Improving Governance in the Water Sector through Social Accountability, Communication and Transparency:

Process, experiences and Lessons using the community score card in Uganda

Cate Zziwa Nimanya (Uganda)

Abstract

In June 2008, Network for Water and Sanitation Uganda (NETWAS) with support from the World Bank Institute and in partnership with the Ministry of Water and Environment, Bukalasa Agricultural college which supplies the college and neighbouring homesteads with piped water; Wobulenzi Town Council which signed a contract with Trandit Limited a private company that supplies Wobulenzi core urban and a few peri urban wards has been implementing a governance project.

The aim of this project was to promote better governance in the water sector in Uganda by fostering transparency, social accountability and efficient communication activities. The specific objectives of this programme were to:

(i) *Help local stakeholders understand and apply social accountability, communication and transparency concepts and mechanisms to improve governance in water service provision.*

(ii) *Support local stakeholders in designing and implementing effective communication mechanisms to promote a permanent, sustainable and constructive way of providing feedback from users to providers as well as informing users about service provision.*

(iii) *Help institutionalize these processes within the Ministry of Water and Environment and the Directorate for Water Development.*

(iv) *Train district-level community members in social accountability concepts and practices for the long-term sustainability of social accountability initiatives.*

Two social accountability tools known as the Citizen's Report Card (CRC) and the Community Score Card (CSC) have been used. A communication strategy was also developed to ensure

better information flow between users and providers and other key stakeholders. This project engaged communities within the Town Council to work in partnership with the service providers to improve the quality of water service delivery. After two years of implementation what is clear is that social accountability works in improving water provision and improving relations among stakeholders. The outcomes of the project are discussed while changes in three dimensions (social accountability, communication, transparency) are analysed in detail.

Keywords

INTRODUCTION

The programme for improving governance in water sector through social accountability, communication and transparency in Uganda was conceived by the World Bank Institute (WBI) which is the capacity development arm of the World Bank, helping client countries share and apply global and local knowledge to meet their development challenges. This project was implemented from June 2008 to March 2010. The project launched communication through a citizen's report card (CRC) and transparency processes in the District of Luweero, Wobulenzi town council to obtain citizen's experiences on water supply. Two private water service providers operated in Wobulenzi: (i) Trandit Ltd (Trandit), serving urban Wobulenzi and some peri-urban areas; and (ii) Bukalasa College, serving the local agricultural college and its surrounding households. The two providers operated under contracts. Bukalasa provided water as a private operator, whereas Trandit functioned under an output-based aid contract with the Ministry of Water and Environment (Box 2). Trandit's contract with the Ministry granted the service provider a subsidy if it installed 200 new connections within five years of the contract's execution date.

The citizen's report card (CRC) was used to provide feedback to the private water operator's agencies on the strengths and weaknesses of their work. It was also used to draw attention to service problems and facilitate cross fertilization of ideas and approaches by identifying good practices. The communities in Wobulenzi were able to monitor and improve the quality of water provision through constructive feedback to water providers using the community score card tool.

Network for Water and Sanitation (NETWAS) Uganda a national NGO has been coordinating the initiative on behalf of the wider multi-stakeholder group. This paper will be presented under theme 3, of the symposium that looks at ensuring accountability: strengthening systems of accountability: state of the art approaches.

METHODOLOGY

The general approach for the programme was participatory and consultative involving relevant stakeholders at each stage of implementation. The reason for adopting a participatory consultative approach was to build consensus around issues and facilitate the implementation of recommendations. This programme was implemented through the following components, each of which is described subsequently: Citizen report cards and water quality testing; community score cards, evaluation and communication.

APPLICATION OF CITIZEN REPORT CARDS (CRC) AND WATER QUALITY TEST

The CRC tool can be used to understand the degree of transparency in local governance while creating a baseline against which progress in improving transparency can be measured (Maria Gonzalez de Asis et al, 2002). This was applied twice in the lifespan of the project at the beginning and at the end.

No	Village	Total number of households listed	Comparison with census figures 2002
	14 villages	3076	2596

Table 1   Listed villages and total number of HH

Baseline Survey

The baseline survey was conducted in Wobulenzi. A total of 14 zones (LC1s) were covered and 487 households interviewed in urban and peri-urban areas.

The selection of the households for interview was based on the comprehensive listing of households which was undertaken in 2008. A stratified sampling plan was used to conduct the baseline. In brief, the households in Wobulenzi Town Council were classified into two strata; Core –Urban and Peri-Urban. A representative sample was drawn from each of the stratum. A table of random numbers was used to select the samples (households) for the interviews.
The data collection methods included questionnaire interviews with households and in-depth key informants interviews with the members of the Water Boards and service providers. The questionnaire and structured interview guide were pre-tested.

The quantitative data generated through questionnaire interviews was entered in EPI INFO and was later exported to SPSS for further cleaning and analysis. The qualitative data from key informant interviews with Water Board and service providers was entered in excel worksheet where it was summarized and analysed using a thematic procedure and content analysis.

Stakeholder analysis

A comprehensive participatory stakeholder analysis was done to identify the specific target groups with whom the programme would be carried out and to ensure that the diagnosis takes account of local knowledge and understanding, to make the interests of key stakeholders transparent, and to build ownership of the programme.

Water quality tests

NETWAS conducted water quality tests in September 2008 and December 2009, coinciding with CRCs. The following measures of water quality were tested:

• pH, which affects the taste and corrosiveness of the water.
• Turbidity, which indicates the cloudiness of the water and affects the risk of infectious disease transmission.
• Electrical conductivity, which affects the taste and freshness of the water.
• Fecal coliform, which indicates recent fecal pollution and the potential risk of contracting infectious diseases.
• Total coliform, which affects the general hygienic quality of the water.
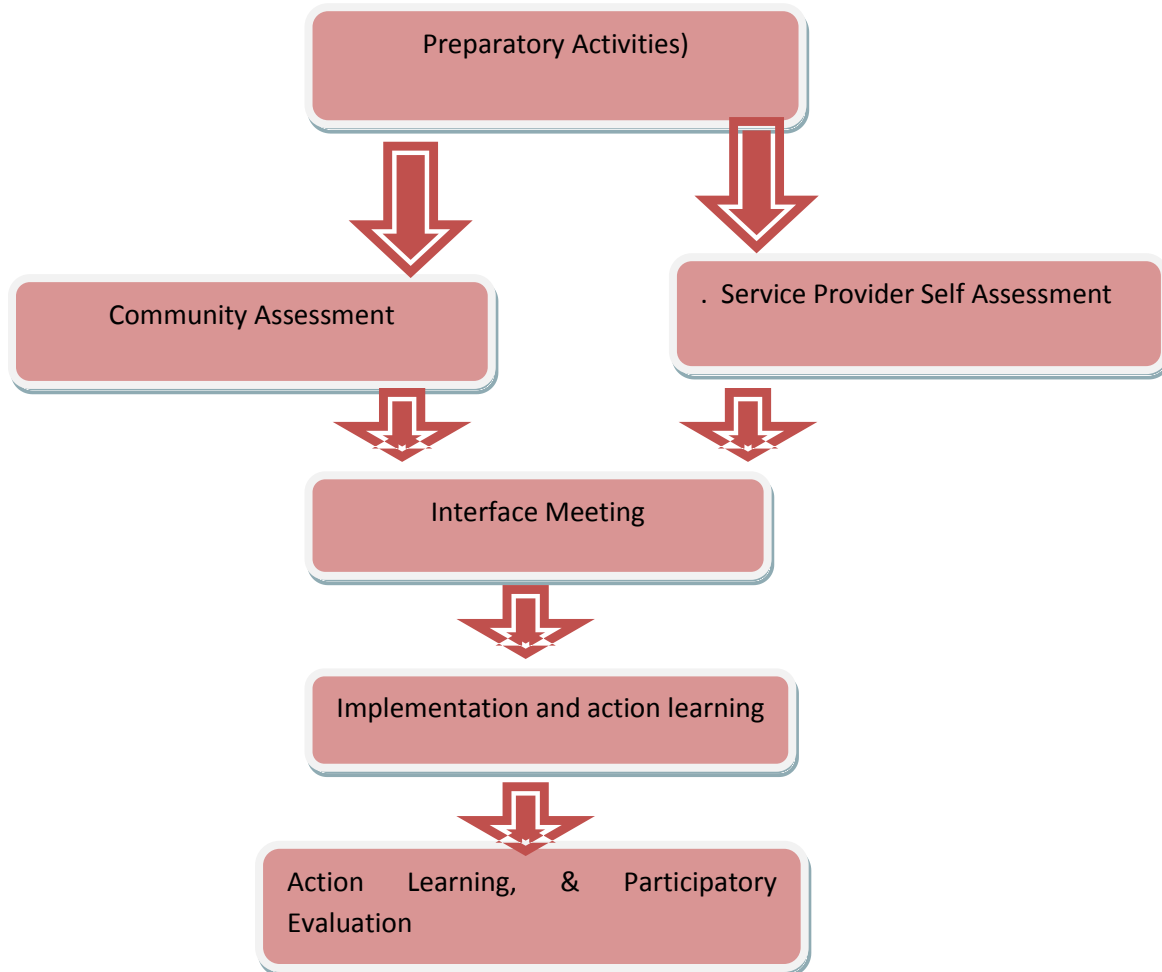
Nine tap stands, four water tanks, and the main outlet of Bukalasa were tested. In Wobulenzi Town Council, a total of four kiosks, two tanks, four tap-stands, and four boreholes were tested. Finally, in Sikanusu zone, one unprotected spring in Wobulenzi (used by a sizeable portion of the population when the flow from tap stands is irregular) was also tested. Water sources were first tested on-site for physical quality using portable electronic meters. Samples were then collected in sterilized glass bottles for laboratory testing supervised by NETWAS. Community focus groups were convened by NETWAS to raise public awareness of the importance of maintaining the cleanliness of water points to avoid contamination, and to demonstrate how to collect, transport, and store drinking water.

APPLICATION OF COMMUNITY SCORE CARDS (CSC)

A Community Score Card is a qualitative monitoring tool used for local-level monitoring and performance evaluation of services by communities. The CSC process is a hybrid of the techniques used in community report cards, social audits, and community-driven monitoring and evaluation (Ksirker et al, 2009.

The CSC is a tool used to: (a) collect feedback from users and service providers of public services (in this case, water); (b) disseminate this information to citizens/users and service providers so they have reliable information about how the community they serve views the quality and efficiency of service delivery; and finally (c) both the community and service providers work on a plan to improve service. It also provides the community and the service providers an opportunity to compare service delivery in their community with other communities, or across districts and municipalities or throughout the country. The methodology emphasizes the active dissemination of information in order to create awareness and enhance community participation.

The Community Score Card Process

```
┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│      Preparatory Activities)     │
└─────────────────────────────────┘
        │                   │
        ▼                   ▼
┌──────────────────┐  ┌──────────────────────────────┐
│ Community        │  │ .  Service Provider Self      │
│ Assessment       │  │    Assessment                 │
└──────────────────┘  └──────────────────────────────┘
        │                   │
        ▼                   ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│        Interface Meeting         │
└─────────────────────────────────┘
                 │
                 ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│ Implementation and action        │
│ learning                         │
└─────────────────────────────────┘
                 │
                 ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│ Action    Learning,    &         │
│ Participatory Evaluation         │
└─────────────────────────────────┘
```

Stakeholders: The main stakeholders in the CSC process were: (i) the water users – Direct water users, individual households and institutional (schools, health centers, private businesses), community leaders – LCs, Religious leaders; (ii) water service providers – Kiosks, compound taps, main suppliers (public, private and NGOs); (iii) Duty bearers - Water management boards, District Water department, Town Council, and so on; (iv) Potential supporters and donors- World Bank, NGOs, Religious Institutions, Influential citizens, Politicians.

The Community Score Card process had seven steps:

a) Training and equipping facilitators – Impartial Facilitators with the right attitude towards users and service providers were selected for the training. Two trainings were held in Wobulenzi each for one week in which 7 NETWAS staff facilitators, 5 Wobulenzi community facilitators, 7 representatives from Wobulenzi Town council, one manager from Trandit, 6 representatives from Bukalasa College and other NETWAS partners such as Buso Foundation (2), Ministry of Water and Environment, World Bank water sector of Uganda, Community Development Facilitation unit of the government, DWD, and Luwero District were trained in use of community score cards.

The aim of the training was to enable facilitators to confidently facilitate the CSC process". In addition, the training was to cultivate appropriate attitudes between facilitators and stakeholder groups, ensuring support and active participation of all relevant stakeholders - especially the water board.

The training covered the following sessions:

(i)   **Facilitation skills** for effective facilitation of participatory processes with adult partners: Topics included what motivates and de-motivates adult participants; adult listeners, working with men and women, the roles of a facilitator, listening skills, and some weaknesses of participatory approaches.

(ii) **Preparation for meetings:** These covered two levels: community representatives' selection and invitation, identification and preparation of meeting venue and logistics; and Workshop preparations which covered rehearsing through the process, preparing meeting charts, developing checklists and team roles.

(iii) **The CSC process:** This session involved walking through the process with detailed illustrations and simulation exercises for the community, service provider and interface meetings.

(iv) **Field practice:** This was carried out in 6 communities served by both Wobulenzi Town council and Bukalasa Agricultural Collage: Sikanusu, Gwaffu, Kigulu, Kitante, Kikasa and Bukalasa Upper West.

(v)   **Participants reflection, lessons and emerging issues**: Each day began with a session for participants to reflect, share lessons and key questions that they still had

b) Community meetings – The main purpose of the community meetings was to allow users of the water service to share their experiences, identify priority areas for improvement as well as the roles and contributions they can make towards improving governance, management and delivery of water services. In the meetings, because the group was big, each representative of special user groups was given room to discuss issues that were most important to their group. The focus groups identified in Wobulenzi included, women, men, vendors, children, business and local leaders/religious leaders. Each group had its own score card presented during plenary (e.g children's community score card). All the focus groups then combined and   selected 3 priority areas   and 3 programme areas (transparency, communication and social accountability) issues on service delivery where

progress could be seen within 6 months and using available resources. The output of this meeting was a **Community Score Card**.

c) Service providers meetings – This meeting was held to give service providers the opportunity to discuss and share their views on the quality of services and factors that they think or know affect their effectiveness. They also proposed activities they think can help improve service delivery, management and governance. The main output of this meeting was a **Service Providers Self-Assessment Card.**

d) Interface meeting – The purpose of the CSC process in the water sector is to promote social accountability, transparency and dialogue between water users and suppliers.   The interface meeting did exactly that: bringing together all stakeholders after their independent meetings, to present, negotiate, agree on a joint position, and develop a joint plan of action. The main output of this meeting was a **Joint Action Plan.**

e) Implementation – NETWAS provided seed money to each community as contribution toward kick-starting implementation. Each decided what to use the money for. In this stage, the communities together with the service provider worked on implementing the agreed work plans in the joint action plan.

f) Reflection and learning meetings –This was a participatory monitoring process to encourage learning and fine-tuning the process to make it more effective. The meetings enabled actors in the action joint plan to take off time to review progress and draw lessons from their own activities. These meetings were held for each of the 6 communities and the activities.   The group also selected some sites to visit for validation where needed. The group selected

EVALUATION

This was done in two parts. First a post-intervention evaluation survey was conducted to monitor changes in quality and performances of providers. Questionnaire interviews were conducted with the households and service providers, similar to what was covered in the first survey. Issues on availability and access to water sources, distance, water use, cost, quality of water services and community participation, information and communication aspects were analysed. A second water quality survey was also carried out on the same water sources.

The participatory evaluation was done after implementation of the community score card implementation.

Specifically the methodology included:

- Plenary sessions in the 6 communities to review and establish the status of activities on the ground. All six communities and representatives from the two service providers (Wobulenzi Town Council and Bukalasa Agricultural College) participated.

- Focus groups to review and score against the progress made, and provide specific perceptions of the various groups, including the service providers. There were groups separately for: Men, women and youths.. Overall 130 people participated.

  (a) Sample household survey to verify and triangulate information generated through focus groups. The evaluation team did not have predetermined questions. The questions were identified based on issues raised during the focus group and plenary discussions. However, in principle most questions were based on the indicators identified during the interface meetings. Homes visited were also randomly selected by the groups. The principle was for each group of 2 -3 persons to interview between 3 -5 homes. About 188 households were visited.
  (b) National Workshop: A national level workshop was held to share experiences of the Community Score Card process with stakeholder in the water sector and to discuss and devise ways of scaling up the approach to other areas of Uganda.

COMMUNICATION

NETWAS, WBI, and the WorldBank's CommGAP programme jointly oversaw the development of a communication strategy for Uganda's water programme. The strategy aimed to foster trust among water sector stakeholders and facilitate dialogue regarding the importance of social accountability and transparency. Among the channels of communication developed were:
Regular meetings with stakeholders from the MWE, local government, service providers and users' associations

- A bulletin with survey results developed by NETWAS in English and Luganda
- Posters in high-traffic areas
- A blog to share real-time information with stakeholders
- A Facebook account to share programme information with other donors and water experts
- A Web site created by WBI to provide easy access to all materials generated by the project, such as surveys questionnaires and results, reports, and evaluations
- A video produced by NETWAS-WBI
- Local forums to host presentations on the project, including during the quarterly
- action-learning meetings
- dissemination meetings to share findings of the surveys.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Outcomes from the project included:

- Through the implementation of CRC and CSC users were given a voice to help improve service provision by providing feedback to the private operator
- Capacity to use the tools has been built in Wobulenzi TC. The tools can be used in any sector
- In extension of service to poor communities, the communities participated in the location of taps, some dug trenches where the pipes would be laid.
- There has been a remarkable improvement in the relationship between the water board members, services providers and the community members.
- Regular meetings were held as a platform for continuous dialogue. More transparency in communication and information sharing
- Over Ug. shs 5,000,000 have been invested in pump repair, meetings, borehole repair
- A customer care/water office was opened at Bukalasa Agriculture College and a sign post with contacts of providers.
- NGO interest in the participatory mechanism of a score card
- The programme has triggered replication in two other districts of Busia, and Rukungiri Town council. NETWAS as an or
- There were good practices in Bukalasa where zonal leaders (water users representatives) collect issues from the community and represent them on the board. Wobulenzi TC sought to revive the use of zonal leaders as a way of bridging the wide gap between the users and the service providers.

Citizen's report card

Comparing the first and second baseline survey, the general finding was that there was an increase in the percentage of **households with piped water**. This was partly attributed to the service provider, Trandit, who was extending piped water connections to households which did not have connections at the time of the baseline.

In terms of **location**, the findings show that in peri-urban areas, there was an increase in percentage of households with piped water in their houses to 41% from 25% at baseline (August 2008). However, there was no change in Core-Urban areas and the percentage remained the same (5%). The increase in percentage of households with piped water in their houses may be attributed to repair of the pump by Bukalasa College as a result of the community score card action plan and the additional connections provided by the service provider, Trandit who had a contract to extend the water. What visibly became clear was the targeting of the peri urban poor.

Conversely, **the reliability of the water supply** by Trandit did not improve much. This was evidenced by the reduction of the percentage of households with piped water in house reporting water flowing 24 hours which reduced to 13% from 21% at the baseline. There was slight increase in the percentage of households that reported water flowing 24 hours at the Kiosks/ Public Stand pipe to 20% from 14% at the baseline. This may be attributed to fewer water system breakdowns and power failures.

Water quality

- There was no significant change of pH from the along the distribution system. This may be attributed to the boreholes having continuous supply of water and routine maintenance.
- Of 32 standpost taps and tanks tested, 11 were contaminated with coliform including two with fecal coliform counts. In all cases, the contamination was removed as shown by the survey results at the end of the intervention, apart from water from one unprotected spring. This can be attributed to the cleaning of all the tanks of Bukalasa water supply and their covers being properly fixed during the community score card implementation.
- Whereas results indicate that there was an improvement in the water quality in the two water systems, it was observed that people still need a lot of sensitization about the safe transportation and storage of drinking water.
- During the second water quality survey it was also observed that there were no longer discontinuities in water services. Water was constantly flowing through the pipes and there were no complaints from the community. When water stops flowing in the pipes, this increases the livelihood of contamination as the risk of backward infiltration (back siphoning) into the distribution network is increased when pipes are at lower pressure than the surrounding soils. Discontinuity was noted in both water supplies during the first survey.

Community score card

While the Output Based Aid (OBA) approach provided the Trandit Ltd with an incentive to improve the service provision by getting paid only after delivering a service, there was no such incentive system for the Bukalasa Agricultural College. However, through the implementation of community report cards and score cards, users were given a voice to help improve service provision by providing feedback to the private operator and the Ministry of Water based on their own experiences using the services of these two water providers.

But perhaps more effective in Wobulenzi was the selection and participation of municipal Water Board (WB) members as facilitators of the community score card. Two members, Mr. Stephen Sawa Luboowa, the Chairperson and Ms. Sarah Nagujja, have not only been supportive of the process, but have taken over the CSC facilitation and lobbying from within the Water Board (WB) for openness and inclusiveness of users in the water sector activities. They were given different areas other those they work in to implement the CSC. They have also been

instrumental in securing resources for the meetings that have begun between the municipal Water Board and communities, and have so far covered 10 out of 20 communities over the 6 months. It should be noted that these were the first community meetings ever held by the local Water Board.

Use of the community score card (CSC) encouraged service providers to meet with members of the community and give feedback on issues that were raised. Results of the CSC were shared with the community, district/Town council and at national level. NETWAS would facilitate, provide technical advice, supervise and support them technically during the process. A communication strategy was implemented to share information with the community as well as with providers and local, Town council and national authorities.

Areas for improvement	Desired Changes	scores	Reasons for the score	Proposed activities
Inadequate water supply	Adequate water supply	5%	Water supply is so low	Apply for more boreholes to be constructed • Nganda Khalid
High cost of water	Reduced water prices	10%	Low income of the community	Hold discussions with service providers • Councilor Kasirye James
Low quality of water	Good quality water	40%	Poor quality water	Ask for a water quality specialist to test the water
Preferential treatment of adults over children at water points	Equality and fairness at water points	0%	There is no equality	Local council should to discuss with vendors on the issue of children • Mwanje Fred
Transparency	Service providers should inform community on upcoming activities and water plans	0%	Service providers do not inform community of events and plans.	Clear introduction of service provider and their roles and duties to the community • Seruwagi Kasim
Social accountability	Accountability to the water users	0%	there	
Dialogue	Well structured channels of two way communication	0%	There is no communication between service providers and the community	Create avenues of communication like loudspeaker to notify community of progress and changes in water schedule and activities • Hamuza kizito

Table 2   Community score card for Sikanusu

Areas for improvement	Desired changes	Scores 0- 100	Reasons for the score	Proposed activities
System machines are old and some pumps are non-functioning	New and functioning machines	40%	Frequent breakdown of machines	To ask for new pumps from the ministry.
Unstable power supply and hiking price of fuel	Uninterrupted power supply	35%	Power supply is very inconsistent	Increase on budget allowance for preparedness when power is off
Poor payment of water users	Good and timely payment	40%	High percentage of defaulters	To ask water users to pay on time
Transparency	Openness	60%	Most information is communicated	To be transparent in all activities
Social accountability	Timely reporting to the water board	45%	Roles and responsibilities are not clear.	Reporting and accounting of all responsibilities
Dialogue	Frequent dialogue with water users	48%	Limited communication and dialogue between water users and service providers	Create avenues of communication with water users

Table 3   Service Providers self assessment card

Areas to be improved	Desired change	Evidence of progress	Scores out of 100	Reason for the scores	Proposed activity	Tasked person	deadline	Person to monitor
Water pipes not enough	increased coverage in piped water supply in Kikasa	Increase in water extension	15%	Water pass on main roads Small pipes Some area has no pipes	Community to ask water while paying	LC1 Zone leader	4 month 6 month	**Sekibengo edward**
No bore hole in Kikasa	When bore hole is excavated	Started getting water from it	0%	There is none	Ask a borehole/water from luwero	LC1 asks through town council to district	2 month	**Sekibengo edward**
To increase on the number of pumps	water has is increased	When getting water in plenty	35%	Water pumps working are few When students are back water is reduced	Repair pumps	Bukalasa water board	4 month	**Kalungi edward**
Communication	When providers work with users	Giving information to people	20%	Zone leaders are not seen They are seen when bringing bills	Electing another zone leader Getting phone numbers of service providers	Water board kalungi Edward	2 month now	**LC1**
Social accountability	Tell people board members	When getting information from board members	20%	Some are being seen working	Visit water users Call meetings	Zone leaders Zone leaders	2 month 2 months	**Sempebwa gideon**
Transparency	When knowing expenditures and plans	When meetings are organized	0%	Water board did not know it was their responsibility	When transparent in activities Calling meetings	Water board Water board	2month 2 month	**Sempebwa Gideon** **Sempebwa gideon**

Table 4   Joint action plan of Kikasa and Bukalasa

CONCLUSIONS

The main conclusions were:

The CSC process had been effective in bridging the gap between water service providers and users. It was a learning process that provided a safe haven for stakeholders to open up and share their concerns, fears and grievances, and yet remain committed to working together towards set goals. But perhaps most effective was the equipping of key members from both Water Boards with the skills to facilitate the CSC process, and the background principles to allow them understand, fine-tune and work with the process. The Chairman and the youth representative of the Wobulenzi Water board, and one Zonal leader from Bukalasa emerged as key pillars in the process.

The success of the project depended on the concerted effort of all team members and stakeholders in Uganda. The commitment of the service providers was paramount in implementation of the project. There was progress in social accountability but both Water Boards had more work to do to ensure that water users understood the roles of all stakeholders involved and how to approach and work with them. As part of the way forward, both WBs committed themselves to regularizing the meetings and trainings in the communities. The District expected a grant from government in the financial year 2009/10 from which the WB Wobulenzi were expected to receive the money needed to take the meetings forward.

There was evidence that improvement in governance improves service delivery. The right priorities usually emerge when you engage with the stakeholders. Involving users in the identification of needs and solutions helps in targeting interventions. Communities can actually be trusted with targeted resources to address key priority needs. They can also openly account for the money.

The results indicate that some progress was made but the actual sharing of plans, budgets and expenditures did not happen especially in Bukalasa. Both the communities and Water Boards agreed that meetings had to continue, specifically to inform and provide updates to people concerning the water service delivery.

Most of the communication was limited to the community radio especially used by Trandit to communicate changes the water supply and remind users to pay their bills. Views from the field revealed that many pockets in the communities, even those near to central town, did not hear radio clearly. The quarterly meetings proposed by the WB should also serve as medium for information dissemination, sharing about budget processes, priority setting, social accountability and targeted training. There is also need to take the communication issue back to the communities to agree on a complementary means to the loud speaker.

The three priority areas selected by each community were problems of service delivery that they wanted to be addressed. The process helped clarify that priorities should be selected for which there could be progress within 6 months and using available resources. The purpose was to help stakeholders consider carefully the availability of resources and the time it would take to see change. In this regard, NETWAS did not mention the seed money until after the communities had identified what they wanted done. The seed money was to kick-start implementation and challenge service providers to release resources towards the Joint Action Plans. In view of the above, both Water Boards made substantial progress especially in renovating, replacing, servicing and maintaining the water systems. Both spent more than the equivalent of USD 2000 to do this, which they had not budgeted for but did so in response to the needs raised by communities.

REFERENCES

Maria G.A, Donal L, Per, L, Butterworth J., 2002 Improving transparency, Integrity and accountability in water supply and sanitation

Ksirker ,K. Bcoltear B. Nimanya C, 2009, Improving Governance in Water Supply through Social accountability, Communication, and Transparency in Wobulenzi, Uganda case study

Programme activity Reports 2008 to 2009

CONTACT DETAILS

Cate Zziwa Nimanya
P.O. Box 8954
cnimanya@yahoo.com
cate-nimanya@netwas.org

APPENDIX: BACKGROUND AND CONDUCT OF PROJECT

The aim of the programme has been to promote better governance in the water sector, by fostering transparency, social accountability and effective communication/dialogue, with the overall goal of improving services to the users. Progress towards these three dimensions is examined below.

Transparency

The working definition of transparency was given as: "Service providers freely share with all involved the annual budgets, budget allocations and providing feedback on expenditures".

During the preparation of the Joint Action plan, transparency between Bukalasa College and Users was dropped from the plan when the college explained that their status as private suppliers exempts them by law from disclosing their income and expenditures to the communities. As such transparency was not discussed in Upper West (College staff quarters). On the other hand, with the Wobulenzi Town Council, It became clear to water users through the evaluation meetings that, in principle, attending budget meetings was a right for all citizens. The indicator selected to measure progress towards transparency was "Water Board of both Wobulenzi and Bukalasa to hold meetings in the communities" to officially inform the communities about the budgets and work plans, as well as any expenditures.

Both Water Boards of Wobulenzi and Bukalasa embarked on the meetings in each community to improve transparency and social accountability. Unfortunately, the Wobulenzi Water Board had not held meetings in two of the pilot communities (Kigulu, and Kitante) and partly Kikasa by the time of the evaluation as is reflected in the scores given by these communities in Table 1.

The Bukalasa Water Board, also working through its Zonal representatives, had public meetings after the intervention of CSC in communities primarily to cater for the community priorities for training on sanitation, provide information on the billing system as well as information about how to reach the plumbers (by phone) and where the water office of the college was located.
All communities saw NETWAS community meetings as educative and empoworing. This was because water users for the first time participated in discussing and prioritizing water issues and met some of the WB members. The meetings also provided a safe forum for communities to share their concerns and to be listened to.

Table 1 below summarizes the community perspectives on transparency before and at the end of the intervention.

Communities	Initiation score	Reason for the score	Ev. Score	Reason for the score
Served by Wobulenzi Town council				
Sikanusu	10%	There was no transparency	50%	There was some level of information sharing by local leaders but Trandit and WB not yet shared the budget issues
Gwaffu	8%	Users had never been informed about work plans and budgets	68%	WB called the meeting but only a small number of users attended
Kigulu	0%	No meetings on water services had been held	0%	No meeting held to inform users about the budget or work plans
Kitante	0%	No meetings had been held	0%	- do -
Served by Bukalasa Agricultural College				
Kikasa	0%	WB did not consider it as their responsibility	23%	Plumbers come when called and people were informed of the debt by the service provider and reason for increasing the tariffs

Table 1   Transparency scores and reasons for the scores

Social Accountability

Social Accountability was defined as "All stakeholders knowing, understanding, performing and being accountable for their roles and responsibilities". This was envisaged to provide the basis for mutual accountability between water providers and users in relation to their specific responsibilities. Communities identified meetings with the Water Board, in which roles and responsibilities, performance against these are discussed as good indicators for social accountability. This was because the Water Board (Wobulenzi) had not been introduced officially to community members, and communities were confused about the relationships and roles of the various bodies involved with water: Town Council, Water Board, Trandit (private operator), and the Kiosk operators.

The Water Board (Wobulenzi) as a result of the CSC process, embarked on a programme to visit all 20 communities in 5 Parishes under the Town council, including Bukalasa College and the communities served by the college. The purpose of the visits was the WB to introduce themselves, inform users about their roles and responsibilities, facilitate the nomination of Water User Committees (WUC) and begin to respond to issues communities wanted to learn about the water services. Ten out of 20 communities were visited before the financial year budget the WB was working with run out. It was unfortunate that three of the pilot communities – Kigulu, Kitante, and Kikasa were among those that missed. Table 2 below summarizes the community perspectives before and at the time of the evaluation.

Communities	Initiation score	Reason for the score	Eval. Score	Reason for the score
Served by Wobulenzi Town council				
Sikanusu	0%	None at all	70%	Water board took the responsibility and held a meeting in Sikanusu. Trandit workers received uniforms with name tags as requested by the community
Gwaffu	10%	People neither knew the water service provider representatives nor their roles	78%	The Water Board and Local councils created awareness. The Water User Comittee worked but there was still need for the TC to inform people about their roles. The water providers came and promised to come back.
Kigulu	0%	There were a lot of complaints	4%	Men gave a score of 10%- because NETWAS meetings provided information on roles and responsibilities but the WB/TC had not come officially. Women gave a score of 0%- because People have not been trained Youth gave a score of 2%- because kiosk attendants played their roles but complaints still existed
Kitante	20%	Trandit workers were seen working	4%	- do -
Served by Bukalasa Agricultural College				
Kikasa	20%		43%	They knew the water office and their Chairman had liaised with Bukalasa WB
Upper west and East	50%	-	50%	Had not changed due to failure to organize meetings

Table 2   Social Accountability scores and reasons for the scores

Effective communication (dialogue)

Effective communication focused on information flow between Service providers and users. Prior to the CSC process, the formalized mechanism of communication was through the local councils and to a limited extent, during delivery of water bills by Trandit employees. These were not working to the satisfaction of stakeholders. As indicated above, users did not understand the roles of the various bodies and especially as Trandit, the private operator, was new. Communities served by Wobulenzi Town council made several suggestions to ensure timely and effective communication: Use of the loud speakers - also called *radio Wobulenzi*, public notice boards, written letters/notices, meetings and door to door delivery of information. At the time of this evaluation, Radio Wobulenzi was actively used. Trandit staff also shared information when distributing bills as well as Kiosk operators. Some communities like Gwaffu used written notices and a public notice board provided by CODI (NGO working on

transparency- they promote local sharing platforms commonly called "Kimeza"). However, in those communities where the WB meetings had not reached, communities were not yet aware of the new communication mechanisms and many did not respond to radio Wobulenzi for lack of awareness. Table 3 below provides the community perspectives on progress made in the area of communication.

Communities	Initiation score	Reason for the score	Eval. Score	Reason for the score
Served by Wobulenzi Town council				
Sikanusu	25%	There was no communication mechanism	70	Trandit talked to people and used of Radio Wobulenzi to deliver information
Gwaffu	10%	Some information came through the councilors most times late. A few people were informed	75%	Information was timely; but the information person had no means of transport or airtime which delayed delivery a bit. Communication was fast, they were called to the meeting in writing, and the information person moved house to house
Kigulu	0%	No meetings or training	7%	Communication was not good. The loud speakers did not reach Kigulu, they got some news during NETWAS meetings but not from the water providers. Meetings had not taken place.
Kitante	0%	No meetings or training	7%	There was the use of the loud speaker but there had been no meeting
Served by Bukalasa Agricultural College				
Kikasa	20	Zone leaders are not seen They are seen when bringing bills	54%	Had the telephone contacts of the service provider's technicians and when, called they responded. Little communication, they had yet to meet.
Upper west and East	50%	The water users got to know water board members from the NETWAS meeting and increased the score by 25% The service providers had been seen working but not known.	78%	Can be contacted and reached any time: phone and a bicycle. The water office had a sign post and all knew it. Everything proposed to improve communication was covered and working well, especially plumbers.

Table 3   Communication scores and reasons for the scores

Overall, progress had been made on the part of the Water board on addressing the three issues of governance.

Figures 1 – 3 below show that in Sikanusu and Gwaffu were meetings were held and the communities' perspectives on performance improved more that 40%. In Kigulu and Kitate where meetings were not held, social accountability is not highly rated.   In the case of communities served by Bukalasa College, a lot of improvement was reflected in the area of communication of about 30% (fig 3), slight improvement in Social accountability and transparency in Kikasa, while Upper west and East (staff quarters) improvement recorded only under communication. This further confirms the necessity of meetings to share information with users, which had not been a practice of the service providers.
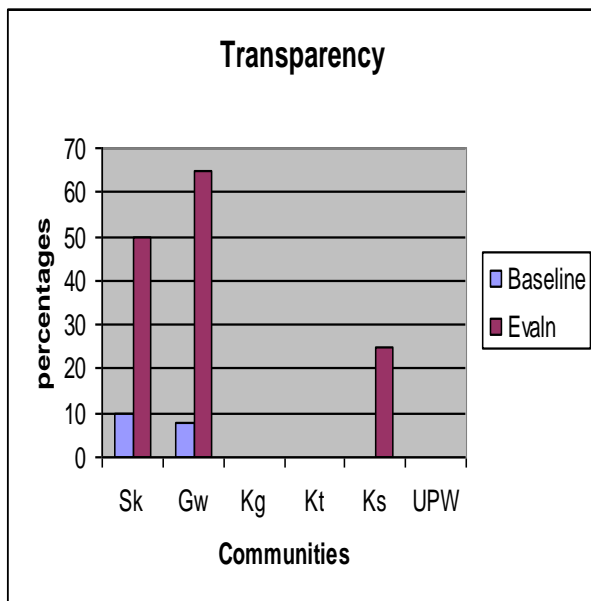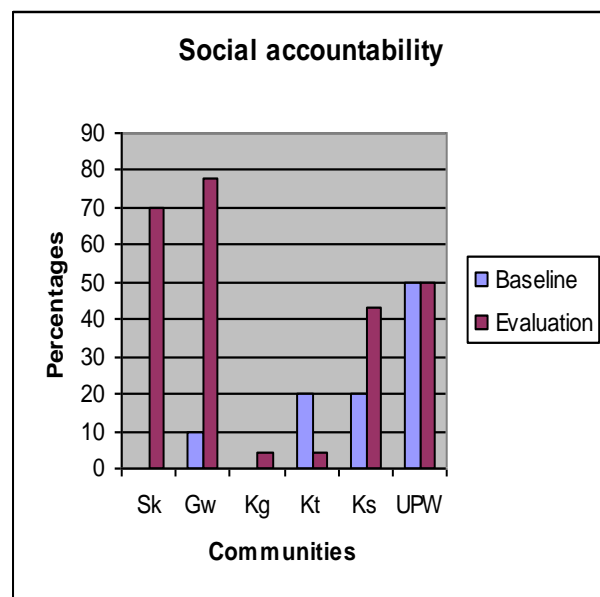

Figure 1   Transparency
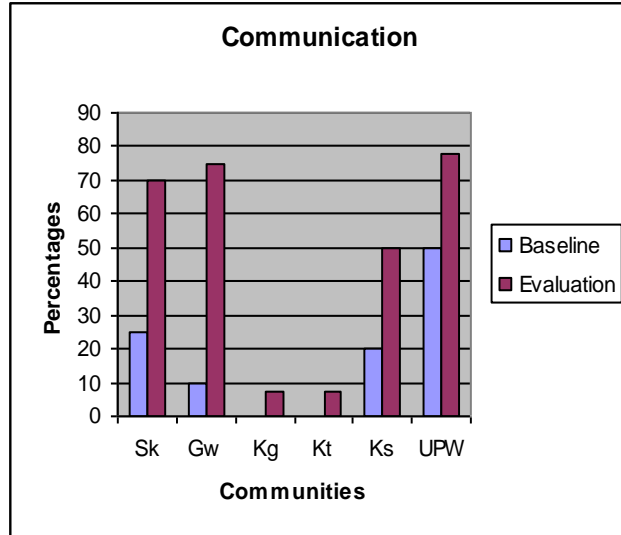

Figure 2   Social Accountability

Figure 3   **Communication**

Key: SK = Sikanusu, Gw = Gwaffu, Kg = Kigulu, Kt = Kitante, Ks = Kikasa, UPW = Upper West.