



Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment
Plot 96, Kanjokya Street, Kamwokya
P. O. Box 29836, Kampala Tel: +256 312 812150
Email: acode@acode-u.org; library@acode-u.org
Website: <http://www.acode-u.org>

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS' PERFORMANCE AND PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY IN UGANDA

Soroti District Council Score-Card Report FY 2013/2014

Authors: Paul Okiring, Benson Ekwee and Dina Atai

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

This policy brief presents findings from the 2013/14 assessment of Soroti District Local Government under the Local Government Councils' Score-card Initiative (LGCSCI), an evidence based project implemented by ACODE in partnership with ULGA with support from GAPP/USAID and DGF. It seeks to enhance the effectiveness of elected leaders in fulfilling their mandate and build the citizens' capacity to demand better services and hold their leaders to account. The initiative uses the score-card – an assessment tool - to facilitate annual performance assessments on the district council, district chairperson, speaker and councilors with focus on their roles and responsibilities as stipulated in the Local Government Act (as amended).

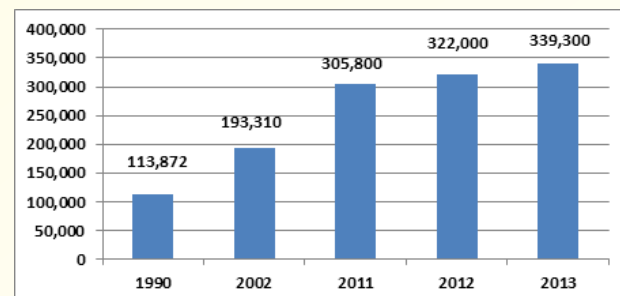
The annual assessment process is conducted by teams of researchers across the 30 districts partaking in the LGCSCI assessment. The research process involves a review of key district documents, interviews with key respondents and consultations with citizens through focus group discussions (FGDs). Following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

OVERVIEW OF SOROTI DISTRICT DURING FY2013/14

The Council consists of 22 members, 8 of whom are

female and 14 male chaired by Hon. George Michael Egunyu. The council works in close collaboration with the Office of the Resident District Commissioner (RDC) who represents the Presidency in the district. At the national level, the district is represented by three Members of Parliament.¹ The national census conducted in 2002 put the total population of Soroti district at 193,310. With an approximate annual population growth rate of 5.1%, it was estimated that it would grow by up to 60% after 10 years – to 339,300 in 2013,² with estimated 89% living in the rural areas.

Figure 1 : Population Trends for Soroti District



Source: UBOS Statistical Abstract 2013.

Local Economy and Potentialities for Development

Agriculture is the predominant activity in the district engaging over 76% of the population. Major crops grown include: millet, cassava, peas, beans, sweet potatoes, simsim, cotton, cabbage, onions, sunflower and rice among others. The district middle aged population has memories of the once vibrant railway system of transport which was a major factor in facilitating their economic activities. Railway transport used to be the region major means of transport for cattle and other agricultural products to markets in Mbale, Jinja and Kampala. Cattle rustling and insurgency from the Lords' Resistance Army (LRA) greatly affected the level

- 1 Soroti District Local Government, Soroti District Council Minutes (2012-2013), SDLG 2013; GOU, Parliament of Uganda 2012
- 2 UBOS, Higher Local Governments Statistical Abstract: Soroti, UBOS June 2009

of production from the district.

Figure 2: The seedlings under transportation to the sites



Photo Credit: ACODE Digital Library

The rich culture of the Iteso manifested in the cultural dances, especially the popular “ajosi dance”, dressing and rites, foods and songs is a great tourism potential. There are also handicrafts like pottery and knitting/weaving that have remained unexploited among others.³

Service Delivery in Education, Health Road Sectors

Education: The District has a total of 133 primary schools, 79 of them government aided while 54 are privately owned. In FY 2013/14, the District had a total enrolment of 58,399 representing a rise from the previous year by over 2,000 pupils. A total of 216 pieces of furniture were distributed, 8 classrooms built and 8 rehabilitated under PRDP in 2013/2014. There were teachers recruited during that FY. The district was able to train School Management Committees (SMCs) of 64 schools. The PCR was 1:86 while the DPR was 1:6 leaving about 26,421 pupils sitting on the floor. In terms of PLE performance 137 pupils out of 4,634 passed in Div.1 in 2013.

Health: Eighty percent of the population resides within 5km of the nearest health facility. Deliveries in health facilities performed far above target at 50% against the national average of 35%. The major challenges for the sector included: inadequate accommodation for staff, lack of equipment, including ambulances, non-functional solar systems initially provided for lighting and cold-chain for vaccines, staff absenteeism and miss conduct, poor sanitary conditions, and changing patterns of diseases/epidemics among others.

Roads Infrastructure: The District did routine maintenance of 133 kilometers of roads, 11.6 kilometers of Gweri-awaliwal-amukaro road under periodic maintenance, 1.5 km of periodic maintenance, and routine maintenance of 17.4 kms. PRDP funds were used for rehabilitating 2 km road in Asuret. RTI funds were used to remove the bottleneck 3km Opiyai

road while 6.4 km of Soroti-Opiro-Aukot road was rehabilitated. The sector registered low performance compared to other sectors as a result of delays in conducting feasibility study for the low cost sealing of Gweri-awoja road among other challenges.

FACTORS AFFECTING SERVICE DELIVERY IN SOROTI DISTRICT

- a) **Budgetary Constraints:** The district is still heavily dependent on central government funding, accounting to over 98 per cent of the district revenue. On the other hand, local revenue and donor funds account for less than 2 per cent. Although there was an increase in central government transfers during FY2013/14, they were mainly in form of conditional grants with little or no room for re-allocation to other local priorities. It was noted the district received less funds UGX 12 billion compared to an approved budget of UGX 17 billion creating a funding gap of UGX 5 billion. Thus, some planned activities were not implemented.
- b) **Administrative adjustment in NAADS:** The NAADS programme had suffered a setback as a result of the administrative adjustments made in the course of the financial year. The involvement of the military in NAADS is well understood in structure in terms of the roles they will play vis-à-vis the existing production department at the District.

Figure 3: Community Members receiving Turkeys under NAADS



Photo Credit: ACODE Digital Library

- c) **Low local revenue performance:** By the close of the 3rd quarter FY 2013/14 the district had realised UGX16 billions of its budgeted annual Revenue representing 80% performance. Specifically Local revenue amounted UGX 184 million, which was 35% of the expected revenue.⁴

³ Soroti District Local Government, Soroti District Development Plan 2011/12 – 2015/16, SDLG, 2012

⁴ MoFPED, Uganda Budget Information: Local Government Budget and Performance <http://www.budget.go.ug/budget/sites/default/files/Individual%20LG%20Budgets/Soroti%20District%20Q3.pdf> 2015 (accessed 27/02/15).

- d) **Limited monitoring and supervision:** This poor revenue performance impacted negatively on critical activities like monitoring and supervision of key public services. The need for the involvement of political leaders in monitoring services has a high bearing on the quality of services. But this could not be achieved without adequate funding. This means that the oversight function of elected leaders was undermined. As a result, the district continued to experience poor workmanship for instance in the roads sector. This therefore explains why the improvement in performance.
- e) **Low capacity of service providers:** The low capacity of service providers also contributed to the slow improvement in public service delivery. In the roads sector for instance, the budget allocations could only allow for contracting of small scale contractors who in most cases did not have appropriate skills and equipment and therefore ended up producing substandard works.
- f) **Procurement and accountability gaps:** Service delivery was further impaired by gaps in the procurement and accountability procedures and practices. Delays in solicitation, award of contracts and completion of contracts is still a big challenge to effective service delivery.
- g) **Unspent Balances:** Delay in processing of requested for funds under IFMS, Vagaries of weather, uncompleted constructions and supplies for PRDP/PMA and NAADS meant non-payment of available funds.⁵

SCORE-CARD PERFORMANCE

The score-card parameters are derived from the mandate of the organs assessed as stipulated in the Local Governments Act (as amended). While all the four categories are evaluated on their legislative and monitoring functions, the district chairperson, speaker and council are assessed against additional roles. As the political head of the district, the district chairperson is also assessed on their political leadership as well as Initiation and participation in projects in their electoral area. The speaker is assessed primarily as a councilor with an additional responsibility of presiding and preservation order in council. The district council, which is the highest organ in the district, is also assessed against the core function of planning and budgeting as well as providing accountability to citizens.

⁵ Ibid, P13.

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

Trends in Performance				
	2011/12	68	100	
	2012/13	60	100	
	2013/14	43	100	
	% change	-28		
Parameter	Indicator	Score	Max Score	Explanatory Remarks
LEGISLATIVE ROLE	Rules of Procedure	2	2	There was no evidence that the Committees of council sat the required Mandatory times in a year. Council did not pass any bill or conduct any public hearing. In addition there was no available record of any capacity building activity for council and its members.
	Membership to ULGA	1	2	
	Committees of Council	0	3	
	Motions passed	1	3	
	Ordinances	0	3	
	Conflict Resolution	1	1	
	Public Hearings	0	2	
	Legislative resources	3	4	
	Petitions	1	2	
	Capacity building	0	3	
	Sub total	9	25	
ACCOUNTABILITY TO CITIZENS	Fiscal Accountability	3	4	Most of the funds released are displayed on the district and sub-county notice boards. But there was no evidence that the district involves CSOs in delivery of services. MoUs between the district and CSOs in the district were not available.
	Political Accountability	4	8	
	Administrative Accountability	3	8	
	Involvement of CSO	0	2	
	Principles of accountability	0	3	
	Sub total	10	25	
PLANNING & BUDGETING	Plans, Vision and Mission	5	5	District had an approved budget and work plan. There was poor performance in relation to local revenue generation.
	District Budget	4	4	
	Local Revenue	2	11	
	Sub total	11	20	
MONITORING SERVICE DELIVERY ON NPPAS	Education	2	5	Available evidence showed that Council did not conduct adequate monitoring of services in the district. There was no evidence available to show that FAL and ENR were monitored. Where monitoring was conducted, reports were not generated and there was no follow-up.
	Health	5	5	
	Water and sanitation	2	4	
	Roads	2	4	
	Agriculture	2	4	
	FAL	0	4	
	ENR	0	4	
	Sub total	13	30	

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

		George M Egunyu		NRM	
Trends in Performance	2011/12	82	100		
	2012/13	78	100		
	2013/14	82	100		
	% change	5			
Parameter	Indicators	Score	Max Score	Explanatory Remarks	
POLITICAL LEADERSHIP	DEC	3	3	The chairperson performed well in providing political leadership to the district largely on all parameters. However, there was no evidence of official correspondences between his office and that of the RDC.	
	Monitoring admin	5	5		
	State of affairs	2	2		
	Oversight civil servants	4	4		
	Commissions/Boards	2	2		
	Central gov't	3	4		
	Sub Total	19	20		
LEGISLATIVE ROLE	Council	2	2	The chairperson attended council at least 4 times in the Financial Year. A motion and a bill were presented in council.	
	Motions Executive	6	6		
	Bills by Executive	3	7		
	Sub Total	11	15		
CONTACT WITH ELECTORATE	Meetings Electorate	5	5	Met all the requirements for this parameter.	
	Issues by electorate	5	5		
	Sub Total	10	10		
PROJECTS	Projects Initiated	1	3	Initiated and supported projects in the district like Shallow well in Opuyo Parish and makes annual contributions to TASO for the Child education program.	
	Communal Projects	1	2		
	NGOs	3	3		
	Sub Total	5	10		
MONITORING SERVICE DELIVERY ON NATIONAL PRIORITY PROGRAMME AREAS	Agriculture	7	7	Largely monitored service delivery in the district with exception of FAL. There was also no monitoring report for ENR sector.	
	Health	7	7		
	Schools	7	7		
	Roads	7	7		
	Water Sources	7	7		
	FAL	0	5		
	Environment	2	5		
	Sub Total	37	45		

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

Trends in Performance	Name	Andrew Odongo			
	District	Soroti			
	Political Party	FDC			
	Constituency	Western Division			
	Gender	M			
	Terms	1			
Trends in Performance	2011/12	61	100		
	2012/13	60	100		
	2013/14	58	100		
	% change	-3			
Parameter	Indicator	Score	Max Score	Explanatory Remarks	
Legislative Function	Chairing council	3	3	Largely performed well on this parameter particularly on delegation to his deputy. Records for the activities of his office were available.	
	Rules of procedure	6	9		
	Business Committee	3	3		
	Records book	2	2		
	Record of motions	3	3		
	Special skills	2	5		
Sub Total	19	25			
Contact with Electorate	Meetings Electorate	7	11	No official programme of meetings even when some meetings were held.	
	coordinating center	9	9		
	Sub Total	16	20		
LLG	Participation in LLG	0	10	Did not attend any LLG council meeting in Western Division.	
Monitoring NPPAs	Health	5	7	Monitored health, education, water Roads and ENR but did not follow-up on service delivery concerns from his reports. Did not have evidence of monitoring for Agriculture and FAL.	
	Education	5	7		
	Agriculture	0	7		
	Water	5	7		
	Roads	5	7		
	FAL	0	5		
	Environment	4	5		
	Sub total	20	45		

Table 4: Summary performance of Soroti District Councillors FY 2013/14

Identifiers	Name	Political Party	Sub-county	Gender	Terms	Trends in Performance			Legislative role					Contact with electorate			LLGs	Monitoring NPPA									
						2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	% change	Plenary	Committee	Motion	Special skill	Sub total	Meeting electorate	Office		Subtotal	Sub county meetings	Health	Education	Agriculture	Water	Roads	FAL	ENR	Sub Total
						100	100	100		8	8	5	4	25	11	9	20	10	7	7	7	7	7	7	5	5	45
						Maximum Score																					
						M	1	50	79	86	9	8	8	0	16	9	18	10	7	7	7	7	7	5	2	42	
						F	1	52	82	79	-4	8	8	2	18	6	15	10	7	7	7	7	3	5	0	36	
						M	2	29	64	69	8	8	5	0	21	7	16	6	7	3	3	3	3	5	2	26	
						M	2	33	57	68	19	8	4	5	17	7	16	10	3	7	3	7	5	0	0	25	
						M	2	37	50	65	30	8	8	0	16	9	15	10	7	7	3	3	3	0	1	24	
						F	1	32	66	63	-5	8	5	0	13	9	18	10	7	7	1	7	0	0	0	22	
						M	2	55	57	57	0	8	8	2	18	9	18	2	7	3	0	7	1	0	1	19	
						F	2	55	65	51	-22	8	8	5	21	3	5	6	3	7	3	3	3	0	0	19	
						M	2	68	55	48	-13	8	8	5	21	9	11	2	3	3	1	3	3	0	1	14	
						M	2	63	50	48	-4	8	8	0	16	9	18	10	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	4	
						F	2	25	42	46	10	8	8	0	16	3	12	0	7	7	1	1	0	0	2	18	
						M	2			42		8	8	5	23	0	9	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
						M	2	54	54	42	-22	8	8	5	21	0	2	2	0	7	3	1	3	3	0	2	19
						M	1			39		8	8	5	23	3	12	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
						M	1	46	42	34	-19	8	8	0	16	0	2	2	2	7	7	0	0	0	0	14	
						M	1			17		4	8	5	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
						F	2	33	46	14	-70	1	1	2	4	2	4	0	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	6	
						F	2	52	36	13	-64	5	8	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
								45	56	49	-10	7	7	3	17	5	11	5	4	4	2	3	2	1	1	16	
						Average																					

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVED SERVICE DELIVERY

From the Soroti District Council Scorecard Report, the following recommendations are made:

- 1. Broaden Local Revenue Base:** The District to focus more on local economic development should broaden local revenue base to support the local revenue streams.
- 2. Stakeholders should be sensitized on the involvement of UPDF in NAADS:** The stakeholders need to be sensitized on the new guidelines for the implementation of NAADS in LGs to avoid role conflict and confusion.
- 3. Improve Civic Awareness and Engagement:** Citizens need to be sensitized about the statutory roles of their leaders in order to hold them to account.
- 4. Strengthen Monitoring of service delivery:** Individual Councilors, committees of council and the district technical team should increase on frequency of their monitoring of services and provide feedback from such visits.
- 5. Follow-up of identified service delivery challenges:** All stakeholders involved in monitoring should ensure that they follow-up on reported service delivery deficiencies from monitoring visits until they are addressed by service providers.
- 6. Clarity of roles in functionality of local Governments:** District elected leaders need to understand the boundaries of their roles and responsibilities to avoid unnecessary administrative clashes with the technical team.
- 7. Need for official communication:** Communication with the different stakeholders in the district should always be in writing for purposes of easier follow-up and reference.

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

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

About the Authors

Paul Okiring is an Independent Researcher and also the Programme Director at Teso Anti Corruption Coalition.

Benson Ekwee is an Independent Researcher and he is also the Executive Director of PAC Uganda in Soroti.

Dina Atai is an Independent Researcher and she is also a Gender Officer at Teso Anti Corruption Coalition.