



THE WORLD BANK



## **Strengthening Social Accountability through Improved Oversight Role of Local Councils**

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**AFRICA LOCAL COUNCIL OVERSIGHT & SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY (ALCOSA) CONFERENCE**

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# **Draft Report**

**PROTEA HOTEL  
KAMPALA - UGANDA**

**1<sup>ST</sup> -2<sup>ND</sup> JUNE 2009**

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## **ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

ACT	Anti-corruption Country Threshold Programme
ALCOSA	Africa Local Council Oversight and Social Accountability
ANSA	Affiliated Network for Social Accountability
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
CBO	Community Based Organization
CEFORD	Community Empowerment for Rural Development
CG	Central Government
CLGF	Commonwealth Local Governments Forum
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DDPG	Donor Decentralization Partners Group
EAC	East African Community
EALGA	East African Local Government Association
GT	Graduated Tax
HLG	Higher Local Government
IFMS	Integrated Financial Management System
IPFs	Indicative Planning Figures
LC	Local Council
LED	Local Economic Development
LGDP	Local Government Development Project
LGFC	Uganda Local Government Finance Commission
LGMSDP	Local Government Management Services Delivery Project
LGPAC	Local Government Public Accounts Committee
LGs	Local Governments
LGSIP	Local Government Sector Investment Plan
LLGs	Lower Local Governments
LOGICS	Local Government Information and Communication System
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MISR	Makerere Institute of Social Research
MoLG	Ministry of Local Government
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	Member of Parliament
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NLC	National Leadership Code
NUAP	Northern Uganda Action Plan
NUSAF	Northern Social Action Fund
PSC	Public Service Commission
PRDP	Peace, Recovery and Development Plan
TAAC	Transparency, Accountability and Anti-Corruption Program
UAAU	Urban Authorities Association Uganda
ULGA	Uganda Local Government Association
UNAT	National Associations Negotiation Team
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNDP	United National Development Program
WB	World Bank

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Uganda Local Government Association (ULGA) with support from the World Bank, Ministry of Local Government Uganda and Affiliated Network for Social Accountability (ANSA-Africa) hosted the Africa Local Council Oversight and Social Accountability (ALCOSA) workshop. The two year World Bank funded project covers four East African Countries – Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania and Ethiopia and provides partnership opportunities for Local Governments in the East African region and Africa as a whole.

The conference which was held under the theme: “*Strengthening Social Accountability through Improved Oversight Role of Local Councils*” was meant to disseminate and share findings from a study conducted in the four study countries so as to improve service delivery in Local Governments. The findings from the study which formed a basis of the discussions were strengthened by experiences from South Africa, Rwanda and Burundi. The discussions further examined the current trends, future actions, priority identifications and wrap up.

The two day conference was held on 1<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2009 at Hotel Protea in Kampala, Uganda. It drew a cross section of participants from the World Bank, UNDP, CSOs, Ugandan Members of Parliament and Local Government practitioners, academia and researchers from Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia, South Africa, Rwanda and Burundi.

The conference was officially opened by Hon Adolf Mwesigye, the Uganda Minister for Local Government and closed by Mr. Johnson Bitarabeh, the Chairperson, Uganda Local Government Finance Commission.

Specifically, the workshop objectives were to:

- i) Enhance regional dialogue and cooperation on local council oversight and social accountability in decentralizing countries.
- ii) Discuss political options for future actions to enhance local council oversight and social accountability.

The overall methodology of the conference was ignited by catalytic presentations on key thematic areas, made by the consultants from Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania and Ethiopia ALCOSA project papers. The presentations were further strengthened by interactive plenary and group discussions.

The discussions at the conference provided guidance in promoting institutional capacity development for local governance and sustained service delivery through support to the local councils. Empowering of local populations to demand for better service and strengthening communication mechanisms and downward accountability towards lower LGs, CSOs, users of services and the community was also emphasized.

The study reports noted the intrinsic achievements of the decentralization process, especially in Uganda which boasts of a better history in the decentralization process. However, strategies to address unique result areas and activities such as human rights, conflict and peace building management, communication, O&M – preventive maintenance, capacity building, role clarity political/elected leaders, cross cutting issues, stakeholder involvement, promoting citizen satisfaction, infrastructure development and strengthening regional cooperation were emphasized.

The working group sessions provided an overview of existing challenges, confirmed priorities, implementation strategies and identified strategic directions to improve service delivery, through harmonized strategies, poverty reduction and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

This report is organized in seven parts: Part one, presents the overview of the conference, Part two presents the speeches and remarks, Part three summarises country presentations from Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania and Ethiopia and experiences from Rwanda. Part four summarizes the group discussions on four key areas: legal frameworks, leadership capacities, and the avenues and approaches for enhancing collaboration to support the implementation of decentralized governance strategies in the sub-region. Part five summarises the emerging issues and recommendations implementation. Part six presents the closing session of Mr. Johnson Bitarabeho which highlights the key issues and recommendations as a way forward. Part seven provides for the appendices with the remarks/speeches in verbatim

A summary of the key findings, emerging issues, lessons learnt and recommendations are presented below. A more specific list of priority actions is elaborated in part five of the report.

### **Key Findings from the Study Reports**

- Re-centralizing of the Chief Executives and councilors allowances from the consolidated fund greatly affects community-driven accountability.
- Central Government transfers dominant the Local Government resources – eroding autonomy.
- Councilor responsibility for decision making viz a vis autonomy to formulate and approve plans and budgets and HR recruitment and management
- Access to information by citizen – development of client charters; performance based contracting for both elected and appointed officials; CSO monitoring initiatives e.g. PETS
- Development of enabling legislative framework – support to legislative reforms that seek to improve accountability
- Lack of support to fiscal decentralization reforms
- Support to development of mechanisms for entrenching citizen participation in decision making through legislative or admin reforms.
- The existence of poor infrastructure development and improvement systems in the financial and human resource management functions of all Local Governments levels.

- The syndrome of LGs over dependency on the Development Partners and CG transfers as the primary sources of revenue.
- There are no strategies and initiatives for LGs to promote Local Economic Development (LED) as strategies for raising local revenue.
- Populist pronouncements and conditionalities from DPs which do not favour progress e.g. UPE coupled with the unwillingness of the LGs to take advantage of existing opportunities and innovative methods to raise revenues.

### **Recommendations (General)**

- Local revenue generation and enhancement of financial autonomy through) identifying potential sources, improving revenue administration procedures and measures to enhance economic growth.
- Establish the necessary legal framework to introduce and strengthen decentralization through advocacy, use of LG associations to make proposals and establish a lobby platform.
- Improve access to information by use of the media, community meetings e.g. councils (deliberate) and introduce public accountability days (case of Rwanda). Investment in homegrown solutions, traditional means to the grassroots levels.
- Incorporation of gender and cross-cutting issues to enforce accountability through widespread media and awareness programmes.
- Support the rollout and implementation of the Client Charter through dissemination, community and council meetings, use of the media and local languages/posters.
- Conduct joint community meetings with the cultural and religious leaders to harness the trust and respect the citizens have for their leadership.
- Role of the Ministries of Local Governments should be clearly spelt out across the board.
- The role of NGOs, CSOs and CBOs in demanding for accountability from the councilors should be clearly spelt out.
- Train and orient resource teams to undertake civic and voter education on the rights and responsibilities of all stakeholders.
- Strengthen data collection, analysis and reporting mechanisms at all Local Governments levels.
- Development partners should support the local councils as institution, issues of internal governance and outward governance
- Encourage and enforce proactive rather than reactive accountability, where possible.
- Investment in developing chain link- support the police, prosecution, the judiciary and civic education, referral systems (ombudsman, police, local leaders etc).

## Country Specific Recommendations

### Kenya

- Develop an enabling legislative framework for effective local council oversight and accountability across the board.
- Support the development of mechanisms for entrenching citizen's participation in decision making through legislative and administrative reforms.

### Uganda

- Massive civic education and awareness should be conducted focusing on the rights and responsibilities of the citizens to avoid conflicts.
- CG should critically review and study the implications/mechanisms for introducing the multiparty dispensation at the lower local government levels.
- Implementation of the Good Governance and Anti-Corruption Strategy (GGACS) as part of its peace-building and conflict resolution result area should be expedited.
- To deal with the current constraints of accessing information from the relevant authorities and harness the resource centres at all local government levels.
- The programme level indicators should be developed at the various localities with their own targets as contributor to respective result areas.
- The MoLG should critically review the performance assessment system to ensure the recruitment and deployment of strong and competent staffs.
- Local governments should encourage adequate representation for all stakeholders to enforce consistency and effectiveness in programme management and information flow.
- Special attention to conflict and hard to reach areas which do not meet the required staffing levels.
- The capacity gaps of LGs be addressed by CG as a matter of urgency – role duplication between DPAC and the Parliamentary Committee on Public Accounts, despite a legal mandate.

### Tanzania

- CG should establish the basic infrastructure and achieves up to LLGs levels to provide the community with the necessary information.
- Need to establish strong legal framework to regulate the actions of the elected representatives with a provision to recall then in case of breach.
- NGOs and other civil society organizations involved in accountability should be supported so as to strengthen social accountability by sharing their initiatives with citizens rather than bureaucrats.

## **Ethiopia**

- Strengthen a bottom-up approach involving community based organisations, women and minority groups to promote inclusiveness for community-initiated and championed organizations.
- Emphasis should be placed on strengthening Local councils in their oversight and accountability roles.
- Establishing a commonwealth regional platform to strengthen the LG Association networks are now a global phenomenon.
- As an immediate action, there is need to develop concept papers on local governance – case of Ethiopia.
- Ethiopia should establish its local government associations supported by goodwill of the government.

## PART ONE

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### I.0 BACKGROUND AND PROGRAMME CONTEXT

#### I.1 Background

The Africa Local Council Oversight and Social Accountability (ALCOSA) Project focuses on good governance and aims to link good governance strategies to local decision making and service delivery mechanisms. Local Council oversight in decentralizing countries is an important component of institutional checks and balances and is a critical entry point to achieve good local governance and effective public services. Functioning local council oversight relies on the assumption that local elected representatives have more incentive to respond to the needs and preferences of local populations and that they are more downwardly accountable as compared to local bureaucrats.

The Africa Local Council Oversight and Social Accountability (ALCOSA) Project covers four East African countries; Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Kenya. The decentralization process embraces local council oversight and accountability as a means of deepening governance and service delivery through enhanced responsiveness, improved access and accountability to the community.

There are three aspects of local council oversight that the project is particularly concerned with and these include: the role of elected local councilors in planning, overseeing service delivery, and their involvement in the public financial management processes. The conference provided an opportunity for emphasis on promotion of institutional capacity development for local governance and sustained service delivery through regional dialogue. Specifically, the key mechanisms for improving council oversight and accountability; communication and awareness creation, dialogue, accountability, participatory planning, human rights, conflict and peace building management, adequate funding, operation and maintenance, sustainable legal framework, capacity building, role clarity political/elected leaders, cross cutting issues, stakeholder involvement and citizens satisfaction were mentioned.

The regional forum aims at disseminating and sharing information from the study conducted by ALCOSA in Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Kenya. The study focuses on good governance, linkage of between appointed and elected local leaders on local service delivery. This is achieved through enhancing regional dialogue and cooperation in decentralizing countries and discussing political options for future actions to enhance local council oversight and social accountability.

#### I.2 Key Results Areas

- i. *Empowering citizens through dialogue between service provider and the user of the service.*
- ii. *Regional cooperation for oversight and accountability strengthened.*
- iii. *Increased efficiency and effectiveness of Local Government capacity development.*
- iv. *Sustainable service delivery in partnership with LGs through enhanced capacities of stakeholders to maintain social infrastructure.*
- v. *Existence of strong legal framework for Central Government and Local Governments.*

- vi. *Quality of communication and dialogue between Local Governments and the civil society improved for more inclusive and responsive planning, oversight and accountable project implementation and service delivery.*

### **I.3 Programme and Methodology**

The programme for the regional conference provided opportunity for agencies, CSOs, academicians, researchers and LGs to share experiences on local governance. It further provided interface between regional local government practitioners in identifying synergies and strategies for addressing the challenges through strengthening oversight and accountability.

The Lead Consultants from the four study countries presented progress reports based on the WB assignment. The overall conference methodology was power point and text presentations, regional experiences, and plenary discussions which optimized participation.

## PART TWO

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### 2.0 OPENING SESSION

#### 2.1 Commissioner Local Councils Development, MoLG Uganda

Mr. Patrick Mutabwire referred to the conference as a critical opportunity for strengthening regional stakeholder cooperation and improving oversight and accountability in the local governments. Decentralisation is a conduit for improved governance, service delivery and local economic development despite a number of challenges.

Decentralization has tangible and visible results through infrastructure development, proper planning, financial management, strong legal framework and good governance. The WB procedures and requirements must be followed so as to take advantage of the grant opportunities. Local Governments have come a long way and the regional cooperation is a manifest. He made special emphasis on capacity building for the appointed and elected leaders.

#### PHOTO

*Mr. Patrick K. Mutabwire, Commissioner MoLG Uganda, Mr. Raphael Magyezi, Secretary General ULGA and Mr. Sylvain Boko of the World Bank at the opening session*

#### 2.2 Prof Sylvain Boko – Consultant World Bank, Washington

The Consultant stated that the regional forum aims at disseminating and sharing information from the study conducted by ALCOSA in Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Kenya. The study focuses on good governance and linking good governance strategies to decision making and local service delivery mechanisms.

The Local Council oversight supports the decentralization policy through three major aspects which include; the role of elected local councilors in planning, overseeing service delivery and involvement of the public in financial management processes.

## 2.3 Ms Kundhavi Kasiresan, World Bank, Uganda Country Manager

**PHOTO**

*Ms Mary Bitekerezo of the World Bank delivering the Key Note Address*

In her speech delivered by Ms Mary Bitekerezo Senior Social Development Specialist, the World Bank Country Manager commended the rich composition of the participants which included policy makers, researchers and practitioners from within Africa.

The ALCOSA research conducted with different institutions and individuals aimed at identifying existing practices for councilor oversight on the executives and community demand for accountability. There is need to double efforts to promote innovations and understand the political and institutional component in order to succeed in the approaches.

Ms Kundvavi noted that the forum provides a platform to discuss the main findings, enhance regional dialogue, cooperation, cross-country learning and policy development on future actions. The World Bank is committed to promoting good governance, transparency and accountability through Local Governments, the Good Governance and Anti-corruption Strategy, the Northern Uganda Action Plan, Transparency, Accountability, Anti-Corruption Plan and the Peace Recovery & Development Plan for Northern Uganda.

The WB Country Director reiterated that good governance promotes the capacities of civil society, the media, local communities and private sector. She stressed for the need to; understand the political and institutional context, accelerate learning and adaptation of successful approaches, develop concrete proposals, conduct field experiments and promote of transparency, accountability and cross country research as impediments for strengthening work systems and sustainable mechanisms for improving service delivery.

## 2.4 Mr. Andama Ferua, Vice President ULGA/ District Chairman, Arua Uganda

**PHOTO**

*Mr. Andama Ferua, Vice Chairperson ULGA/Chairman Arua delivering his speech*

Mr. Andama commended the conference for offering cross border opportunity for dialogue on local governance issues across Africa. The forum provides key stakeholders, practitioners and implementers with a rich package to deepen decentralization and strengthen oversight and accountability at community levels. The three aspects of LC oversight include; planning, service delivery and financial management processes.

The Vice President, ULGA appreciated the efforts and support of the World Bank, MoLG Uganda and ANSA-Africa in addressing challenges of local governments will greatly enhance local service delivery. The conference further supports the objectives of the Association's Charter on Accountability and Ethical Code of Conduct for Local Governments. He reiterated ULGA's commitment in driving the decentralization process as stipulated under the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda.

## 2.5 Hon Adolf Mwesigye, Minister of Local Government, Uganda

### PHOTO

*Hon Adolf Mwesigye, Minister of Local Government, Uganda at the official opening of the conference*

Addressing delegates, Hon. Adolf Mwesigye, the Minister of Local Government, Uganda commended the conference for providing an opportunity for critically examining the ALCOSA project focus. The three major aspects of focus include; the role of elected local councilors in planning, overseeing service delivery and involvement of the public in financial management processes.

The conference provides a great opportunity for improving on good governance and development of the Africa as a whole. Besides, the rationale embraced will provide for service delivery in a more a transparent and accountable manner to the community. The Minister reiterated that the will carry forward the outcomes and recommendations made at the conference for better implementation. The decentralization process is enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda and provides for devolution of political, fiscal and administrative responsibilities to LGs. It further provides for the transfer powers from the HLGs, LLGs and administrative units in a more defined manner. This has led to increased community demand for services.

The Minister mentioned the existence of strong legal framework, enabling laws and regulations, political will and affirmative action, community participation, capacity of councilors, adequate resources as key factors for enhancing decentralization. He recommended for regular programme reviews (JARD) which offer platform for better approaches to service delivery. The Government of Uganda is committed to continued advocacy, awareness creation, mobilization and civic education; inspection and technical guidance through downward and upward accountability, regular linkage and feedback to the community and media, improved livelihood of citizens and collaboration with stakeholders.

He also noted the crippling effect placed by the contradictions on the roles and responsibilities of leaders and conflicts on service delivery and performance levels. He implored the delegates to utilize the conference to focus on strategies for improving service delivery. Local Council oversight supports the decentralization policy through provision of institutional checks and balances. It is therefore, imperative to note the linkage between good governance strategies, decision making and local service delivery mechanisms.

The Minister thanked the World Bank for providing the funds, ULGA for hosting the conference, other development partners for supporting the initiative. The Minister further commended the consultants and moderators for their efforts which enhanced the conference by raising pertinent issues and recommendations for enhancing the decentralization process. The Ministry of Local Government, Uganda on its part, is committed to fully support the recommendations made at the conference.

## PART THREE

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### 3.0 COUNTRY PRESENTATIONS AND EXPERIENCE SHARING

#### Introduction

The representatives of the study teams from Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania and Ethiopia presented the country project papers. The four country presentations gave an overview of the Local Government system in each country, with special emphasis on the local council oversight and social accountability context. Further, they described the methodologies and process of the study, key findings, best practices and challenges. They also gave recommendations for addressing the identified challenges.

The delegate from Rwanda shared his country's efforts in the context of institutionalising social accountability and strengthening local council oversight. In addition, the representative of ANSA South Africa gave background of the organisation, highlighting the goal, objectives, thematic focus and target deliverables for 2009.

This section summarizes the country presentations by Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania and Ethiopia as well as the highlights of the Rwanda and ANSA experiences.

#### 3.1 Uganda

The objective of the ALCOSA study project was to improve knowledge on how the elected local councillors oversee local appointed officials and account back to the citizens. A sample of four local governments reflecting regional representation was used for the study. These included: Kasese District in the West, Masaka Municipality in the Central, Nebbi District in the North and Tororo District in the East of the country. In addition, Wakiso District in the Central was used for methodology piloting. Apart from addressing issues of representation of the different regions of the country (socio-economic and ethnic diversity), the sample frame also targeted a mix of urban and rural councils as well as different political affiliations.

An overview of the local government system in Uganda summarised the status, authority and responsibility of the local governments and councils as follows:

- ▶ LGs are body corporate - can sue or be sued in their own names.
- ▶ LGs elect their own chairpersons and councils on the basis of Universal Adult Suffrage
- ▶ LGs raise their own revenue, have independent authority to make investment decisions and have responsibility for service delivery
- ▶ A council is the highest political authority in a LG with legislative and executive powers
- ▶ A district or an urban council may establish or abolish offices in its public service
- ▶ The Central Government institutions are responsible for guidance, inspection, monitoring, and coordination of LGs etc. to ensure compliance with the laws.

The study examined Uganda's legal framework and its impacts on local council oversight and accountability mechanisms. In each sampled LG, data was collected from elected councillors, appointed staff, community members and non-state stakeholders at district/municipal, sub-county/town/municipal division (LLGs), as well as lower local councils.

### **3.1.1 Key realisations**

Key realisations from the study reflect on robust legal framework, regular council elections, reasonable council capacity, consultations and feedback, improving service delivery and technical backstopping, inspection and monitoring by CG agencies and LG associations. The manifestations are highlighted in the box below:

**GROUP PHOTO FOR THE DELEATES**

**Robust Legal Framework**

- ▶ Role clarity for councillors who are responsible for establishing policies and overseeing their implementation by the technical staff; legal provisions for councillors to account to the citizens and clear division of tasks for service delivery among the different levels

**Council Elections**

- ▶ LG council elections are regularly conducted every five years and since 2005, multi-party politics was introduced thus providing voters with a choice and opportunity to hold the councillors accountable; voting mainly still based on individual competence and expression of trust by the citizens in the elected councillor and councillors reportedly give precedence to respective constituency interests (rather than party interests) while Councils have required representation of the different levels and marginalised sections of the community

**Council Capacity**

- ▶ People elected as councillors at LG level possess sufficient clout to hold the technical staff accountable – less than 5% of councillors in 18 sampled districts spread in all regions of the country had not attained O-level certificate; District/Municipal councils have reasonable physical infrastructure, tools and staff; the District Executive, the Speakers and LLGs chairpersons are full time public servants with entitlements; Council and executive committee performance is good – they meet and deliberate on relevant issues; technical staff provide information to the councillors during committee meetings and Councillors provide feedback to the technical staff after monitoring activities

**Consultations and Feedback**

- ▶ Councillors have diverse channels for addressing the needs of citizens; including the bottom-up, participatory planning process culminating into LG development plans and budgets incorporating needs of the citizens, citizens voicing concerns through the media and a wide range of informal mechanisms and functions.
- ▶ Use of formal and informal channels for a feedback process to the citizens including public accessibility to council resolutions, use of the media through talk shows, notices in public places and communicating on intending meetings using the various community fora.

**Service Delivery**

- ▶ Councillors ensure that the technical staff submit work plans and financial reports to trigger release of funds from CG and Sectoral committees routinely scrutinise plans and monitor implementation
- ▶ District Public Accounts Committees analyse reports, interview staff with audit queries and make recommendations.
- ▶ Improvement in financial management through proper maintenance of books of accounts, timely submission of reports and reduced audit queries.
- ▶ Increased quantities of services and increasing involvement of user committees in service delivery.

**Support, Inspection and Monitoring**

- ▶ CG Agencies through conducting routine inspection, supervisory support and annual performance assessment to trigger improved performance and support the elimination of corruption and abuse of office.
- ▶ LG Associations (UAAU and ULGA) should undertake advocacy and negotiation roles; increasing GT compensation; capacity building to LGs; analysis of the national budget and uphold good governance through the Charter on Accountability and Ethical Code of Conduct.

### **3.1.2 Challenges**

The positive realisations notwithstanding, significant challenges still exist in the electoral process, council oversight and response to citizen priorities, supervision of service delivery and CG inspection and monitoring.

#### *Electoral process*

The challenges of the electoral process include poor civic education and allegations of vote rigging. In addition, inadequate representation of the marginalised groups, despite some improvement and pending local council elections the multiparty dispensation is likely to face challenges. There is also decreasing trend on the voter turnout at the Presidential and Parliamentary elections as compared to the local council election. The likely implications of these are summarised below:

- Perception that councillors who are involved in vote rigging place emphasis on individual interests as opposed to constituency and ignore the oversight and accountability roles.
- The public has not internalised operations under multi-party dispensation while many parties lack countrywide grassroots support.
- Possibility that the LG system has been weakened and the role of Parliament strengthened;
- Citizens seem to look towards the President and MPs for service delivery instead of the mandated local councils.

#### *Council oversight*

The specific key challenges to council oversight include:

- Information is often presented late and in complicated formats not easy to be internalised by most of the councillors
- There are cases of councillors venturing into direct implementation rather than overseeing the performance of staff
- The recentralisation of the Executive Officers by the PSC, is likely to compromise the accountability and oversight linkages between the appointed and elected leaders (insubordination).

#### *Responding to citizens' priorities*

The challenge of responsiveness to citizens' priorities is evidenced by delays to approval of plans and budgets, over contentions with budget allocations for council emoluments; inadequate feedback mechanisms by the politicians to the citizens on inclusion of their priorities in the development plans which rarely the intended actions. Whereas provisions exist, there are limited success stories of recalling councillor's a mechanism for holding them accountable. Other critical factors include the limited nature of conditional CG transfers for discretion in allocation, low local revenues that negatively impact on accountability, ownership and inter-relationships between councillors and citizens, and payment of some councillors which distort the desired lines of accountability and mobilisation of local revenues.

#### *Supervision of service delivery*

Supervision of service delivery is challenged by limited information on desired quality of service, staffing gaps, facilitation of the key departments, insufficient discussion on audit reports by council, undue influence exerted by councillors on human resource management (recruitment and disciplinary actions), manipulation, collusion in pricing/award of tenders/contracts and shoddy procurement and contract management. The phenomenon of creation of new districts exacerbates the situation with many unfilled yet established positions.

#### *CG inspection and monitoring*

The challenges of CG inspection and monitoring broadly result from inadequate coordination between agencies manifested in the multiple programmes executed in LGs. This has resulted in fatigue on the LG implementers who are overwhelmed with activities, thus affecting service delivery. In addition, the issuance of parallel guidelines on planning and reporting undermines the discretion, power and accountability of the LGs.

### **3.1.3 Proposals for consideration**

The presentation identified critical proposals for consideration as efforts are made to address the challenges. The proposals focus on ideal actions to improve the electoral process, responsiveness to citizen priorities, empowering citizens and enhancing CG coordination. The proposed actions are elaborated below:

#### *Improving electoral process*

- Further study the implications and best mechanisms for introducing multi-party politics at lower local councils to enable citizens make informed electoral choices – spearheaded by ACCU.
- Either make political party preliminary elections more transparent or make it easier for the independent candidates to compete for elections to ensure that the electoral process serves its rightful purpose as a forum for the citizens to elect councillors they can hold to account
- Institute mechanisms for penalising councillors not abiding with the electoral process - e.g. those implicated in buying votes

#### *Responsiveness to citizen priorities*

- Enhance local council autonomy
- Support local revenue generation (e.g. LED initiatives; and efficient and transparent tax assessment, collection and administration).
- Increase discretionary funds and transfers to LLGs,
- Support LGs to develop and implement client charters detailing e.g. key services to be provided by the LGs; and mechanisms for channelling complaints
- Study and elaborate mechanisms through which religious and cultural leaders can complement local councils in performing the oversight and accountability roles - they were presented as legitimate and trusted representatives of their constituents.

*Empowering citizens*

- Intensify civic education focussing on both rights and responsibilities
- Strengthen radio programmes to communicate major council decisions
- Clarify the oversight and accountability roles and relationships between the user committee and local councils

*Enhance council capacity*

- Timely information to councillors in simplified formats and local languages (notion of lifting the minimum academic qualifications may not address the problem of capacity gaps of the councillors).
- Further empower the accounting officers to ensure that procedures and regulations are followed
- Support District Chairpersons to conduct performance appraisals for the Chief Executives.
- Organise joint capacity building activities for the staff and councillors.
- Councillors who violate procedures should be made liable for their actions.

*Enhancing CG coordination*

- Clarifying the roles, relationships and implications of ministries, departments and agencies interventions to LGs
- Organise joint support, inspection and review missions (various CG agencies)
- Encourage and support consolidated reporting of LGs to the CG rather than fragmented reporting to the respective line ministries

## **3.2 Kenya**

The rationale for local council accountability and oversight is the perception that councillors, through their involvement in local council planning processes, are better placed to represent their constituents by making policies that reflect and are responsive to the interests and preferences of citizens. The objectives of the study on local council oversight were to review the role of local council oversight in improving the service delivery; assess the extent to which citizens are able to hold their local councillors accountable for their performances; and build in-country and regional dialogue based on concrete analysis derived mainly from local deliberations.

Data were collected through documentary review, including relevant laws, policy documents and previous studies, reviews and evaluation reports and research papers. Interviews with various stakeholders such as MoLG/ KLGRP, LA Officials, Councillors, researchers, LG associations, user associations, neighbourhood associations, professional bodies and the business community were also used.

### **3.2.1 Local Government System and Institutional Assessment**

The institutional structure of LG is composed of four categories; a City Council, Municipal Councils, Town Councils and County Councils. The local governance structure consists of the political arm and standing committee; and administrative arm (Departments/sections/units). The responsibilities of the local authorities include:

- Street lighting, markets, solid waste management
- Fire fighting and other emergency services
- Control and regulation of various trades and occupations
- Establishing and maintaining schools and educational institutions (only older Municipalities)
- Provision of health services (only older Municipalities)
- Land use planning and
- Provision of social and community development services

The study included the institutional assessment of local councils with a focus on, among others, the electoral and party system and composition of councils, loyalty of councillors to party ideologies and the dangers of factionalism in councils due to the numerical strengths of the different parties. Key points to note include:

- Election of local councillors is held nationally every five years under a multiparty system since 1992
- Council is made up of elected councillors and nominated councillors (proposed by parties to the Minister for LG for nomination)
- Mayor/Chairman elected bi-annually, and committee chairmen elected annually by councillors
- Numerous cases of the same councillors repeatedly nominated by the Minister over several years
- Councillor must be a member of a registered political Party and is subject to the sponsoring political party's ideologies and agenda
- LC where one party predominates, greater consensus in council decisions may be realised, but dominant political party in the LA may use its numerical superiority to promote policies and programmes that advance their party's agenda leading to factionalism on party lines within LAs
- Councillors from minor political parties may not be able to significantly influence decisions affecting the people he/she represents.

### **3.2.2 Current Accountability and Oversight Systems**

The current accountability and oversight systems provide limited demand and space for councillor involvement in LA operations. The only function that the law requires a councillor to undertake is to attend council meetings and participate in the deliberations (law provides sanctions for failure to attend meetings). Councillors can only participate through council meetings where they are empowered to bring motions and ask questions on matters relevant to the operations of the council – the only channel for an individual

councillor to articulate the needs and priorities of his/her constituents. However, this vital avenue for championing the citizen's concerns is rarely utilized. The oversight responsibility of the councillors can only be exercised within the context of corporate decision of the local authority.

In this environment, the citizen's expectations of their councillors (i.e. championing their cause in the council and influence formulation of policies, actions and resource allocation that is responsive to their needs and priorities; watching out for prudent management of their taxes by public officers, etc.) may not always be met due to deficiencies in the legislative framework, inadequate capacity, lack of necessary resources and the dynamics of the political environment in which local councillors operate.

There is no legal provision for citizen interaction with LC and the LASDAP Regulations that require LC to involve citizens in identification, prioritization and monitoring of implementation of the service delivery action plans are applied at the discretion of the council appointed officials. This implies limited formal avenues for the citizens to demand accountability right from the start.

On the other hand, there exists informal mechanisms for citizens to demand accountability through personal audience with the councillors, public 'barazas'-usually convened by DC/chiefs, written or oral representations, the media, street demonstrations and mass action, withholding payment of taxes, the judicial system and user/community based committee such as school management, rural water or health centre/clinic committee. The in view of the limited formal oversight channels/mechanisms, a variety of informal methods have evolved through which councillors interact with appointed officials and their influence on service delivery this include informal caucuses, delegations to the Minister for LG and lock out of officers. Informal accountability mechanisms include community mobilization – around a specific issue of concern in a particular Ward, social gatherings, public "Barazas", "Meet the People" tours and the media.

### **3.2.3 Challenges**

- Citizens lack a comprehensive, all inclusive and legally binding mechanism for participating in the decision-making process in the council such that their concerns/views influence resource allocation and service delivery by their local council.
- The main channel of influencing council decisions in support of locally identified needs and preference is through relevant motions and effective articulation of citizen needs in the council meetings.
- The legislative framework for downward accountability is very weak, there are no requirements to provide citizens with information on council operations except for a summary of the LA's annual budget and even that is not obligatory but permissive.
- Outside the five year term of council citizens have no mechanisms of imposing any sanction on their elected councillor.
- Citizen influence on council decision-making relies on the initiative of their councillor and personal influence.

- Systematic erosion of LA service delivery mandates by the central government has contributed to diminishing public confidence in the local council as service provider thus shifting the citizens' focus on who should be accountable for delivering desired development projects and services.
- The excessive debt burden in most councils has further contributed to the erosion of LC credibility
- The Local Government Officers Regulations of 1984 transferred the management of the most critical resource (HR) to the central government. This leaves the councillors feeling disconnected and rendered powerless as their staff have divided royalties.
- Information flow is critical for effective oversight and accountability. Access to information has been enhanced by the LATF reporting requirement, however, the usefulness/value of the information provided is reduced due to the focus on inputs and processes other than outputs; and accountability judged on the degree of compliance with laid down procedures and reporting formats rather than the results of the activities undertaken. The study did not find any evidence to suggest that output budgeting is a requirement or a practice.

### **3.3 Tanzania**

The study was conducted in 3 rural council and 1 urban (7 villages and 1 street (mtaa) were visited in 8 wards). The data collected for the study consisted of open-ended interviews with councilors, council staff, WEOs and VEOs, divisional secretaries, central GoT appointees at local level (i.e. DC), ordinary citizens and CSOs representatives (NGOs, and FBOs). Document review of consultancy/research reports, some laws and regulations and Council documents was also undertaken.

#### **3.3.1 Socio-economic and political state of Councils**

##### *Social services*

The socioeconomic state of the case Councils indicates existence of reasonable coverage of social services manifested in many primary and secondary schools in each Council, over 90% enrollment of school-going age children and existence of a secondary school in nearly every Ward as result of the central government policy. In health services there is a government-owned hospital in each council except Karatu where the hospital is owned by the Lutheran Church. Faith based organizations have set up a number of facilities in Councils in the north (Karatu and Same) and there are dispensaries and clinics in the councils but their number still does not meet the demand.

Challenges in terms of the quality of education remain. Most schools in rural areas lack adequate and qualified teachers- this is due to the harsh conditions in rural areas (poor infrastructure, lack of other social services and rural cultures!) Challenges related to health services include: distances between villages and wards which affect access to services and the lack of medicines

### *Implications of the socioeconomic background on accountability*

- Distances affect access to information
- Low income of the rural people affect access to news papers (basics versus newspapers), or pay bus fare to attend a village/council meeting
- Poor transport and communication infrastructure worsens information access and use of existing mechanisms of governance.
- Lack of good systems/services for information management at community level compounds the problems (photocopying facilities, power, etc.)

### **3.3.2 Councils' constitution and processes**

#### *Constitution/composition*

There are 2 types of councilors: elected and appointed ones. Appointed ones are all women and constitute 1/3 of the council. Regular elections are held under a multiparty system every five years. Appointments are made every time a council is launched. However, there is no explicit requirement or provision for recalling a councilor before expiry of the term for non-performance.

#### *Councilors' capacity and allegiance*

The law prescribes a very low requirement: to be able to read and write in Kiswahili and English yet is being blamed for encouraging people with little capacity to become councilors. Over 50% of councilors possess primary education with none at University or college education.

Councilors owe more allegiance to the party which holds them accountable by reprimand or withdrawal of membership rather than the electorate.

#### *Resources and incentives*

Councils have staff dedicated to council's activities (committee clerks) and are utilized as per the issue at hand. The chairperson has an office which is available for other councilors. Councilors are paid an allowance determined by the ministry responsible for local government and transport refund when they attend council. Other benefits include gratuity and proposals have been made for tax relief, medical attention and funeral costs.

#### *Council meetings*

Council meetings are held four or more times a year and are open to the public and press. Minutes of the full council are also open to the public upon payment of a fee. Party meetings are held before full council.

#### *Implications of the composition, capacity, resources and processes*

The appointment of women not achieving intended results as it raises issues of cronyism as opposed to competence. The appointed councilors do not know who to account to and for what! In addition, vulnerable groups are not represented in the development processes.

The lack of capacities of councilors translates into misinterpretation of key documents such as budgets, thereby weakening oversight and accountability to citizens. Furthermore, citizens believe that party meetings undermine accountability to the electorate as focus is placed on party rather than people interests.

### *Budget discretionary space and oversight*

There is limited budgetary discretionary space due to the high percentages (over 80%) of development and recurrent sectoral budgets are provided by the Central Government. These funds are accompanied by budget guidelines e.g. menus of sector investments; percentage expenditure on specific items etc. Delays in providing budget guidelines, disbursement of funds and unfunded commitments frequently issued to the LGAs. The secondary-school-for- every-ward is a living example. LGs estimates of 20% of their budgets to fulfill orders from above. Other factors limiting discretionary space include interference by central government agents in local council decisions and lack of control over council staff. Human resource management and development functions are still firmly controlled by central government.

### *Implication of limited space*

Earmarking gives local councils a leeway to avoid their responsibilities and blame central government. This and delays in disbursement of funds deters accountability at the local level. Control over staff challenges decentralization and the overall effect is poor service delivery.

### *Council oversight over staff*

There is council oversight over staff on planning, budgeting, procurement, monitoring, management and assessment of service delivery. Councilors participate in the planning process at community level, ward level and Council level; approve procurement plans and monitor procurement on quarterly basis; review quarterly reports on revenues and expenditures (Internal audit reports are part of the monitoring tools used by councilors); and conduct regular site visits to ensure efficient and effective service delivery through sector specific project visits.

### *Mechanisms of oversight*

These consist of formal standing committees (e.g. Finance, Planning and Administration Committee; Services committees: education, health and water; economic affairs, works and environment; (HIV/AIDS) as well as Investigation Committees and other informal mechanisms.

### *Social accountability in LG*

Several mechanisms of social accountability apply at local government level; participatory planning and budgeting processes, Budget monitoring, procurement process and service monitoring, Politicians tours and meetings and village assembly. However, participatory planning process hardly takes place, no IPFs are provided; inadequate resources for planning, etc. The challenge of budget monitoring which lacks information on implementation, procurement process and service monitoring save for projects implemented at community level, procurement is generally viewed as a business for technocrats. There is informal service delivery for the ordinary citizens who use political tours and meetings as a forum for raising their concerns. Village assemblies are potential though lack the necessary ingredients and lack of financial information is also a challenge.

### **3.3.3 Conclusions and Recommendations**

- The socio-economic circumstances of the LGs are an important factor in social accountability and needs to be recognized as a negative impact on the incentive to participate in accountability processes such as village meetings, access to information etc. The accountability process should be designed in a way to mitigate the adverse effect on the planning process to enable the masses appreciate the processes;
- Feedback processes should be conducted in a customized way and at the right time.
- Legal framework for elected representatives is problematic:
- Provision for easy recall for poor performance should be made possible and easy for citizens
- Educational requirements should be clearly defined and raised to discourage incompetent councilors.
- Issue of independent candidates should be explored further before electoral periods.
- Information management and transparency
- Establish strong regulations to define the nature of information to be accessed by the public which should be availed at village or street (mtaa) level, schools, health centres and during politicians' tours/meetings

Why should traditional systems of accountability work out rather than modern systems? Pot breaking practice! Apply its logic!

- Facilitating wards and villages should provide information through notice boards, archives and basic infrastructure which is lacking.
- The planning process should be reviewed, customized and implemented (IPFs) should also be provided.
- Earmarking should be reduced or eliminated to allow more discretion on programmes.
- NGOs and other civil society organizations involved in accountability should be emphasised to focus on strengthening social accountability by sharing their best practices to the citizens instead of bureaucrats.
- Strong mechanisms for monitoring accountability in local governments should be developed and lessons learnt should be expounded.

The rationale for local council accountability and oversight is the perception that councillors, through their involvement in local council planning processes, are best placed to represent the interests of their constituents – by making policies which are responsive to the interests and preference of citizens.

The objectives of the study on local council oversight were to review the role of local council oversight in improving the service delivery; assess the extent to which citizens hold their local leaders accountable in service delivery; and build an internal and regional dialogue based on concrete analysis derived from local deliberations.

The institutional structure of local government is composed of four categories of local authorities namely a City Council, Municipal Councils, Town Councils and County Councils (rural). The local governance structure consists of the political arm, standing committee; and the administrative arm (Departments/Sections/Units). The responsibilities of the local authorities include:

- Street lighting, markets, solid waste management
- Fire fighting and other emergency services
- Control and regulation of various trades and occupations
- Establishing and maintaining schools and educational institutions (only older Municipalities)
- Provision of health services (older Municipalities)
- Land use planning and
- Provision of social and community development services

### **Approach to Task**

Data was collected through documentary review, including relevant laws, policy documents and previous studies, reviews and evaluation reports and research papers. Interviews with various stakeholders such as MoLG/ KLGRP, LA Officials, Councillors, researchers, LG associations, user associations, neighbourhood associations, professional bodies and the business community were also used.

The study examined the institutional assessment of local councils with a focus on the electoral system, composition of councils, loyalty of councillors to party ideologies and the dangers of factionalism in councils caused by the different parties. Key points to note include:

- Election of local councillors which are held nationally after every five years under a multiparty system since 1992.
- Council is composed of elected councillors and nominated councillors (proposed by parties to the Minister for LG for nomination)
- Mayor/Chairman elected bi-annually, and committee chairmen elected annually by councillors
- Numerous cases of the councillors repeatedly nominated by the Minister over several years
- Councillor must be a member of a registered political Party and subject to the sponsoring political party's ideologies and agenda.
- LC where one party predominates, greater consensus in council decisions may be realised, but dominant political party in the LA may use its numerical superiority to promote policies and programmers that advance their party's agenda leading to factionalism on party lines within LAs.
- Councillors from minor political parties may not significantly influence decisions affecting the people he/she represents.

### **3.4 Ethiopia**

The country presentation on Ethiopia gave background on the system of governance followed which comprises 13 States made of the government structures and zonal administration (Woreda and Kebele) further divided into smaller administrative divisions.

The establishment of the councils is a step forward though faced with a number of challenges; delayed council meetings and key information, on procurement, audit and rubber stamp decisions. Others issues outlined include structural constraints, party dominance, overlap of state structures, domination of council by party members, limited separation of power between the executive and legislature, capacity constraints realized by poor incentives, lack of awareness, training and resources domination by council. Besides, lack of involvement of the Woreda in service delivery, traditional system of handling public complaints, lack of information on donor support, no linkages between technical staff and government, lack of punishable measures and integrated plans and accountability to the community.

#### **3.4.1 Local Institutions and Social Accountability**

- Local associations established by members in the community are accountable to members.
- Membership-based externally initiated organizations have dual accountability to government structures and to their members.
- Customary institutions for justice delivery are accountable to the community at large.
- No strong involvement of NGOs and donor funded projects on accountability. The five sectors are considered – health, education, agriculture, water and justice.
- Accountability of the extension agents in agriculture, education and health is to their sectoral offices at the Wereda and regional level and not to the community.
- The health sector lacks clear complaint procedures while in education there are clearer guidelines, mechanisms for complaint and local institutions involved than in other sectors.
- Disciplinary procedures exist and complaints mechanisms against unfair measures are available and are sometimes used.
- Although in theory complaints can be made to DA supervisors this seems to be rare, though it has sometimes resulted in salary cuts.
- Water sector reveals local level management with semi-formal committees often raises issues of accountability and inadequate resources.
- The justice sector provides for formal and customary institutions in operation.
- The dual justice systems offer opportunities for citizens to obtain redress in one system if they do not obtain justice in the other.

### 3.4.2 Recommendations

- Strengthening a bottom-up approach involving community organizations
- Bridging the disconnect between *Wereda* and *Kebele* levels
- Strengthening the *Wereda* and *Kebele* councils' oversight role
- Enhancing *Kebele* involvement in planning and decision-making
- Funding and projectisation of community-led development
- Broadening the vision and agenda of social accountability
- Promoting linkages between PBS II and other government and donor initiatives
- Adopting a cross-sectoral design and linkages with the justice sector
- Involving women and promoting the interests of minorities and the disadvantaged
- Promoting the involvement of community-initiated and led organizations.
- Empowering citizens to demand for accountability.
- Central Government should ensure capacity building for all stakeholders.
- Gender should be linked to the dimension and a social accountability. Efforts of decentralization useful if retracted to the lower levels.
- Central federal government system down to the lower levels

### 3.5 Rwanda Experience

The experience from Rwanda guided through the definition of accountability, reasons for establishing effective accountability mechanisms, the various types of mechanism, their establishment and why in effect. It outlined the two dimensions for enforcing accountability and these include: civil servants to elected officials and elected officials to the electorate. The principles under which accountability mechanisms operate include transparency, answerability and controllability.

The presentation further defined corruption, its causes and its manifestation to the Local Governments. The strategies for enforcing accountability in Rwanda include: public accountability day, performance contracts, traditional approaches through village initiatives (*ubedehe*), organised village level strategies (*Umuganda*), participatory budgeting and traditional justice systems (*Gacaca*). It also identified transparency, citizen's participation, information dissemination, zero tolerance and punishment as some of the strategies for deepening democracy and decentralization.

The way forward is prevention and enforcement through creation and maintenance of regulatory systems, strengthened management capacities and encouragement of ownership. The presentation emphasised use of simplified processes, regular communication, technology to track information, capacity building and citizen engagement as key points for deepening decentralisation. Accountability is possible, requires good leadership and commitment, enhances economic development and results in increased citizen's satisfaction.

### **3.6 South Africa Experience**

The presentation made by Mr. Paul van Hoof guided that (ANSA) Africa is a network organization, jointly created by the World Bank and the Human Sciences Research Council in 2007, as a leading African advocate of citizen involvement in demand-side governance initiatives. He highlighted the background, goal, objectives, thematic focus and target deliverables for 2009.

ANSA-Africa focuses on bridging the gap between government and its citizens and enforces cross-country collaboration on social accountability and demand-driven governance initiatives. It also provides technical assistance to difference countries to enforce social accountability, deliver training programs across Africa on specific tools and techniques. Its major thematic areas of focus include; education, gender, ICT, service delivery and health. He reiterated that the issues discussed were complex for individual countries, thus the need for regional and global forums.

The Affiliated Network for Social Accountability (ANSA) is currently sourcing for partners to strengthen and carry forward the recommendations of he conference. He referred participants to the ANSA website <http://www.ansa-africa.net/> which provides a variety of innovations and materials for improving service delivery. There is still room to improve on the lessons shared as a resource for implementing decentralization.

## PART FOUR

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### 4.0 WORKING GROUP SESSIONS

The participants were divided into four working groups and tasked to address key questions related to the implementation context, legal frameworks and strategic actions for improving local governance and service delivery against achieving the MDGs. Using examples and country experiences, the four groups developed action-oriented strategies to harmonize existing policies and practices. In addition to the major discussion questions, the groups were tasked to identify the most actionable steps for realizing social accountability and come up with new innovations for implementation.

The overall group discussions identified the challenges and proposals for improving the assignment of functions, financial management, civic education, conflict resolution, role of donors ensuring accountability, revenue collection, inter-government transfers, donor coordination, regional coordination and corruption. A more detailed and country specific approaches are outlined under Part five of this report.

#### **GROUP I: Improved Service Delivery**

*The discussions basically identified ways of improving service delivery in local governments. The key issues discussed included:*

- *LGs to identify revenue sources to enhance economic growth in their areas for*
- *Improved legal framework to enhance decentralization by devolution – advocacy*
- *Improve communication and information flow to the communities*
- *Support roll out and implementation of client charters*
- *Use of radio to popularize the client charter*
- *Conduct client satisfaction surveys through meetings with concerned people in cascaded manner*
- *Develop tools and train research teams to collect the data*

## **GROUP 2: Financial Management**

The discussions on financial management zeroed on the challenges and recommendations for improved financial management in local governments. These included:

### **Challenges**

- Lack of resources and capacity at all levels – spending at Wards and villages (Tanzania).
- The political system does not fit into decentralization model (Kenya).
- LR revenue collection = 5 – 20% realisation; CG grants in high percentages erodes autonomy.
- Inadequate opportunity to facilitate regional cross-learning opportunities
- Inter-governmental transfers - inadequate and untimely release; Approved grants reduced by CGs without notice to LGs, disrupting LG plans; lack of mechanisms to complain about CG failures on transfers; External donor dependence, unutilized funds returned to CG without regard to the unveiling circumstances (Uganda and Tanzania).
- Poor accountability and transparency mechanisms to reduce corruption

### **Recommendations**

- Improved local revenue collection; capacity building interventions; improve legal framework to support decentralization by devolution
- Identify more LR sources to strengthen autonomy and reduce dictating from top
- Improve LR collection procedures
- Improve transparency on collections – public accountability day of Rwanda could be replicated
- Allocation of resources using unit cost to cater for unique circumstances of localities – not only population, etc.
- Study tours, e.g. Ethiopia
- Institute public expenditure tracking system
- Improve information dissemination to citizenry – through media etc.
- Sensitize citizens on their rights

## **GROUP 3 Conflict Resolution**

The group discussion mainly focused on types of conflicts, various actors, causes, resolution mechanisms, challenges and preventive mechanisms of conflicts.

### **Types of conflicts:**

- Conflict of roles and responsibilities e.g. district level between LG and CG officials
- Political conflict due to party affiliations.
- Tribal conflicts especially in districts that have different tribes like Kibale district in Uganda
- Power struggles between politicians, technocrats and civil society.

### **Main Actors**

The main actors of conflict included politicians – policy makers, technocrats – implementers at Central Government levels, and politicians, technocrats and implementation representatives, community: individuals, CSOs, special groups and development workers at local government levels.

### **Actors Interests**

- Central Government – effective and efficient service delivery of policies and programmes.
- Local Government: politicians need to deliver their manifesto.
- Technocrats should implement programmes and service deliver

- RDCs - oversight roles on behalf of government
- Community – access to services
- CSO – voicing interests of the voiceless and employment

### **Causes of conflicts**

- Religion, inadequate resources, party affiliations, tribal differences, incompatibility of education qualifications between politicians and technocrats.
- Mechanisms for resolving conflicts included, mediation by the cg, training and sensitization and arbitration through local council courts.

### **Challenges**

- Mediation/reconciliation: Time to bring parties together and issue of building trust
- Arbitration: Lack of facilitation for service providers
- Training: Funding and access to information
- Current trends: Multi party pluralism
- Power struggle about the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders

### **Remedies**

- Creation of complaint desk like Tanzania
- Empowering village councils
- Civic education on citizens rights and sensitization drives
- Clarity of roles and responsibilities
- Training specialists and developing curriculum
- Adequate funding
- Training service providers
- Councilors need training
- Massive civic education drives

## **GROUP 4 Role of Donors in Ensuring Social Accountability**

The discussion placed emphasis on the stages of accountability, its sustainability, strategies for maintaining good working relations with the development partners while taking into consideration the community interests and government capacity to meet them. :

### **Recommendations**

- Stakeholders strengthened through a supply-demand driven approach for materials and financial support.
- Donor community should ensure proper disintegration of issues, harmonization with communities, duplication, follow up and proactive accountability.
- Investment in homegrown solutions, traditional means etc and in general on the grassroots levels.
- Donor should support the local councils as institution, on issues of internal governance and outward governance.
- Need to emphasize proactive rather than reactive accountability, where applicable.
- Investment in developing in chain link- support the police, prosecution, judiciary and civic education, referral systems (ombudsman, police, local leaders) etc.
- Local Governments should ensure ownership on their success and failures.

- *Direct support and collaboration between development partners and LGs to enforce accountability and harmonize development plans so as to address specific needs of the LGs (case of SNV and CEFORD programmes) in Northern Uganda.*
- *Emphasize interests of LGs at the level of engaging with the DPs to ensure their priorities are catered for – within the national priorities.*
- *Introduction of structural tiers different from those in place – advocacy should start with government.*
- *Goodwill of government and level of freedom will determine ease of achieving desired goals*
- *Lobbying, packaging and marketing concept to relevant officials*
- *New ideas need championing through identifying champions within the government.*
- *Prove the value addition potential of the association to government's achievement of its objectives.*
- *LG Associations are now global phenomenon, there is need to identify levels of LG to start with, preferably HLG who are at a higher advantage in bargaining power.*
- *Initiate and encourage piloting with one federal region for a start.*
- *Introduce advantages and sustainability modalities for service delivery*

## PART FIVE

### 5.0 EMERGING ISSUES/RECOMMENDATIONS

The conference isolated and discussed a number of issues that need immediate consideration by the member countries and the implementing agencies including the LGs. They are elaborated below:

#### Kenya

- Centralise the Recruitment of Chief Officers and payment of Councillors remunerations from the consolidated fund as a motivation factor.
- Provide for adequate and discretionary transfers to supplement (not substitute) locally raised revenue -discretion to plan, prioritize and allocate funds according to locally defined needs to strengthen local accountability.
- Provide adequate and relevant information and establish mechanisms for redressing grievance so as to improve the interaction with local councils.
- Development of Citizens'/Client Service Charters to as to improve on the linkages between the citizens and government to promote efficient and effective service delivery.
- The CG should set up and enforce performance based contracting for both elected and appointed officials and further develop client charters.
- Establish Civil Society monitoring initiatives e.g PETS
- Develop an enabling legislative framework for effective local council oversight and accountability.
- Support the countries' legislative reforms that seek to enhance local accountability, such those reforms currently undertaken through the Local Government Reform Programmes in Kenya and Tanzania.
- Support Fiscal decentralization reforms so as to ensure equitable distribution of financial resources across the country to perform the functions defined for the various local councils whilst promoting the enhancement of local revenue to safeguard local decision-making autonomy. This further promoted effective local level planning which underpins social accountability and allows for community engagement and participation
- CG should support the development of mechanisms for entrenching citizen participation in decision making through legislative and administrative reforms.
- Improvement of management systems for financial management and reporting, human resource management and information.

#### Ethiopia

- Strengthen a bottom-up approach by involving community organizations through demand driven initiatives.
- There is need for special assistance from the member countries on the idea of LG associations which is still new for the country.
- Bridge the disconnections between the *Wereda* and *Kebele* levels.

- Strengthen the *Wereda* and *Kebele* councils' oversight role.
- Enhance *Kebele* involvement in planning and decision-making.
- Allocate funding for and projectise community-led development processes.
- Broaden the vision and agenda of social accountability through a multi-disciplinary approach.
- Promote linkages and networking between PBS II and other government and donor initiatives.
- Adopt a cross-sectoral approach for the design and linkage with the justice sector to enhance compliance with the decentralization policy.
- Gender incorporation and promotion of interests of the minority and disadvantaged groups to enforce representation of all groups.
- Promote the involvement of community-initiated organizations through competitive approaches.
- Strengthen a bottom-up approach involving community organizations; involve women and promote the interests of minorities and the disadvantaged; promote the involvement of community-initiated and led organizations
- Study mechanisms through which religious and cultural leaders can play an oversight role through emphasizing values and ethics and integrity.
- Need for recruitment of a consultant to advise Government on the recruitment on councilors, and their capacity building through training.
- Development Partners should exert pressure on government to support the developmental initiative.
- Need to have a government entity on board on the electoral process since NGOs are not barred from engaging in civic and voter education.

## **Tanzania**

- The accountability process should be designed to cater for the mitigation of the socioeconomic environment. For example, when plans are made they should be respected so that people see the point in these processes- they should address key issues. Feed back should be provided in good time
- A provision should be made in the legal framework for citizens to recall their elected representatives for poor performance.
- Educational requirements for councilors should be raised to discourage incompetence of the councilors who may wish to be elected.
- There is need to revisit the position of the independent candidates under the multi-party dispensation.
- Access to information should be regularized to define the kind of information that the public is entitled to, its availability and publicity at convenient points (village, street (mtaa) level, schools, and health centres).
- Support and facilitate the wards and villages to provide information through developing notice boards, archives and other basic infrastructure which are currently lacking.
- Strengthen the existing social accountability mechanisms through a more customized review of the planning process (provision of the IPFs).

- Earmarking of funds and transfers should be reduced or eliminated to allow more discretion.
- NGOs, CSOs and CBOs involved in the accountability processes should be supported so as to strengthen social accountability by disseminating the results back to citizens and not bureaucrats.
- Strong mechanisms should be developed for monitoring accountability in local governments and build on the lessons learnt from previous experiences.

## **Uganda**

- Further study the implications and identify best mechanisms for introducing multi-party politics at lower local councils. This is possible through enforcing transparency at preliminary party elections and open competition.
- Institute mechanisms for penalising councillors who breach the electoral process through vote rigging and harassment.
- Enhance local council autonomy through supporting local revenue generation (e.g. local economic development initiatives; efficient and transparent tax assessment, collection and administration) and further advocate for increased discretionary funds and transfers to LLGs,
- Support LGs to develop and implement client charters detailing the major services provided by the LGs and the mechanisms for channelling complaints.
- Study and elaborate mechanisms through which religious and cultural leaders can complement local councils in performing the oversight and accountability roles. These were seen as legitimate and trusted representatives for their constituents.
- Intensify civic and voter education to enlighten the citizens on their rights and responsibilities in the electoral process.
- Strengthen awareness creation through the media and community programmes to inform the public on major council decisions.
- Clarify the oversight and accountability roles and relationships between the user committee and local councils enhanced through timely and simplified information and communication channels.
- Further empower the accounting officers to adhere to the procedures and regulations, enforce appraisal of the accounting officers by District Chairpersons and set targets, conduct reviews on achievements and maintain the link with the officers.
- Organise joint capacity building activities for the appointed and elected leaders to enforce compliance on joint support, inspection and review missions.
- Councillors who violate the laid down procedures should be made personally liable and punishable by the beneficiary community.
- Clarifying the roles, responsibilities, relationships and implications of the CG ministries, departments and agencies in the interventions to LG.
- Encourage and support consolidated reporting of LGs to the CG and discourage fragmented reporting mechanisms to the respective line ministries and departments.

## **PART FIVE**

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### **6.0 CLOSING SESSION**

#### **6.1 Secretary General, Uganda Local Government Association**

Mr. Raphael Magyezi commended the Ministry of Local Government, Uganda for the support in hosting the conference. He particularly thanked Hon Adolf Mwesigye, Minister of Local Government (Uganda), Mr. Patrick Mutabwire and Prof Sylvain Boko of the World Bank for their commitment towards the conference amidst other heavy schedules. He also commended Hon Abdu Katuntu, Chairperson of the Parliamentary Local Government Public Accounts Committee (LGPAC-Uganda) for his exemplary commitment and tremendous efforts in enforcing accountability, Ms Gertrude Gamwera of ULGA for her tireless efforts in organizing the conference and Mr. Solomon Ossiya, Chief of Party of the Anti-corruption Country Threshold Programme (ACT).

He also thanked the Vice Chairperson ULGA for his commitment, WB officials for the financial support, ideas and commitment, ANSA, Consultants for conducting the study, member states for their contributions, ULGA staff, rapporteurs and press for all their support towards the conference.

#### **6.2 Prof Sylvain Boko – Consultant World Bank, Washington**

Prof Sylvain Boko commended the conference for offering great opportunity to enhance regional integration on local governance. The emerging global and regional issues should be consolidated and promoted to help other countries realize the same footing in the decentralization process. The decentralisation process is dynamic and calls for shared understanding and learning opportunities across governments. Thus, new strategies should be applied in addressing the challenges identified to accelerate regional development.

The conference has exhibited professionalism and mutual respect; the proposed recommendations will greatly strengthen the local governments in enforcing oversight and social accountability at the local level. The issues for emphasis include; capacity building; clarity on intergovernmental fiscal transfers to enhance the ability of local government to raise local revenue, reducing over dependency on CG and the Development Partners; and empowering citizens to be fully involved in local governance. All these will go a long way in promoting local economic development and ultimately, poverty reduction.

Prof Boko called upon the political representatives to use their positions to support the agenda to strengthen oversight and social accountability during their deliberations and proposals in their high level forums. Special attention and backstopping support should be extended to Ethiopia which is still far from Local Governance issues. The Consultant re-emphasized the significance of the innovations brought forward by the various groups, refining of proposals and developing concrete action plans. He invited delegates to visit the website created by the World Bank to update members on the conference.

The forum has enhanced opportunities to share, understand and learn from other experiences. Joint efforts are needed from the member countries, World Bank, ANSA Africa, Ministry of Local Government, Uganda to implement the decisions made at the conference so as to enhance local governance.

Prof Boko concluded by commending the ULGA Management and Staff for their leadership roles and tremendous efforts in organizing the conference.

### **6.3 Mr. Bitarabeho Johnson, Chairperson, Uganda, LGFC**

Mr. Bitarabeho in his closing remarks commended the thoroughness of the research conducted, depth of the discussions, rich experience exhibited and the efficiency with which the workshop was managed. He reiterated that the resolutions and recommendations will go a long way in forwarding the findings, lessons learnt and recommendations of the study. The Uganda Local Government Finance Commission is committed to implementing the recommendations in cognizance of the legal mandate and available resources.

The Uganda LGFC is established by the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda to guide and advise Government on the financing of Local Governments. It also examines the financing regime and sharing of resources between the Centre and Local Governments. The Commission further studies revenue sources and guides on how to improve the local revenue collection and management. LGFC acts as a link between Local Government taxes and service delivery and is concerned with the extent to which the citizens are involved in the budgeting process and determines priorities in the Budget Framework Paper of each district and urban authority.

Mr. Bitarabeho stated that the LGFC promotes and encourages timely and accurate information and reports from LGs to Government and their communities on the allocation of resources, expenditure and impact on the realization of the Government overall objective of poverty eradication. He commended the conference for adding value to the mandate of the Local Government Finance Commission. The findings and recommendations of the country study reports will go a long way to enhance strategies for improving LG financing. The existence of strong linkages between the degree of social accountability and willingness of the citizens to pay taxes greatly enhances LGs in providing services. Uganda's experience shows a range of opportunities to strengthen the local council oversight function and enhance social accountability.

The Local Government Finance Commission together with other stakeholders are engaged in the following responsibilities:

- Implementation of the Fiscal Decentralization Strategy.
- Annual Negotiations between the Local Governments and the Sectors.
- Local Revenue Enhancement.
- Integrated Financial Management System (IFMS)
- Participatory Local Government Planning and Budgeting
- Local Government Charter on Accountability and Ethical Code of Conduct.
- Capacity Building for the Local Councils
- Joint Annual Review of Decentralization and other Sector Reviews
- Local Government Reporting and Accountability.

This is manifested in the existence of policies and legal framework. However, there is need for their implementation and enforcement as well as capacity building for the key actors. Further focus should be placed on legal enforcement, capacity building for the councilors, regular consultation and feedback mechanisms to enforce downward accountability.

This conference offers opportunities for deepening decentralization through enhanced regional cooperation. The commitment of Local Governments in working together as East African Local Governments Association, the Commonwealth Local Governments Forum and other networks is greatly embraced. Mr. Bitarabeho reiterated the strategic positioning of Local Government Associations in assisting LGs to realize downward accountability, while the CG enforces upward accountability. However, the internal self-check and assessment calls for the development of an M&E tool to be managed by the LG Associations and provide mechanisms for technical backstopping to weak members.

Mr. Bitarabeho urged the Local Government stakeholders to urgently address the issues of corruption, inadequate funding, comprehensive service delivery standards, and equitable resource allocation through clear indicators and measurements. This calls for Central Government technical and mentoring support to Local Government leaders. He urged the Bank and other Development Partners for continued support and to ULGA and other National Associations to implement the recommendations derived from the workshop as a way of promoting good governance through the policy of decentralization.

He concluded by thanking the World Bank in funding the conference at a regional level and the delegates for sharing their experiences on local governance.

He then officially closed the conference at 6.00pm.

**PART SEVEN**

**APPENDICES**

**Appendix I: PROGRAMME**

<b>SUNDAY MAY 31</b>		
Arrival of Regional Delegates		
<b>MONDAY JUNE 1: MORNING</b>		
Master of Ceremony and Head of Protocol: <b>Mr Patrick Mutabwire</b> , Ministry of Local Government		
<b>Session I:</b>	<b>Opening Session</b>	<b>Chair: Mr Patrick Mutabwire</b>
8:00-9:00	Registration of Participants	ULGA
9:00 – 9:10	Introduction of Delegates	Mr. Patrick Mutabwire
9:10 – 9:20	Introduction of Conference Theme and Objectives	Prof Sylvain Boko
	Welcome Address	Mr. Ferua Andama, Vice President ULGA
9:20 – 9:40	Welcome Address	Hon Minister of Local Government
<b>Session II</b>	<b>Country Presentations</b>	<b>Mr Raphael Magyezi</b>
9:40 – 10:00	Presentation of the Uganda ALCOSA Project Paper	Mr. Emmanuel Ssewankambo
10:00-10:25	Discussion on the Uganda Paper	
10:25 – 11:00	<b>Coffee Break</b>	
11:00-11:20	Address and Remarks	World Bank/Uganda Country Manager
11:20-11:40	Presentation of the Kenya ALCOSA Project Paper	Ms. Harriet Naitore
11:40-12:05	Discussion on the Kenya Paper	
12:05-12:25pm	Presentation of the Tanzania ALCOSA Project Paper	Ms. Lemanyon Melyoki
12:25-12:50pm	Discussion on the Tanzania Paper	
12:50 -2:00pm	<b>Lunch Break</b>	
2:00-2:20pm	Presentation of the Ethiopia ALCOSA Project Paper	Buli Edjeta and Agazi Tiemelissan
2:20-2:45pm	Discussion on the Ethiopia Paper	
2:45-3:05pm	Presentation of the Synthesis Paper)	Ms. Harriet Naitore
3:05-3:30pm	Discussion of the Synthesis Paper	
3:30-3:45pm	Coffee Break	
<b>Session III:</b>	<b>Panel Discussion.</b>	<b>Chair: Prof. Sylvain Boko</b>
3:45-4:45pm	<u>Topic:</u> “Oversight Role of Local Councils in Service Delivery: Further Country Experiences”	<b>Ms. Asli Gurkan</b> (The World Bank); <b>Ms. Nzosaba Goretti</b> (BLGA, Burundi); <b>Mr. Sebastian Totwe</b> (ANSA, South Africa); <b>Mr. Peter Karasira</b> (RALGA, Rwanda)
4:45-5:15pm	Discussion on Panel Presentations	
5:15-5:30pm	Recap of first day and endnotes	
8:00 pm	CONFERENCE DINNER: <i>HOSTED BY ULGA AND MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT</i>	
<b>Session IV:</b>	<b>Working Groups Session</b>	
8:30-10:00am	Concurrent Working Groups. Delegates sign up by topic	
<u>Topics:</u>	“The Role of Local Councils in Public Finance	<b>Facilitator: Ms. Asli Gurkan,</b>

	<p>Management”</p> <p>“Conflicts in Local Governments and Effect on Service Delivery”</p> <p>“Institutional Assessment of Local Councils: Country Experiences”</p> <p>“Role of Donors in Ensuring Social Accountability: Issues and Debate”</p>	<p><b>The World Bank</b></p> <p><b>Facilitator: Ms. Gertrude Rose Gamwera, Deputy Secretary General</b></p> <p><b>Facilitator: Mr. Wilber Bateisibwa, ULGA Director of Training and Capacity Building</b></p> <p><b>Facilitator: Mr. Solomon Ossiya, Deputy Chief of Party Anti-Corruption Threshold Program</b></p>
10:00-10:15	<b>Coffee Break</b>	
10:15-12:00	<u>Task:</u> Working Group Reports and Discussions	<b>Chair: Mr. Johnson Bitarabeho, Chairperson Local Government Finance Commission</b>
12:00-1:45	<b>Lunch</b>	
<b>TUESDAY JUNE 2: AFTERNOON</b>		
<b>Session V:</b>	<b>Recommendations and Future Policy Actions.</b>	<b>Chair: Mr. Paul van Hoof, ANSA</b>
2:00-4:00	<p><u>Topics of Discussion:</u></p> <p>Policy Implications of Country Reports</p> <p>Future Action and Commitments on Social Accountability across Countries and Regions in Africa</p> <p>ANSA-Africa and its Role in Building a Regional Network on Social Accountability</p>	
4:00-4:15	Coffee Break	
4:15-4:30	Summary of Proceedings	<b>(Prof. Sylvain Boko)</b>
4:30-5:00	Closing	Minister East African Affairs, , Republic of Uganda

## Appendix 2: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

NO.	NAME	DESIGNATION/INSTITUTION/COUNTRY	
1	Mr. Kizito Siraje Nkugwa	District Chairperson, Central Region, Uganda	
2	Mr. Berihu Nurhusien	Ethiopia	<a href="mailto:bnhusien@yahoo.com">bnhusien@yahoo.com</a>
3	Mr. Karasira Peter	Chairperson, EALGA/ President, RALGA	
4	Mr. Patrick Mutabwire	Commissioner, Ministry of Local Government	<a href="mailto:pmutabwire@yahoo.co.uk">pmutabwire@yahoo.co.uk</a>
5	Mr. Clestine T. Kimaro	Ag. Secretary General, ALAT	<a href="mailto:Alat_tz@yahoo.com">Alat_tz@yahoo.com</a>
6	Mr. Wilber Bateisibwa	Director Training & Capacity Building, ULGA	<a href="mailto:bateisibwaw@yahoo.co.uk">bateisibwaw@yahoo.co.uk</a>
7	Mr. Paul van Hoof	IDASA, South Africa	<a href="mailto:pvanhoof@idasa.org.za">pvanhoof@idasa.org.za</a>
8	Ms. Harriet Naitore	Consultant, Africa Development Professional Group	<a href="mailto:harrietaidore@adpgroup.org">harrietaidore@adpgroup.org</a>
9	Mr. Richard Mushi	University of Dar-es-salaam	<a href="mailto:rmushi@fcm.udsm.ac.tz">rmushi@fcm.udsm.ac.tz</a>
10	Mr. Lemayon Melyoki	University of Dar-es-salaam, Tanzania	<a href="mailto:melyoki@yahoo.com">melyoki@yahoo.com</a>
11	Mr. Sylvain Boko	Consultant, World Bank	<a href="mailto:shboko@yahoo.com">shboko@yahoo.com</a>
12	Mr. Sebastian Totwe	Capacity Building Expert/IDASA	<a href="mailto:stotwe@pta.idasa.org.za">stotwe@pta.idasa.org.za</a>
13	Mr. Terrell Manyak	Uganda Christian University	<a href="mailto:tmanyak@graduate.ucu.ac.ug">tmanyak@graduate.ucu.ac.ug</a>
14	Mr. Nyaga Kamundi	Retired Local Authority Officer	<a href="mailto:nyagakamundi@wananchi.com">nyagakamundi@wananchi.com</a>
15	Ms. Nalutaaya Zainabu	Researcher/MISR/Uganda	
16	Mr. Buli Edjeta	World Bank, Presenter	<a href="mailto:buliedjeta@yahoo.com">buliedjeta@yahoo.com</a>
17	Mr. Agazi Tiemelissan	World Bank, Presenter	<a href="mailto:agaziti@gmail.com">agaziti@gmail.com</a>
18	Ms. Mary Bitekerezo	World Bank, Sr. Soc. Dev. Specialist	
19	Mr. Andama Ferua	ULGA, Vice President, Uganda	<a href="mailto:afreuarichard@yahoo.com">afreuarichard@yahoo.com</a>
20	Mr. Raphael Magyezi	Secretary General, ULGA	<a href="mailto:raphael.magyezi@ulga.org">raphael.magyezi@ulga.org</a>
21	Ms. Gertrude R. Gamwera	ULGA, Uganda, Deputy Secretary General	<a href="mailto:rose.gamwera@ulga.org">rose.gamwera@ulga.org</a>
22	Mr. Wasswa Katono	Lecturer, Uganda Christian University	
23	Ms. Asli Gurkan	World Bank	
24	Ms. Jennifer Bukhoke	NPO, UNCDF Chairperson, DDPG	
25	Mr. Tavis Barr	Makerere University	
26	Mr. Johnson Bitarabebo	Chairperson, Local Government Finance Commission	
27	Ms. Angela M.T. Bafokuzara	Deputy Director, Directorate for Ethics and Integrity	
28	Ms. Akampurira Sarah	Anti Corruption Coalition	
29	Hon. Abdu Katuntu	Chair, Parliamentary Committee on LGPA	
30	Mr. Solomon Ossiya	Deputy Chief of Party/ACT/USAID	<a href="mailto:sossiya@act.co.ug">sossiya@act.co.ug</a>
31	Mr. Emma Ssewankambo	Consultant	<a href="mailto:mentor@africaonline.co.ug">mentor@africaonline.co.ug</a>

### CONFERENCE SUPPORT (STAFF)

NO.	NAME	DESIGNATION/INSTITUTION/COUNTRY	E-MAIL
1	Ms. Munira Ali	Communication Officer, ULGA	<a href="mailto:munira.ali@ulga.org">munira.ali@ulga.org</a>
2	Ms. Mutuzo Emily	Ag. Legal Officer, ULGA	<a href="mailto:emily.mutuzo@ulga.org">emily.mutuzo@ulga.org</a>
3	Ms. Damalie Mbega	Accountant, ULGA	<a href="mailto:damali.namuyiga@ulga.org">damali.namuyiga@ulga.org</a>
4	Ms. Ceaser Nabwire	Statistician, ULGA	<a href="mailto:ceaser_w@yahoo.com">ceaser_w@yahoo.com</a>
5	Mr. Christopher Kayima	Asst. Accountant, ULGA	<a href="mailto:chris.kayima@ulga.org">chris.kayima@ulga.org</a>
6	Ms. Hailen Jagimere	Personal Secretary, ULGA	
7	Ms. Kiiza Monica	Administrative Assistant, ULGA	<a href="mailto:monicakiiza@yahoo.co.uk">monicakiiza@yahoo.co.uk</a>
8	Ms. Jamidah Namuyanjanja	Front Desk Officer, ULGA	<a href="mailto:jamidah.namuyanjanja@ulga.org">jamidah.namuyanjanja@ulga.org</a>
9	Ms. Christine Nakyanzi	Student Intern, Resource Centre	<a href="mailto:nakyanzica@yahoo.com">nakyanzica@yahoo.com</a>
10	Mr. Allan Nziine	Driver, ULGA	<a href="mailto:nziineallan@yahoo.co.uk">nziineallan@yahoo.co.uk</a>
11	Mr. Geoffrey Atukwatse	Driver, ULGA	<a href="mailto:kabushaho@yahoo.com">kabushaho@yahoo.com</a>
12	Mr. Kibira Vincent	Officer, Attendant, ULGA	
13	Mr. Bogere William	Officer, Attendant, ULGA	<a href="mailto:bogere@ymail.com">bogere@ymail.com</a>

### RAPORTEURS

1.	Sanyu Clare	Associate, Niche Consultants, Uganda	<a href="mailto:mclarep@yahoo.com">mclarep@yahoo.com</a>
2.	Mawano Tabisa	Associate, Niche Consultants, Uganda	<a href="mailto:mawanotd@yahoo.co.uk">mawanotd@yahoo.co.uk</a>

## Appendix 3: SPEECHES

### (I) Opening Speech by Hon Adolf Mwesigye, Minister of Local Government, Uganda

It is my pleasure and honour to receive you at this two days conference here in Uganda. Special and hearty welcome to those of you who have come from our sister countries, that is, the Republic of Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania, the Republic of Rwanda and Ethiopia. You are all most welcome.

The issue you are discussing at this conference, which is strengthening local councils oversight and social accountability, is important to the governance and development of our respective countries and continent. The rationale of decentralisation, which many of the African countries have embraced, is to provide efficient and effective services to our citizens. These services have to be provided in a transparent and accountable manner. That is the reason why Governments exist and that underlines the extent to which we as leaders of both the Central Governments and Local Governments, shall be judged by our people as either democratic or not.

I am therefore glad to join you at this meeting. My Ministry will be eager to receive the outcomes and recommendations of the meeting, so as to carry them forward for Government consideration and possible presentation to wider fora, such as the East African Community.

### Decentralisation and Service Delivery in Uganda

Uganda adopted the Decentralisation policy in 1993. Article 176 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda provides that decentralisation by Devolution shall be the system of governance applying at all levels of Government. The policy provides for extensive devolution of powers from the Central Government to the Districts and Urban authorities, in terms of political, fiscal and administrative responsibilities. The higher LGs, which are the Districts\City or Municipal councils, are equally expected to transfer powers to the lower level LGs and administrative units. These powers are meant to result in better services and Local Economic Development of the communities.

Sixteen years down the road, we have registered a number of achievements as a result of this policy reform, notably the following,

- Strong legal framework for decentralisation. The policy of decentralisation has high level political will and commitment in this country. It is embedded in the Constitution and has supportive legislation and regulations. The roles of the various actors are properly spelt out in the law and the rights and duties of the councils are well known. These include mechanisms for social accountability and the responsibility to ensure community participation in council decisions and to give regular feedback to the people on undertakings of each council.
- Increased democratisation of the country. The citizens have been empowered to elect their local leaders and to remove them if they do not perform. In each district there is a Chairperson who is the political head of the district, elected by universal adult suffrage through a secret ballot. The Chairperson is answerable to the citizens through the District Council and makes a report to the Council on state of affairs of the district, at least once a year, as a form of accounting to the citizens.
- Improvement in service delivery. The LGs have constructed roads, health units, schools, water sources and other investments. Consequently, we see decentralisation contributing successfully to the reduction in poverty from about 57% in the 1990s to less than 35% to date.
- Strengthening the Local Government revenue base, both in terms of local revenues and the Government Grants. Government continues to review the local tax system in a bid to provide a viable and sustainable financing mechanism. The LGs have been given resources in form of conditional, unconditional and equalization grants, plus various project funds, such as the Local Government Management and Service Delivery Programme.
- Ensuring more efficient management of public functions by placing appointment, deployment, supervision and disciplining of LG technical staff in the hands of the LGs themselves through the District Service Commissions, which are appointed by the district councils.
- Affirmative action for Gender, Disability, age and other crosscutting issues. In every council at least 30% of the councillors must be women. The representation of the youth, aged and persons with disability is also provided for.

Nonetheless, there are challenges with such a young system. Uganda continues to review the system with all stakeholders at the Joint Annual Review of Decentralisation and to make the necessary changes to accommodate the demands of the population. The major challenges revolve around the need to continuously build the capacity of our local leaders, both political and technical, to manage their responsibilities. It has also been our realisation that the population must be mobilised and educated on their civic rights and duties, so that they can support their local authorities fully and demand the services they deserve from the taxes that they pay. It is this vital link between the activities of the LGs and the expectations and requirements of the communities that the Government consistently urges the LGs to strengthen and maintain. The challenge of providing adequate resources to affect the decentralised services cannot be over emphasised. Much as the Government has increased the transfers to the LGs, the resources available are subject to an ever growing population and rising costs of services.

### **Opportunities to Enhance Local Council Oversight and Accountability**

Decentralisation provides a conducive framework to enhance local council's oversight and social accountability. The Government of Uganda will continue to provide inspection and technical guidance to the councils and to put in place the necessary guidelines for planning, reporting and accountability so as to strengthen the capacity of the LGs to supervise, monitor and evaluate services rendered in the areas of jurisdiction. Government will also continue to support the LGs in the measure to ensure downward and upward accountability in the use of public resources.

The role of LGs themselves should be highlighted. They are required to develop and implement client charters, to consult the citizens in developing participatory plans and budgets, to give regular reports to their constituents and the Government on management of resources and to adopt Result oriented processes and transparent procedures. The councillors in particular require capacitation and skills for prioritization, planning, budgeting, community mobilisation, reporting, supervision, monitoring and evaluation.

The country has a growing network of civic organisations. The Non Governmental Organisations shall continue to be encouraged to play their role of monitoring and checking the performance of LGs, as well as mobilizing the community to support the Government projects. A critical group to work with in this endeavour is the media and press, particularly the local FM radios, which are increasing upcountry.

The Ministry works closely with the National Associations of Local Governments. Both the Uganda Local Governments Association and the Urban Association of Uganda have a critical stake in this regard. They should be strengthened and supported so as to be more effective in advocacy for LGs, contributing to capacity enhancement of their members and working with their counterparts in the Region under their umbrella Regional and global Associations.

Last but not least, the community is the main player in building strong democracies in our countries. It is they that put in place the Government and they are our masters. They deserve our attention, whether directly as community groups, or as individual citizens. They must not be left behind in our engagements. Civic education and community participatory approaches are some of the tools to use.

### **Conclusion**

Devolution of powers and functions to lower levels of local governments is an irreversible trend in Uganda. This is because Government is committed to the improvements of the livelihood of citizens through improved service delivery. This will only be possible when Councillors in part play their oversight role effectively and mechanisms are in place for citizens to hold them accountable for their actions. This requires all stakeholders including Local Government Associations, development partners, CSOs and NGOs to jointly spearhead the cause of accountability. It is then that we shall be able to build strong and more transparent and accountable local governance mechanism.

Many thanks to all those who have contributed to the success of this conference. Particular thanks to the World Bank through the African Network on Social Accountability (ANSA) for providing the resources for this meeting. I also thank the Uganda Local Governments Association for hosting the meeting.

I wish you successful deliberations at this conference.

**(2) Welcome Remarks: Mr. Andama Ferua, Vice President ULGA**

The Africa Local Council Oversight and Social Accountability (ALCOSA) Project focuses on good governance and it aims to link good governance strategies to local decision making and service delivery mechanisms. Many services such as education, health, and social services are delivered at the local level and affect the poor (therefore have direct impact on the performance towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals). Not surprisingly, the local policy environment also affects them – to be shaped by more and more decentralized contexts. Stronger accountability (referring to the mechanisms or sanctions by which society holds government in check) and increased oversight (referring to the mechanisms or sanctions by which councilors hold their executive in check) provides a better institutional framework for effective delivery of such public services aiming at reducing poverty and promoting shared growth.

Local Council oversight in decentralizing countries is an important component of institutional checks and balances and is a critical entry point to achieve good local governance and effective public services. Functioning local council oversight relies on the assumption that local elected representatives have more incentive to respond to the needs and preferences of local populations and that they are more downwardly accountable as compared to local bureaucrats.

There are three aspects of local council oversight that the project is particularly interested in: The role of elected local councilors in planning, overseeing service delivery, and their involvement in the public financial management processes.

A Conference for the Regional Forum is being organised for purposes of dissemination and information sharing of the findings of the studies on Local Council Oversight and Social Accountability (ALCOSA) conducted in four East African countries- Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Kenya. The studies undertaken in these countries focused on oversight and accountability relationships between local elected representatives (councilors) and the local appointed officials, citizens and local elected representatives.

In terms of specific objectives, the Conference seeks to:

- Enhance regional dialogue and cooperation on local council oversight and social accountability in decentralizing countries.
- Discuss policy options for future actions to enhance local council oversight and social accountability.

The Forum will comprise of participants from Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Rwanda and Burundi. These shall be drawn from a cross-section of Policy-Makers, Civil Society Organizations, Development Partners, and Researchers.

The Conference for the Regional Forum is organized by the Uganda Local Governments Association (ULGA), in association with the World Bank, Uganda Ministry of Local Government and the Affiliated Network for Social Accountability (ANSA-Africa). ULGA is the National Association of Local Governments in Uganda whose objective is to unite and strengthen the Local Governments through service provision and capacity building initiatives for efficient and effective delivery of public services its members the Local Governments of Uganda.

The purpose of the forum fits into ULGA's mission and strategy for action. The Association, in its drive to contribute to the process of deepening decentralization in Uganda, seeks to strengthen Local Governments' commitment to uphold the principles of accountability and transparency as laid down in the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995. The Forum appropriately contributes to the objectives and the realization of the Association's Charter on Accountability and Ethical Code of Conduct for Local Governments.

### **(3) Opening Remarks by Ms Kundhavi Kadiresan, World Bank Uganda Country Manager**

On behalf of the World Bank Group, I am delighted to welcome you to this Regional Forum on African Council Oversight and Social Accountability.

This forum is being spearheaded by the Uganda Local Government Association (ULGA) with support from the World Bank, Uganda Ministry of Local Government, and the Affiliated Network of Social Accountability (ANSA).

It is impressive to see such a broad group of policy makers, researchers and practitioners from different parts of East Africa and beyond.

#### **World Bank Support to Governance**

Africa Council Oversight and Social Accountability (ALCOSA) is a two year World Bank – supported project in Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya and Ethiopia. The project researched how councilors oversee executives and how citizens hold councilors accountable.

Different institutions and individuals were involved in this research across the four countries. This forum provides an excellent opportunity to discuss and learn from the main findings in the region and use it as a platform to enhance regional dialogue, cross-country learning and cooperation and discuss and develop policy options on future actions.

As you may know, the World Bank Uganda has been very active in promoting and supporting work on local governance. For example under the second Local Government Development Project (LGDP II) the Bank supported the preparation of the local government Good Governance and Anti-Corruption Strategy, which will be implemented under the Local Government Management Service Delivery Project (LGMSDP).

The Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF) also provided an entry point for the creation of the Transparency and Anti-Corruption Program (TAAC) in the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) for Northern Uganda, in order to promote good governance at community, local government and national levels. Further, the Bank is conducting a randomized field experiment on community based monitoring in health to explore cost-effective and sustainable mechanisms. Government continues to be a central pillar of Uganda's poverty reduction strategy.

When working to support governance, we have learnt that we must do more to promote innovations both on the supply-side of good governance, and also on the demand side. The demand for good governance is about strengthening the capacity of civil society, the media, local communities and the private sector to hold authorities accountable for better development results. Moreover, we need to understand the political and institutional context to do this work well and lessons shared among this group can help accelerate the process of learning and adaptation of successful approaches.

#### **Conclusion**

Our vision is to see cross-country learning and dialogue integrated systematically in the Bank's work across projects, in sector strategies, in country strategies and programs, and in policy dialogue.

Coming out of your work in these two days, I look forward to hearing of concrete proposals on how this work might be strengthened. I hope this week will provoke you to do ever more innovative work on how to promote transparency and accountability to improve governance and further cross-country research and dialogue in this regard.

Once again, I wish to thank the facilitators and organizers of this training and wish you all a constructive week of deliberations

I thank you.

**(4) Closing Remarks by Prof Sylvain Boko, Consultant World Bank, Washington**

We have come to the end of two long and arduous days during which we have worked in an atmosphere of friendship, regional cooperation, all driven by professionalism and mutual respect. Our task was to exchange experiences in terms of challenges faced by local governments in our respective countries and to propose practical recommendations that are likely to lead to the strengthening of the ability and skills of local governments in carrying out their oversight role as we link this role to the strengthening of social accountability at the local level. I would like to suggest that we have largely met these goals. We achieved these objectives not only through individual country and panel presentations, but also through the results of breakout sessions where we had time to expand on particular issues affecting our respective countries and also those that cut across countries. We have also strived not to remain in generalities. Hence in our last session we proposed specific action plans we can and should present to the decision-makers in our respective countries. But beyond this, we delineated practical action plans that we can implement individually, at the levels of our institutions, and among our institutions. Delegates stressed the need to build networks of local government associations in order to continue on this trajectory that we have set today. We further discussed in what ways donors may or may not be effective partners of development at the local level.

The issues we have emphasized are varied and many. I will not list them all but will only highlight a few that I think are central, including, capacity building; clarifying intergovernmental fiscal relationships to enhance the ability of local government to raise local revenue to reduce their dependency on central government and even donors; and empowering citizens to become fully involved in local governance (beyond elections), which includes civic education. I cannot emphasize enough however that at the end of the day at the front and back of our minds is improved service delivery at the local level, which include promoting local economic development and ultimately, poverty reduction.

I would like to suggest furthermore that the presence among us of personalities of such stature as District Chairpersons, Members of Parliament, Chairperson of Local Government Finance Commission; leaders of local government associations, and above all that of the Honorable Minister of Local Government of the Republic of Uganda assured us that those who are in a position to make decisions are listening. Allow me a few minutes to mention these personalities by name and ask them to stand up if they are here please. They are: Hon. Adolf Mwesigye, Minister of Local Government, Republic of Uganda; Hon. Abdul Katuntu, MP and Chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee on Local Government Accounts; Mr. Patrick Mutabwire, Commissioner, Minister of Local Government; Mr. Andama Richard Ferua, Vice President of ULGA and Chairperson Arua District Local Government; Mr. Bitarabeho Johnson, Chairperson Local Government Finance Commission; Mr. Nkugwa Kizito Siraje, Chairperson ULGA Committee on Conflict Resolution and Management and Chairperson of Kiboga District; Mr. Magyezi Raphael, Secretary General ULGA; and Mr. Osiya Solomon, Deputy Chief of Party USAID/Anti-Corruption Threshold.

My sincere hope is that these personalities will agree to help us further the agenda of strengthening oversight and social accountability at the local level by building into their deliberations and decisions the proposals from this forum and go further to mobilize their colleagues at the regional level to take action in the same direction.

Regarding regional networks, a brief presentation was made on the structure and objectives of the Affiliated Network for Social Accountability (ANSA-Africa), and a call was put out for the institutions and associations represented in this forum to consider becoming partners in the ANSA network.

With respect to building networks at the national level, the forum devoted sometime to the case of Ethiopia, at the request of the Ethiopian delegation, to provide advice and practical means by which they can establish an association of local governments in their country.

On behalf of the delegates I would like to formally extend my thanks and appreciation to you Mr. Magyezi for the good work you are doing on behalf of local governments in Uganda first, and for allowing me to work with your organization in preparing for and hosting this conference.

In that vein, I would like to formally recognize Ms. Gertrude Rose Gamwera, who has shown leadership, patience, and decisiveness in the run-up to this event. I would further like to recognize the staff of the ULGA namely: Munira; Wilber; Emily; Ceasar; Damalie; Christopher; Hailen; Monica; Jamidah; Christine; Allan; Geoffrey; Vincent; William. I am very appreciative of all your efforts.

As for a way forward, I would like to re-emphasize the significance of the innovations which have been brought forward by the various groups. We shall continue to refine these proposals with ULGA into a concrete action plan to drive our future engagements in this respect. Already, I strongly encourage delegates to consider joining the ANSA network to take advantage of the resources: technical and financial offered by this organization. Furthermore, the World Bank has established a website for this conference, on which the next phase actions will continuously be posted. I also encouraged delegates to networks among ourselves as well as we move forward.

I wish you the best for the rest of your stay in Uganda, and wish you a safe flight to your respective destinations.

God bless you.

**(5) Closing Speech by Mr. Bitarabehe Johnson, Chairperson Uganda Local Government Finance Commission**

I am privileged to be given the honor and opportunity to preside over the closing of this two days international workshop on Africa Local Council Oversight and Social Accountability. I was able to join you on the first day as a participant and I appreciated the thoroughness of the research, the depth of the discussions, the richness of experiences amongst the participants and the efficiency with which the organizers managed the conference. Congratulations to all of you on holding and completing the conference successfully.

I have no doubt that you have agreed on the conference resolutions and recommendations which will help to take forward the findings, lessons learnt and recommendations of the study. On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Uganda and the Uganda Local Government Finance Commission, I give you the assurance of our preparedness to assist in the implementation of your recommendations, within our legal mandate and resources.

The Uganda Local Government Finance Commission, which I head, is the body established in the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda to advise H.E. the President and Government on the financing of Local Governments, so that they can deliver the devolved functions, responsibilities and services. The Commission also examines the financing regime between the Centre and Local Governments and accordingly advises on the appropriate sharing of resources between the various Government tiers. We further study the sources of revenue at the disposal of the Local Governments themselves and give guidance on how they can improve the local revenue collection and management.

The mandate of the Commission goes beyond merely providing the finances required by the Local Governments. We are also concerned about the link between Local Government taxes and service delivery. We inquire into the extent to which the citizens are involved in the budgeting process and in determining the priorities set in the Budget Framework Paper of each district and urban authority. We promote and encourage the Local Governments to give timely and accurate information and reports to Government and to their communities on how the resources received from the different sources are expended and how this impacts on the realization of the Government overall objective of poverty eradication. As such this conference is most relevant to the work of the Local Government Finance Commission. The findings and recommendations of the study report on Uganda and other countries will go a long way to inform our strategies to improve LG financing.

There is a strong link between the degree of social accountability and the willingness of the citizens to pay taxes which enable the Local Governments to provide the public services. Uganda's experience shows that there are indeed various opportunities to strengthen the local councils oversight function and to enhance social accountability. I will mention a few of the practices which we are engaged in at the Commission, together with other stakeholders:

- i. Implementation of the Fiscal Decentralisation Strategy. Government provides conditional, unconditional and equalization grants to the Local Governments to finance the decentralized services. The Commission has designed the formula for the grants in a manner that increases flexibility in the grants and that is poverty sensitive, so as to ensure that public resources are deployed in a way that addresses the equity concerns among the various districts, enables Local Governments to focus on the priorities of their communities and leads to faster rates of poverty eradication.
- ii. Annual Negotiations between the Local Governments and the Sectors. The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, Article 193, makes it mandatory for the Sector Ministries to agree with the Local Governments on the programmes which should be included among conditional grants and their conditionalities. The Commission chairs the negotiations and provides witness to the resulting agreements between the Local Governments, represented by the National Associations negotiation team (UNAT) and the respective Sector Ministries.
- iii. Local Revenue Enhancement. This includes tax education on the rights and duties of the ordinary citizens in financing the Local Government services, and the right of the people to monitor the implementation of Government programmes and to demand accountability from the leaders.

- iv. Integrated Financial Management System (IFMS). Government is implementing an information package to modernize management of financial records and information. The local administrations are required to be transparent and to give timely and accurate data and information to the councilors in the Executive Committees, sectoral committees and councils, so as to inform the political leaders' policy decision-making process and ease the tracking of resource use. This is intended to improve the oversight of the councilors over the administration.
- v. Participatory Local Government Planning and Budgeting. Local Governments are required to develop and implement medium term rolling development plans and budgets through a bottom up process. The process starts at community level where individual citizens and groups are expected to give their proposals on the priorities of their Local Governments. At all levels of Local Governments, there are plan and budget conferences, which are open to the general public and where development agencies, both Governmental and Non-Governmental give their input into the local development plans and budgets.
- vi. Local Government Charter on Accountability and Ethical Code of Conduct. This initiative has been spearheaded by the Uganda Local Governments Association. It is linked to the National Leadership Code, which, among other things, requires all leaders to declare their assets and to observe the leadership standards set by the Government. The Commission supports the Association and identifies itself with ULGA's efforts to build internal measures and incentives within the Local Government family to behave in a transparent and accountable manner. There are penalties and rewards in the Charter to promote councillors' integrity and ethical behavior. This effort will be further strengthened when the charter is rolled out in every Local Government.
- vii. Capacity Building for the Local Councils. The financing of Local Governments includes grants for capacity building for local councils. The Ministry of Local Government, the Local Government Finance Commission and the Associations, together with the support of our Development Partners, work together to implement the Capacity Building Strategy aimed at enhancing the local leadership capacity of councils.
- viii. Joint Annual Review of Decentralisation and other Sector Reviews. All stakeholders get together annually to examine implementation of decentralization and to agree on the necessary reforms to meet the demands of the population. This kind of forum provides the opportunity to in-build into the policy of decentralization, schemes and procedures for strengthening council oversight roles and social accountability. This is part and parcel of the indices of performance on which the Local Governments are assessed every year.
- ix. Local Government Reporting and Accountability. The Commission, together with the Ministry, the Auditor General and other agencies, has assisted to build the capacity of Local Governments to produce audited financial accounts and quarterly/annual reports. In every district there is a Public Accounts Committee to examine the reports of the internal auditor and to oversee financial management. The Parliamentary Committee on Local Government Accounts may at any time call any Local Government Accounting Officer to explain queries raised by the internal and external auditors. It is now a requirement for every council to publish its revenues and expenditures and to post such information on public notice boards in conspicuous places.

These and other examples show that the policies and legal framework are in place. What is required is implementation and enforcement as well as capacity building for the Councils, so that they can perform as expected. The focus now is more on the consultation and feedback mechanisms between the councils and the communities, or downward accountability.

This conference therefore comes at the right time to enable us deepen decentralization. It also comes at the time when Regional Integration is top on the agenda of our Heads of States meetings within the East African Community. I am glad that the Local Governments themselves have seen the need to work together not only in their National Associations but also in the East African Local Governments Association, the Commonwealth Local Governments Forum and other networks. This impetus should be given every support and encouragement. The Local Government Associations are particularly well placed to assist the LGs with downward accountability. The Central Government can enforce the upward accountability by the LGs. However, the internal self-check and assessment requires a tool developed and managed by the LG Associations, with mechanisms for technical backstopping to their weaker members.

Before I conclude my remarks ladies and Gentlemen, allow me to comment on only two issues that you need to address seriously as Local Government stakeholders.

- The issue of corruption must be addressed urgently. Local Governments have been accused of corruption, nepotism and patronage which adversely affect performance of Local Government service delivery. You must therefore consider the strategy to stamp out corruption in Local Governments. Local Governments must rebuild ethics and integrity in their leadership at both political and technical levels.
- Local Governments must advocate for increased funding. This requires that Central Government with other stakeholders should come up with a financial allocation formula that ensures equity, transparent and need based.
- These should be followed by establishing comprehensive service delivery standards which must be accompanied by the required resources. Central Government should also develop and provide performance indicators and measurements which are clear to all stakeholders. This calls for Central Government technical and mentoring support to Local Government leaders.

On behalf of the Government of Uganda I express our gratitude to the World Bank for taking the first step to bring the stakeholders together to discuss this subject at a Regional level. I hope the Bank and other Development Partners will continue to work and support ULGA and other National Associations in the region to implement the recommendations of this conference so that our people reap the benefit of good governance through the policy of decentralization.

For the delegates who came from outside Uganda it was so pleasant to be with you and share with you your experiences and I hope you found at least something to take back home from Uganda.

It is now my unique honour and privilege to declare the conference closed and to wish all of you safe return to your respective destinations.

For God and My Country