

**INVITATION: REGIONAL FORUM ON AFRICA LOCAL COUNCIL OVERSIGHT AND SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY (ALCOSA) 1 JUNE 2009-2 JUNE 2009.**

You are hereby invited to attend the abovementioned Forum scheduled to take place from the **1 June to 2 June 2009** at the **Protea Hotel, Acacia Avenue, Kololo.**

The 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). The forum is the culmination of a two-year research project on Local Council Oversight and Social Accountability conducted in Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Kenya.

The Uganda Local Government 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 objectives of the Forum contribute to the objectives of the association's Charter on Accountability and Ethical Code of Conduct for Local Governments.

The key objectives of the Forum are to:

1. Enhance regional dialogue, cross-country learning and co-operation on local council oversight and social accountability.
2. Discuss and develop policy options for future actions to enhance local council oversight and social accountability.

Participants will represent different stakeholders including policy-makers, civil society organizations, government officials, donors, and researchers.

We look forward to your active participation.

**Contact**

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## **ALCOSA BACKGROUND**

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.