaders' perception thin this is overly demanding. Limited local revenues. Targeting the budget cycle – petitions can take longer in the process. Limited discretion in expenditure. Capacity limitations in LG leaderships. Implementation of the CEAPs methodology requires collaborative efforts between citizens, CSOs and DLGs, yet coordination is limited.



Figure 6: Dr Susan Kavuma, Research Associate, ACODE making a presentation on the Successes of Civic Engagement under LGCSCI

#### 4.4 Local Government Financing

The importance of local government financing cannot be overstressed. Mr George Bogere revealed that LG financing impacts on the quality of services provided by LGs:

- Since the 2015/16, the Intergovernmental Fiscal Transfer Reform (IGFTR) program has been ongoing, in 04 different phases, but only 02 have been undertaken. The other 02 phases on reforms of frameworks are not yet undertaken.
- Appealed to MoLG to take up the role with the finance ministry to ensure that these reforms bear fruits.

- Revealed decline (2015/16), the increment (2018/19) in financial transfers to local governments, indicating fluctuation and unpredictability in financial transfers to LGs
- There is less money for development at LG level, and limited substantive contributions to LGs by development partners.
- LGs transfers are dominated by education (94 per cent), public sector management and health, with agriculture (4 per cent), works and transport (1 per cent) taking the lowest shares.
- 72 per cent of revenues are conditional grants, followed by discretionary transfers at 12 per cent and other government transfers at 11 per cent. Local revenues contributed only 3 per cent of LGs revenues. Donor funding is only 2 per cent.
- Major revenue sources: market fees and gate fees, Local Services Tax, and business licenses. The sectoral budget performance presents mixed results, but some sectors have poor budget performance, such as health, production, and community-based services. Some discretionary funds are not being well managed or utilized – 31 per cent is used for administration, 14 per cent for health, 13 per cent education, 12 per cent planning and 9 per cent for roads and engineering, and 6 per cent on water.
- There is an improvement in timeliness of funds released to districts. Some DLGs are still taking a bit longer possible due to delayed submission of requirements needed before funds are released.



Figure 7: - George Bogere, Research Fellow, ACODE making a presentation on Local Government Financing

## 4.5 LG SCORECARD PERFORMANCE



Figure 8: Mr Jonas Mbabazi, Research Fellow and Project Manager, LGCSCI, Making a Presentation on Local Government Scorecard

When presenting the DLGs Scorecard performance, Mr Jonas Mbabazi highlighted the observed improvement in the performance of DLGs as revealed by the assessment. He presented the performance of 33 district chairpersons (because Nebbi and Tororo chairpersons had died), 33 Speakers of Councils, Councils, and councillors (1005). He revealed that:

- Only one out of 33 chairpersons is female. Only 03 of the 35 speakers are female and that there were more female councillors than their male counterparts.
- The NRM party dominated the representation in Councils – at 77 per cent of all the leaders, followed by independents (9 per cent), UPC party at 8 per cent, and others.
- He outlined the education levels of those assessed and the terms they had served, the majority of them (68 per cent) serving their first term in office.
- The four parameters on council assessment included: legislative function, accountability to citizens, planning and budgeting, monitoring priority

development processes. There was an improvement from 5 points to 62 points in council performance, including improvement in some of the parameters. Some councils have improved scores; with low (0-25) scores declining, and those scoring between 51 and 75 points increasing.

- Kabarole district council rated the best, with 87 points, then Gulu and Mpigi with 86 and 80 points respectively. Arua registered significant improvement over the years, from 29 points in 2016/2017 to 63 points in 2018/2019.
- Improvements are attributed to various factors related to capacity.
- On district chairpersons, 5 parameters were assessed. There was a general improvement in performance from 62 to 72 points. Slight improvement under political leadership, legislation and initiating development projects. Scores of less than 25 per cent have not changed, but an improvement in scores of 76-100 points (from 30 to 49 per cent).
- The best performing chairperson was Richard Rwabuhinga of Kabarole, with 96 out of 100 points. The second was Martin Ojara Mapinduzi of Gulu (94 out of 100 points). The third was Alex Oremo Alot, of Lira DLG (84 out of 100 points). Two chairpersons exhibited great improvements – Arua’s Sam Wadri Nyakua (from 36 points in the previous assessment to 86 points) and
- Four parameters were assessed for Speakers of the district councils: legislation, contact with electorate, participation in lower local government councils and monitoring of service delivery. The improved performance was observed, with a significant increase of 51-74 points. Only three speakers were female, three were youth representatives. The best performing Speaker was Hon. Stella Kyorampe of Kabarole, followed by Charles Beshetsya of Kanungu (77 out of 100 points).
- On councillors, four parameters were assessed. The number of councillors scoring between 0-25 points increased from 19 to 23 per cent. Also, an increased from 6-8 per cent of those scoring 75-100 points. Male councillors scored higher average points compared to their female counterparts. The higher the level of education, the higher the average score, with Masters Degrees scoring average 53 out of 100 points.
- Factors affecting performance: limited financing, limited discretion overutilization of funds; inadequate capacities of local governments, dormant structures at local levels (women, youth, PWDs, associations of the elderly, etc. due to lack of funds); absence of substantive Clerks to Councils; conflicts in some local governments, poor accountability relationships between political and bureaucratic leaders (e.g. Tororo, Agago, Nwoya, Masindi, Bududa); limited

functionality of committees of council and statutory bodies; and lack of a law that compels councillors to attend meetings at lower local governments levels.

- He concluded that: To consolidate the gains of decentralisation, elected leaders need resources, knowledge, skills and competences to execute their mandates. LG structures need to be regularly trained and mentored to play their accountability and oversight functions. Laws need a review to provide LGs with the flexibility to mobilise resources from different sources to improve their performance.

## 4.6 Policy Recommendations

Considering the findings and conclusions of the scorecard, the following policy recommendations came out strongly:

- a. Financing of local governments should be prioritized
- b. The Local Government Sector should play a greater role in spearheading and championing policy reforms that impact on the functioning of local governance through conducting targeted research Review of relevant legislation and other frameworks to strengthen local government as a sector and production system
- c. The Ministry of Local Government and other stakeholders should focus on strengthening social accountability and oversight at the Local Government level for improved service delivery Establish clear service-delivery standards and rewards and sanctions for performance
- d. The Local Government sector should design mechanisms for sharing resources within the local government setting and between Central Government and DLGs.
- e. Review inter-governmental relations to ensure proper coordination, cooperation and minimisation of conflicts between the Central Government MDAs and the district, the district and the sub-counties, districts and municipalities.
- f. Local governments should establish smart partnerships with other stakeholders to attract financial resources, technical expertise, and other forms of support needed by local governments to effectively deliver services to the people.
- g. Rationalise LG responsibilities to bring the in line with existing government structures, technological changes and systems
- h. Revive the intergovernmental revenue sharing system, which would incentivize Local Governments to collect local revenue as well as foster cooperation among different levels.
- i. Enhance citizen engagement and participation in all local governance processes, by strengthening frameworks for their participation by rationalizing approaches

and costs involved and leveraging advancements in information communications technology.

- j. District Councils should have deliberate conflict resolution arrangements to minimize the adverse impact of skirmishes on the functioning of the district bodies.
- k. Empower local structures within districts, e.g. youth and women councils, then leverage existing ones (SMCs, WUMCs, HMCs) to enhance local governance
- l. Capacity strengthening of local government structures - the Ministry of Local Government and Stakeholders ought to focus on strengthening accountability and oversight at the Local Government level for improved service.
- m. Strengthen the role of the District Council in Public Financial Management by clarifying the role of LGPACs in audit and reporting Monitoring compliance with LG governance frameworks to address impunity.
- n. The ministry of Local Government needs to develop a mechanism for monitoring compliance with guidelines including budgeting, rules of procedure among others and provide support services to assist Local Governments that are not meeting the minimum standards.

## **5. RESPONSES AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS**

### **5.1 Response by the Minister of Local Government**

In response to the Scorecard presentations, the Minister of Local Government remarked that he had been called by the Speaker of Parliament for some consultation, but insisted that “this is a good report; I think we should take it forward.” Many central ministries are assessing local governments, and discussions will be made on how to develop a common assessment mechanism, to reduce duplication, increase coverage and ensure wide reach of the assessment. “If other countries are already recognizing ACODE for a good job, we should also recognize our very own.”

He recognized that the link between decentralisation and democracy comes out clearly, and he encouraged DLG leaders to establish and encourage barrazas in their local areas because civic engagement is the heart of decentralisation. LGs need not go far; it is their “obligation to give information to the citizens... Open up to the citizens, because the people are the centre of decentralisation.” He added that the environment is another serious problem, rivers are drying, Lake Victoria is filling up, and local leaders should protect the environment. He was thankful for the

customized diaries provided under ACODE's LGCSCI process. On the issue of the money held by government MDAs that are meant for local governments (UGX 01 trillion), he agreed that districts have a problem with funding and "we need to get this money transferred to local governments." He challenged local governments to stop returning money to the treasury when they are clamouring that funding is inadequate.

The minister congratulated best-performing leaders and insisted that there is a link between the performance of district chairperson and speaker and the performance of the council. He suggested linking the causes of change/improvement to LED – "we must reduce poverty." It is good to see that the performance of LGs has improved over the years, and a lot more is needed to compel councillors at local levels to attend councils. He suggested making it mandatory for district councillors to attend lower-level council meetings. He committed the MoLG to implement the recommendations and asked for a copy of the report which he committed to deliver to the President. He requested development partners to fund a nation-wide assessment to cover the whole country and to develop a capacity development intervention for those districts that may be performing inadequately.

## **5.2 Response by ULGA President, Hon. Joseph Lomonyang**

The President of ULGA, Hon. Joseph Lomonyang, who is also the chairperson for Napak district, was thankful for the report and expressed gladness for the continued work since 2009. He added that the issue of lack of capacity continues to be demystified. He added that the assessment team correctly picked key issues and made appropriate policy recommendations. In general, the findings highlight the remarkable improvement in the performance of LG leaders, improvements in relations and handling of LG concerns by the central government, and the need for a united front as a sector with a strong foundation for devolution in Uganda.

He added that leaders work through structures and systems. These may demand accountability and transparency from leaders but fail to improve service delivery if the constraining conditions are not addressed. He thanked Parliament for discussing the issue of minimum qualifications for local government leaders. He called for the establishment of a leadership training centre in the country, akin to the Civil Service College.

ULGA is interested in working with MoLG and ACODE to merge the national assessment and the ACODE assessment to widen the coverage. He hoped that the minister would take up the recommendations to the highest policy levels, and ended "on a very serious note": the aspect of decentralisation is within us, and fiscal reforms are constraining the discretion of local governments more than ever, curtailing the



voices of ordinary citizens and service delivery. Underfunding curtails the democratic intent of decentralisation, and recommended that the MoLG “facilitates and ensures inter-sectoral linkages as well as reposition our sector for better performance.” He added that the need for social accountability also needs to be stressed, to ensure community ownership of the investments made by local governments. He called upon the media to capture the issues very well, consider that ACODE covers only 35 districts, and ensure truthful reporting. He congratulated the best-performing district leaders and calls upon other colleagues to strive for higher scores. He called for more support from development partners to strengthen this action research process.



Figure 9: ULGA President, Hon. Joseph Lomonyang Presenting his Statement on Behalf of Local Governments

## 6. WHAT THE ELECTED LEADERS SAY ABOUT THE IMPACT OF THE SCORECARD

Best-performing chairpersons and speakers made testimonies about the scorecard. They included; Hellen Kabajungu, Owinyi Bor - both Councillors and Richard Rwabuhinga - a District Chairperson.

### 6.1 Statement by Mr Richard Rwabuhinga, Chairperson, Kabarole DLG



Figure 10: The Best rated District Chairperson, Richard Rwabuhinga, Kabarole DLG Making his statement

Mr Rwabuhinga thanked those who put the scorecard effort and thanked them for choosing his district to participate in this social accountability initiative. He added that his district has participated in the initiative, which has helped strengthen his district local government. The scorecard strengthens transparency and communication in service delivery as it increases demands from citizens and responses from leaders; strengthening political accountability; enhancement of the quality of debates in district councils, focusing more on service delivery “other than wasting time on trivialities”;

improved participation of local councillors in the district council as the scorecard excites and triggers citizens to demand results from their local leaders, becoming an annual performance report for citizens to gauge their leaders; citizens enabled to analyse their performance of their leaders and accountability and good governance; sparked positive competition among councillors while in council as enthusiasm to debate and make points known and resolutions generated is high. It has enhanced intra-district benchmarking

Some gaps remain. Increased demands from the population are not met by the supply side. Highly engaged communities are disappointed by LG leaders who are unable to deliver to their communities. The allocation of more funding to LGs may help reduce these pressures. The uninformed citizenry remains a challenge – they demand everything from everybody without knowing who is supposed to do what. The scorecard does not consider government bureaucratic systems.

He called upon ACODE to focus its advocacy on increasing budget allocation to LGs, fighting recentralization, and working together to ensure increased unconditional budget grants to districts “to help us deliver on our mandate.”

## 6.2 Statement from Hellen Kabajungu, Councilor, Rukungiri District (Ruhinda & Buhunga sub-counties)



Figure 11: Best Rated Female Councillor, Hon. Hellen Kabajungu Making her Statement

She recognized all present in respective capacities. She praised the initiative and congratulated CODE for maintaining the position of being the best think tank.

She says at first the scorecard as misinterpreted but was later understood as an important process of ensuring leadership accountability. She thanked ACODE for not being partisan, for focusing on capacity building and monitoring service delivery. She was thankful for the training given to local elected leaders, the element of community engagement, and training of communities on their civic roles and obligations.

She stated that these processes enable service delivery as they empower all actors in the delivery wheel to act responsibly. Her performance has improved, enabled district to have functioning board and committees, and ACODE Diaries have enabled the district to be up-to-date, compelling councillors to be organized and scheduled properly, easing their work. ACODE should ensure more regular CEMS to enhance service delivery, roll on to other districts, and to lower local governments. “Long live ACODE and your partners, For God and My Country...”

### 6.3 Statement from Owinyi Bor, Councilor and Deputy Speaker, Soroti District



Figure 12: Best rated youth Councillor, Owinyi Bor, District Councilor and District Deputy Speaker, Soroti

Honoured to be on the platform to share his experience with the initiative. Appreciated ACODE for the initiative, which has impacted positively on DLGs, specifically the youth. Researchers in the district, the Teso Anti-Corruption Coalition, are doing a good job.

He has worked with youth leaders to mobilise on different platforms to advocate lobbying and planning, to ensure that beyond conditional grants for youth councils the district LG of Soroti allocated UGX 3,000,000 under DDEG; money allocated for youth to sub-counties has been raised, and Tuguru sub-county (used to have UX 500,000=, now to 1,500,000); Gweri sub-county (from 500,000 to 1 million).

He added that money for youth councils is now available. On the functionality of youth councils – in Soroti, youth councils have been transformed into youth parliaments, which sit every quarter and share their resolutions with the main councils. The 99 executive of the youth sits at the district council. He thanked everyone for the support given to him and his chairperson and Chief Administrative Officer.

#### **6.4 Statement from Sam Nyakua Wadri, Arua District, Most-Improved Chairperson**

He was pleased to share his small experience, a good one. He was one of the worst-performing chairpersons during previous assessments. He thanked Dr Arthur, and his ACODE team, with whom he disagreed seriously. His campaigns were rendered difficult by the assessment results, for he had not properly understood what the assessment was about. He rejected the second assessment, but the researchers went on and made their assessment. “I was beaten in my own game; the results came and were not good.”

Again a tough researcher was sent and he realized that his main problem was record keeping. He started keeping his records, stopped relying on technocrats. He added that the barazzas are important and cheap methods of campaigning.

He added “for those of you who have not performed well, be prepared”, enhance record-keeping, minimize conflicts, and more. He said he chairs some informal councils, and these ten to become abusive but help address conflicts. He has benefited from the establishment of the Regional Presidential Demonstration Farms, through the concept of LED, which has started with civil servants, teachers, LCI chairpersons, religious leaders, and more.

“I want to thank ACODE very much; this is a program that takes you close to your citizens”. He revealed an example of a bridge which was eulogized instead of the dead man whom he had gone to bury. He revealed that he had no money to build the bridge, and slowly and by slowly it was handled. “Accountability is a key factor”

– fits of anger should be expressed and responded to. He promised to compete with Kabarole and Gulu chairpersons in future assessments, ending with this call: “ACODE should find resources to extend this thing to other districts.”

The award of Plaques to winners, best-performing Leaders and Councils, and most-improved Chairpersons, Speakers, and Councils, was made by the Permanent Secretary, MoLG, at 02:05 pm.



Figure 13: Mr Ben Kumumanya, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Local Government, Giving a closing Statement

## **7. CLOSING STATEMENT: BEN KUMUMANYA, PERMANENT SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

In his remarks, Mr Kumumanya recognised the various leaders and signatories present, and stressed the following:

1. Today, “I am liberated” because in the 1990s when they were in the forefront of decentralisation they thought everything was possible. The catchword was “people must shape their destiny.” But resources were in short supply.

2. Amidst the challenges, an independent, empirical, scientific research agency can go out and assess and pick people who are performing at the level of 90% - to the expected levels. He thanked the high performing LGs for teaching and demonstrating to the others that it is possible
3. On youth, he was thankful that youth and women can steer forward this country to higher levels, as revealed by Deputy Speaker of Soroti and Hon. Kabajungu from Rukungiri.
4. He thanked the chairperson of Arua for revealing ways in which local leaders are addressing issues, resolving conflicts, and moving forward.
5. He indicated that the policy drafting (Section 9, for instance) was intended to strengthen the district council as the highest political authority. "We had not provided instruments" to enable these councils to perform their roles. The research under the scorecard seeks to unravel those provisions. "There is the capacity to fulfil these dreams by making these local governments become the highest political authorities... I call upon everybody to support the sector." He added that there were struggles to make MoLG into a sector, and called upon everyone to offload these issues and table them on the policymaking and resource-allocation Table.
6. He asked ACODE to produce a specific Concept Note – "in the shortest possible time" – to package those things that need to be addressed quickly. He insisted on quick packaging of these issues, to achieve results for the local government sector.
7. He thanked all those who participated and asked them to learn from one another. It is "allowable that you can all be in the 90s". He reiterated the minister's promise to use every opportunity available to make the Local government sector to take its official constitutional position. This entails sound financial base, appropriate measures to ensure that LGs perform, and ensure that LGs are responsible for monitoring service delivery. If this is not done, it defeats the spirit of 1990s, which gave rise to decentralisation, and which considered that local leaders are more knowledgeable of local dynamics and what works and what does not work. "We shall call upon you to support us once we in the battlefield" for these issues. He ended by calling upon everyone to go and "propagate the good examples, the good messages" so that decentralisation can "help to shape the destiny of the people of Uganda."

## **8. CONCLUSION**

Both the scorecard assessment process and the launch were successful processes. The assessment was successful not only by the extent to which it was analytically more in-depth, but also the retention of the intervention in those districts for a decade. The display of research rigour and country-wide teamwork and professionalism was demonstrable and the report is a significant contribution to the policy research efforts in the developing world. The launch was successful not only because it attracted high-level policy and technical leaders but because it was recognized by those present as truly indicative of the reality on the ground and the extent to which it reflects the very nuances of assessment that the ACODE research team has always gone through.

Considering the in-depth recognition of improving performance in these districts, it is reasonable to conclude that the capacity-development interventions which accompany the scorecard assessment process may have made a significant contribution to this improvement. It is possible, therefore, to observe significant underperformance if the scorecard were extended to new districts, and this would indicate that the paucity of capacity building interventions and absence of a minimum benchmark upon which leaders measure themselves may be responsible for the concerns about the general failures of the decentralisation policy. Leadership performance is not a function of funding and resource allocation, but of the awareness that dedicated service is possible through innovative leadership oversight and engagement with issues facing the institution one leads. ACODE must follow up on promises made by different stakeholders during the launch to ensure continued, productive engagement on main or the core issues raised both in the report and the launch itself.



# APPENDICES

## Appendix 1: Concept Note

### Introduction

Since 2009, ACODE in partnership with the Uganda Local Government Association (ULGA) has been implementing the Uganda Local Government Councils Score Card Initiative (LGCSCI). The LGCSCI seeks to deepen democratic decentralisation in Uganda by building the civic competence of citizens to demand effective service delivery and political accountability from their local elected leaders. The initiative also seeks to build the capacity of local governments to execute their mandates including supplying effective service delivery and political accountability to citizens. The initiative is premised on the theory of change that by monitoring the performance of Local Councils regularly and providing information about their performance to the public, citizens will demand increased accountability on local political leaders hence triggering a vertical spiral of demand for accountability from the local to the national level. The initiative has grown in reach having begun with 10 districts in the initial assessment in 2009, to the current 35 districts. This initiative is currently supported by the Democratic Governance Facility (DGF), DFID (under GAPP Program) and the Hewlett Foundation.

LGCSCI is designed as a capacity-building initiative aimed at building the relationship between the citizens and their leaders through a three-pronged approach of research, capacity building and advocacy. The Scorecard assessment process utilizes a highly participatory methodology that involves the technocrats, political leaders, civil society, and the citizens in coming up with evidence-based scores reflective of the state of service delivery in the districts during the financial year while highlighting the individual efforts of the political leaders in bettering service delivery. The Local Government Scorecard and methodology has undergone both internal and external review processes over the years. The purpose of the reviews was to deal with emerging gaps and challenges that have continuously been raised by district leaders and stakeholders. Upon completion of the assessment, the district reports are synthesized into a national report that paints a realistic picture of the state of service delivery in the country. It is this synthesis report that is launched at the national level on an annual basis. The launch will take place on Tuesday 10th March 2020 at Hotel Africana, Kampala, starting at 8:00 am prompt and ending at 1:00 pm.

The objectives of the launch include:

- a. To disseminate scorecard results from the Local Government Council Scorecard assessment for FY 2018/19
- b. To share policy recommendations with various stakeholders in the sector
- c. To brainstorm on the current trends of Local Government Financing and showcase proposals for improving Local Government Financing in Uganda.
- d. To provide a forum for representatives of government, local government practitioners; CSOs, academia, development partners and the private sector to share lessons and experiences learnt during the implementation of decentralisation policy.

## **Participating Districts**

The national launch will bring together the District Chairperson, Speaker of the council, Chief Administrative Officer and Clerk to Council from the following 35 districts: Northern Region (Agago, Amuru Nwoya, Gulu, Lira, and Apac), West Nile (Arua, Nebbi, Moyo), Eastern Region (Tororo, Amuria, Soroti Moroto, Nakapiripirit, Bududa, Mbale, Jinja, Kaliro, and Kamuli), Central Region (Mpigi, Luwero, Mukono, Lwengo, and Wakiso), Western Region (Kabarole, Kabale, Kisoro, Ntungamo, Rukungiri, Kanungu, Mbarara, Sheema, Hoima, Masindi and Buliisa). The launch will be attended by additional participants and including ULGA Executive Committee members, Ministry of Local Government, Office of the Prime Minister, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Civil Society Organisations and Development Partners.

## **Mode of presentation**

The launch will take a dialogue format with panel presentations and a plenary session. The launch will be broadcast live on television and beamed on social media platforms (Twitter and Facebook). This scorecard report will also be relayed on several radio stations and some news stories run in the newspapers. Each of the participants at the launch of the scorecard report will receive a copy of the report.

## **About ACODE**

ACODE is independent public policy research, analysis and advocacy think tank operating in Eastern and Southern Africa. Our work in Uganda and other African countries aims at informing public policymaking in the key areas of local governance, environmental democracy as well as science and technology. ACODE has for the four consecutive years been ranked by the Global-Go-To Think Tank Index as the best think tank in Uganda and one of the top think tanks in the world.

## **About ULGA**

The Uganda Local Governments' Association (ULGA) is an Association for Local Governments in Uganda formed in 1994 by the District Chairpersons. ULGA's main function is to advocate and negotiate for the interests of the Local Governments and its ultimate goal is to promote and build Democratic and Accountable Local Governments capable of delivering Efficient and Sustainable Public Services to the people. ULGA's mandate is to unite Local Governments and provide them with Association member services, and a forum through which to come together and give each other support and guidance to make common positions on key issues that affect Local Governance. ULGA carries out this mandate through lobbying, advocacy and representation of Local Governments at local, National and International fora.

## **About the MoLG**

The Ministry of Local Government is in charge of coordinating the implementation of the decentralization policy. The paragraphs below highlight the vision, mission, mandate and functions of the Ministry. The vision of the Ministry is to have democratic and accountable local governments capable of delivering

efficient and sustainable services to the people, thereby bringing about socio-economic transformation in the country. The ministry also has the mandate to guide, harmonize, mentor and advocate for all local governments in support of the vision of the government to bring about socio-economic transformation of the country.

## Appendix 2: Programme



### LAUNCH OF THE 8th LOCAL GOVERNMENT SCORECARD REPORT

Tuesday, March 10, 2020, at Hotel Africana, Kampala

#### FINAL PROGRAM

TIME	ACTIVITY	Person Responsible
Moderator: Maurice Mugisha		
8:00 am – 9:00 am	Arrival, Registration and Breakfast	ACODE Staff
9:00 am – 9:05 am	Prayer, National Anthem, East African Anthem	Moderator
9:05 am – 9:15 am	Opening Statements	Dr Arthur Bainomugisha, Executive Director, ACODE (5 Mins) Gertrude Rose Gamwera, Secretary-General, ULGA (5 Mins) Mr Ben Kumumanya, PS, Ministry of Local Government (5 Mins)
9:15 am - 9:35 am	Key Note Address	Hon. Raphael Magyezi, Minister for Local Government (20 Mins)
9:35 am – 9:40 am	Statement from the LGFC (5 Mins)	Dr Agnes Atim Apea, Chairperson, LGFC
9:40 am – 11:20 am	<b>Presentations</b>	Dr Arthur Bainomugisha, Executive Director, ACODE
	1. Background and Evolution of the Scorecard and Decentralisation (20 Mins)	Assoc. Prof Winstons W. Muhwezi, Director of Research – ACODE
	2. Scorecard Methodology (15 Mins)	Dr Susan Kavuma, Research Associate, ACODE
	3. Successes of Civic Engagement under LGCSCI (15 Mins)	George Bogere, Research Fellow, ACODE
	4. Local Government Financing (15 Mins)	Jonas Mbabazi, Research Fellow, ACODE
	5. LG Scorecard Performance (25 Mins)	Assoc. Prof Winstons W. Muhwezi, Director of Research - ACODE
	6. Policy Recommendations (10 Mins)	

<b>TIME</b>	<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>
11:20 am – 11:55 am	Plenary Discussion and Feedback (35 Mins)	Maurice Mugisha - Moderator
11:55 am – 12:20 pm	Panel Presentation: Leaders' Perspectives of the LGCSCI (5 Mins each)  Impact of the Scorecard in the Districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hon. Richard Rwabuhinga (Chairman, Kabarole District)</li> <li>• Hon. Thomas Jefferson Obalim (Councillor, Central Div, Lira District Council)</li> <li>• Hellen Kabajungu (Councillor, Ruhinda &amp; Buhunga Sub-Counties, Rukungiri District)</li> <li>• Hon. Sam Wadri Nyakua (Chairman LCV, Arua District Local Government)</li> <li>• Hon. Grace Mary Mugasa (Mayor, Hoima MC)</li> </ul>
12:20 pm – 12:35 pm	Award of Honors and Launch of the 2018/19 Scorecard Report (15 Mins)	Mr Ben Kumumanya, PS, Ministry of Local Government
12:35 pm – 12:50 pm	Statement by Director Budget, MoFPED	Mr Kenneth Mugambe (5 Mins)
	Statement by President ULGA	Hon. Joseph Lomonyang (5 Mins)
	Statement from the Board Chair, DGF (10 Mins)	H.E. William Carlos, DGF, Board Chair, Ambassador, Ireland
12:50 pm – 1:00 pm	Closing Statement (10 Mins)	Mr Ben Kumumanya, PS, Ministry of Local Government
<b>1:00 pm</b>	<b>LUNCH/ DEPARTURE</b>	

### Appendix 3: Media Coverage

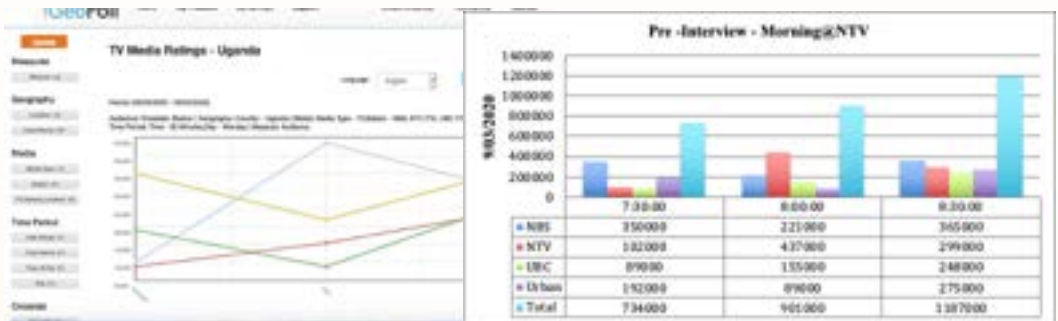
The launch of the Local Government Councils Scorecard report FY 2018/19 was widely covered in both in the electronic, print and social media. The event was broadcast live on NTV. There was a pre-event and post-event TV discussion hosted on NTV involving the Executive Director of ACODE and the Project Manager for the Local Government Councils Scorecard Initiative (LGCSCI). Also, the event was covered in other media platforms as shown below.



Figure 1: Front Page Coverage of the Scorecard Report in the NewVision and Daily Monitor on March 11, 2020



Figure 2: ACODE Executive Director and LGCSCI Project Manager above appearing in a TV interview to talk about the launch of the 8th Scorecard Report on Morning@NTV – 9th March 2020. Below are graphs showing TV ratings and viewership during the program.



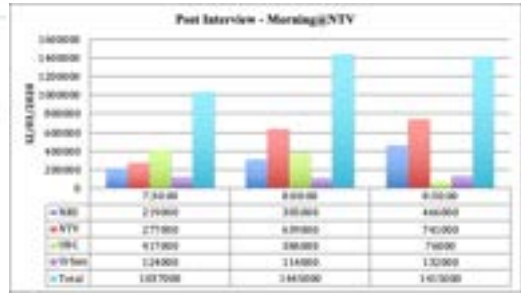
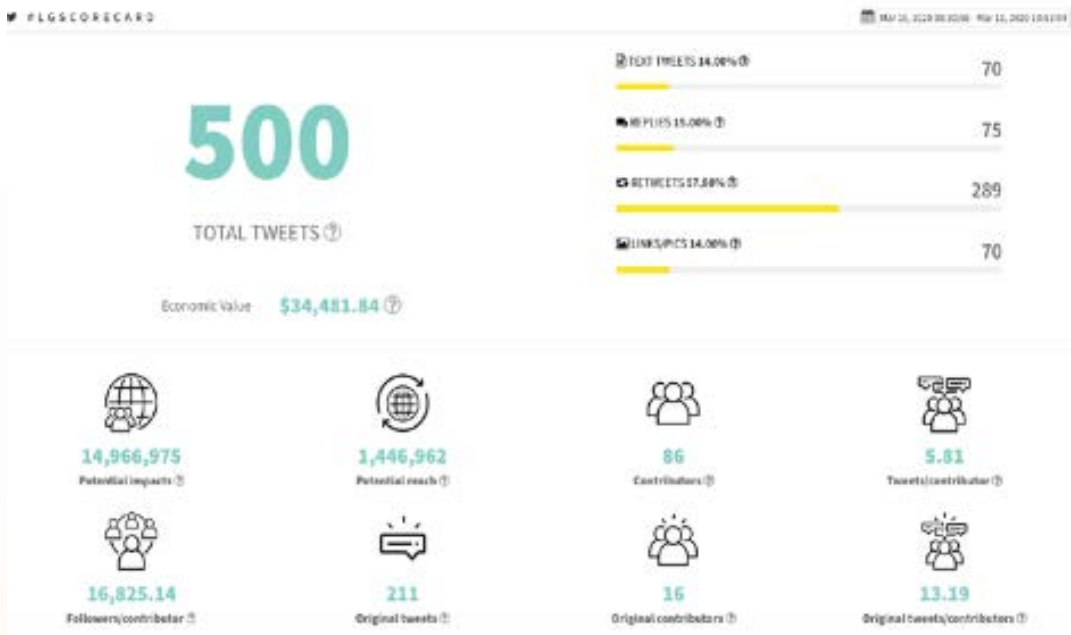


Figure 3: Geo Poll Viewership during the post-launch interview about the 8th Scorecard Report on Morning@NTV and below Geo Poll's measure of TV audience during live broadcast of the report launch on Tuesday 10th March 2020 between 9:30am to 12:00pm



### Appendix 3: Social Media Activities under #LGScorecard



MOST ACTIVE		Total tweets	RETWEETERS		Retweets	ORIGINAL TWEETS		tweets
	@jshemugisha	141		@jshemugisha	59		@jshemugisha	92
	@ACODE_Uganda	56		@JonasMbabazi1	47		@ACODE_Uganda	51
	@JonasMbabazi1	47		@the_travor_guy	22		@Sanbanuz	20
	@Sanbanuz	15		@UgWils	13		@generic1	14
	@the_travor_guy	12		@matungire	12		@ntvuganda	9

MOST POPULAR		Followers	HIGHEST IMPACT		Impacts	TOP PHOTOGRAPHERS		Photos
	@ntvuganda	909,351		@ntvuganda	19,002,861		@ACODE_Uganda	18
	@MauriceMugisha	187,947		@jshemugisha	2,876,719		@jshemugisha	12
	@generic1	40,737		@generic1	855,267		@ntvuganda	8
	@aketerana	35,941		@MauriceMugisha	375,894		@generic1	6
	@legendary_ql	22,431		@ACODE_Uganda	318,912		@Sanbanuz	6



HAPPENING NOW: ACODE launches the 8th Local Government Scorecard report | [www.ntv.co.ug/live](http://www.ntv.co.ug/live)

**26,890**  
People Reached

**2,345**  
Engagements

Boost Post

221

16 Shares 10K Views

Like

Comment

Share

Comments

Up Next



Appendix 4: Pictorial









Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment  
Plot 96, Kanjokya Street Kamwokya  
P. O. Box 29836, Kampala UGANDA  
Tel: +256 (0) 312812150  
Email: [acode@acode-u.org](mailto:acode@acode-u.org)  
Website: <https://www.acode-u.org>

ISBN: 978-9970-567-16-4

