



social accountability NOTES

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Improving Governance in Water Supply through Social Accountability, Communication, and Transparency in Wobulenzi, Uganda

Uganda's water crisis is largely a result of deficient governance, including dysfunctional institutions, poor financial management, and the inability of citizens to demand change. This case study examines how social accountability tools were used in a pilot program to improve water service delivery in Uganda.¹

The average potable water coverage of small towns in Uganda (towns of between 5,000 and 15,000 inhabitants) is approximately 51 percent. Some towns, including those with piped infrastructure, have lower coverage owing to a backlog of repairs, replacements, and service renewals and expansion, according to the Ugandan Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE). Some infrastructure is malfunctioning from age, having gone more than ten years without repair.

The government of Uganda has expressed concern that the majority of Ugandans lack access to clean and safe water. It has therefore made water sector reform a priority. Uganda's "Annual Sector Performance Report" for 2006 revealed that the unit cost of water services has increased steadily without a proportional improvement in quality.² The discrepancy between the cost and quality of water services is a result of several factors: poor management of water services providers, poor or non-existent maintenance of infrastructure; the lack of a feedback mechanism through which the public can voice complaints; and a lack of

1. A more comprehensive case study that captures broader lessons and good practices in social accountability under this pilot program is under development.
2. Annual sector performance reports from Uganda's Ministry of Water and Environment can be obtained from <http://www.mwe.go.ug/MoWE/55/Publications-Reports>.

Good Practices Checklist

- Securing a commitment by all stakeholders (including water users, service water providers, the Ministry for Water and Environment, and the World Bank) to promote good governance in the water sector.
- Institutionalizing the use of feedback mechanisms to allow water users to voice their complaints and concerns to water service providers.
- Launching regular, structured dialogues among the stakeholders to foster a sense of mutual trust and encourage collaboration to solve problems.
- Implementing participatory monitoring to gather data about the quality of water and water services before and after the implementation of social accountability tools, all designed to enable practitioners to measure progress achieved.
- Ensuring that external (World Bank) and domestic Ugandan water projects are complementary.

government accountability and transparency. These problems have undermined the Uganda's efforts to improve water services, particularly in small towns.

Since 2003, the government of Uganda has sought to improve governance in the water and sanitation services sector. In 2006, the multi-stakeholder Good Governance Sub-Sector Working Group (GGWG) was established within the MWE to improve transparency and accountability.

In 2008, the World Bank Institute (WBI), in partnership with the MWE and the GGWG, launched a non-lending technical assistance program to improve governance in water supply in Uganda through social accountability, commu-

nication, and transparency. The program was to be implemented by a local NGO following a competitive bidding process. The Norwegian Trust Fund, the Trust Fund for Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development (TFESSD), and the World Bank's Communication for Governance and Accountability Program (CommGAP) were to provide funding.

The WBI program aimed to promote the use of transparency and social accountability tools in Uganda's water sector and to encourage effective communication among stakeholders. Furthermore, it sought to institutionalize the use of these tools within the MWE and the Directorate for Water Development to provide training in sustainable social accountability practices to a national level NGO that would implement the program, as well as to community leaders, local authorities, and local providers. Two surveys were conducted to track changes in public opinion about the performance of water service providers in the Ugandan town of Wobulenzi, in Luwero district. A baseline survey was done in August 2008, and a follow-up survey in December 2009. Additionally, the project included a participatory monitoring and evaluation of Wobulenzi's water providers and supported the deployment of communication tools to facilitate dialogue among stakeholders about water use and services. Feedback from water users was also sent to service providers.

The program had five components:

- Comprehensive assessment of the local context

- Capacity building of the national NGO and community stakeholders
- Implementation of social accountability tools
- Improved communication to encourage good governance and cooperation among stakeholders
- Monitoring and evaluation to measure progress, results, and outputs, and to track outcomes, difficulties, and lessons learned

Comprehensive Assessment

WBI conducted a comprehensive initial assessment of Uganda's water sector in collaboration with several partners: the MWE, the GGWG, the Water and Sanitation Program in Uganda (WSP-Uganda), CommGAP, and local stakeholders. The activities and outputs of each program component are listed in Box 1.

The assessment results provided a comprehensive picture of the enabling environment for promoting good governance and effective communication in the water sector in Uganda. In particular, the assessment helped to identify Luwero as a geographic region that would substantially benefit from the program, as well as possible partners to support the program's implementation.

Partnering with NETWAS Uganda in Wobulenzi.

WBI and the MWE identified five qualified NGOs to bid for inclusion in the program. WBI then formed a three-person committee to determine selection criteria and choose the NGO best qualified to implement the pilot program. Ultimately, the committee

Box 1. Activities and Outputs of Program Component

Assessment activities

- Assess the need for governance-related capacity development in the water sector; assess communication and dissemination needs.
- Identify, hire, and orient a local partner to implement the program.
- Define the capacity development needs of the chosen partner.
- Evaluate the needs of the area selected for the pilot and define the tools to be applied in the pilot.

Outputs

- A communication assessment was conducted and communication guidelines prepared.
- NETWAS-Uganda was selected as the local partner after a competitive bidding process.
- A local consultant was found to train NETWAS on social accountability.
- A combination of citizen report cards and community score cards was supported by water quality tests and communication tools.

Box 2. What Is Output-Based Aid?

Output-based aid is a performance-based payment to service providers that subsidizes the cost of providing access to safe and clean water to poor users. Its aim is to provide or widen access to safe water when tariffs do not cover the full cost of connecting or providing water. However the subsidy payment is given to the provider only after it delivers the pre-agreed outputs, such as a specific number of yard-tap connections or water service delivered for a specified time.

The first key feature of OBA is that it is pro-poor. Subsidies offered to the provider are designed to open access to water to poor people. The second key feature is that the water service has to be sustainable. Normally getting connected is what poor people cannot afford, but after being connected poor people end up paying less for water than they were when buying it at kiosks or from mobile tanks. OBA seeks to combine incentives with outputs.

The Ministry of Water and Environment has launched output-based aid projects in 13 small towns and rural growth centers in Uganda. These projects seek to increase the poor's access to water services by increasing the accountability of water service providers. The Ministry of Water and Environment and the water service provider execute a new contract that permits payment to the service provider only after it has achieved specified delivery outcomes. For example, the selection of service providers for the contracts is competitive, which further drives down costs.

chose NETWAS because of its experience in the water sector and its significant experience working in peri-urban and rural areas of Luwero.³ NETWAS was also well-staffed and delivered a competitive budget proposal. NETWAS and the MWE decided to implement the program in the urban and peri-urban areas of Wobulenzi and invited the Wobulenzi Town Council to become their local implementing partner.

3. The Network for Water and Sanitation (NETWAS) is a nonprofit organization registered in Uganda in 1996 to provide services in the water supply, sanitation and hygiene sector. It is affiliated with NETWAS International, a part of an international training network for water and waste management that supports sector-related activities in developing countries.

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 MWE (Box 2). Trandit's contract with the MWE granted the service provider a subsidy if it installed 200 new connections within five years of the contract's execution date.

Between April 2007 and December 2008, WBI staff made four trips to Uganda to explain the program to national and local authorities, donors, and representatives from national and international NGOs. WBI also solicited feedback and recommendations to reinforce the technical capacity of NETWAS. That feedback enhanced the technical capacity of NETWAS. WBI incorporated suggestions from other institutions—for example, representatives from other key Ugandan NGOs were included in the training sessions and other key activities so as to expand capacity beyond NETWAS and to build coalitions while implementing the program.

Selecting Appropriate Social Accountability Tools. Appropriate social accountability tools were needed to monitor and evaluate the performance of Wobulenzi's water service providers. The tools would also be used to track improvements in service delivery throughout the course of the program. Ultimately, WBI and NETWAS chose to deploy three tools: citizen report cards (CRCs), community score cards (CSCs), and chemical water quality tests, all of which are described below.

Capacity Building

Following the initial assessment, WBI developed a strategy to build NETWAS's capacity to implement the program and to train community members to use social accountability tools. NETWAS's capacity building and training activities, and their outputs, are described in Box 3.

Box 3. Activities to Build the Capacity of NETWAS and Local Stakeholders, and Outputs of Those Activities**Activities**

- Train NETWAS on citizen report cards.
- Provide technical assistance to NETWAS on design of the sample in Wobulenzi.
- Train NETWAS on the use of community score cards.

Outputs

- A local consultant (Frances Nsonzi) who had participated in the application of citizen report cards to the health sector in Uganda trained NETWAS on the use of that instrument.
- WBI hired an international expert (Jakov Svensson) to accompany and advise a local statistician (Johnson Kagugube) in designing a stratified sample for Wobulenzi.
- A local consultant (Monica Kapiriri) who had participated on the application of the CRC for the health sector in Uganda in the past trained NETWAS on community score cards.

Box 4. Social Accountability Tools Used in the Project, and Their Outputs**Accountability tools**

- Citizen report cards
- Community score cards
- Water quality tests

Outputs

- Two surveys were conducted more than a year apart.
- Two rounds of community score cards were administered in each of the six communities selected, with six months between administrations.
- The quality of the water provided by both private providers was tested twice, with more than a year between tests.

Box 5. Activities Related to Citizen Report Cards, and the Outputs of Those Activities**Activities**

- Mapping of stakeholders in Wobulenzi's water sector.
- Household listing exercise to update and corroborate information from the last census.
- Sample design.
- Citizen report card design.
- Data collection and data entry.
- Analysis of results.

Outputs

- Stakeholder analysis produced.
- List of households in Wobulenzi.
- Representative sample with two different strata: core-urban and peri-urban households.
- Three questionnaires: one for water users, one for Water Board members, and one for others.
- Questionnaires collected and entered into data system.
- Comparison of survey results.

Implementation of Social Accountability Tools
NETWAS deployed three social accountability tools in Wobulenzi, as described in Box 4.

Implementing Citizen Report Cards

CRCs are detailed surveys used to assess public opinion. Unlike traditional surveys, however, they are often accompanied by broad media

coverage and civil society advocacy. The results of CRC surveys can be used to monitor progress and can affect policy design and program implementation. The CRCs for the water sector surveyed users on the quality and availability of water services, including hours of service, problems in billing and collections, tariffs, added costs, rent-seeking by service personnel, information dissemination from the provider

concerning service interruptions or repairs, and overall satisfaction.

NETWAS deployed the CRCs in August-September of 2008 and again in December of 2009. The activities related to CRCs, and their outputs, are described in Box 5.

Stakeholder Mapping. On July 3, 2008, NETWAS convened a workshop in Wobulenzi to identify the stakeholders in Wobulenzi’s water sector and their relative priorities, roles, and responsibilities.

Twenty-nine participants (15 men and 14 women) attended the workshop. They included members of the Town Council, members of the Water Board (the entity responsible for monitoring local water issues and evaluating water service operators), staff from each of the two water service providers and the MWE, and representatives from the local community and NGOs. A staff member from NETWAS facilitated the workshop, which included a series of collaborative break-out groups and a review of key concepts, such as governance, social account-

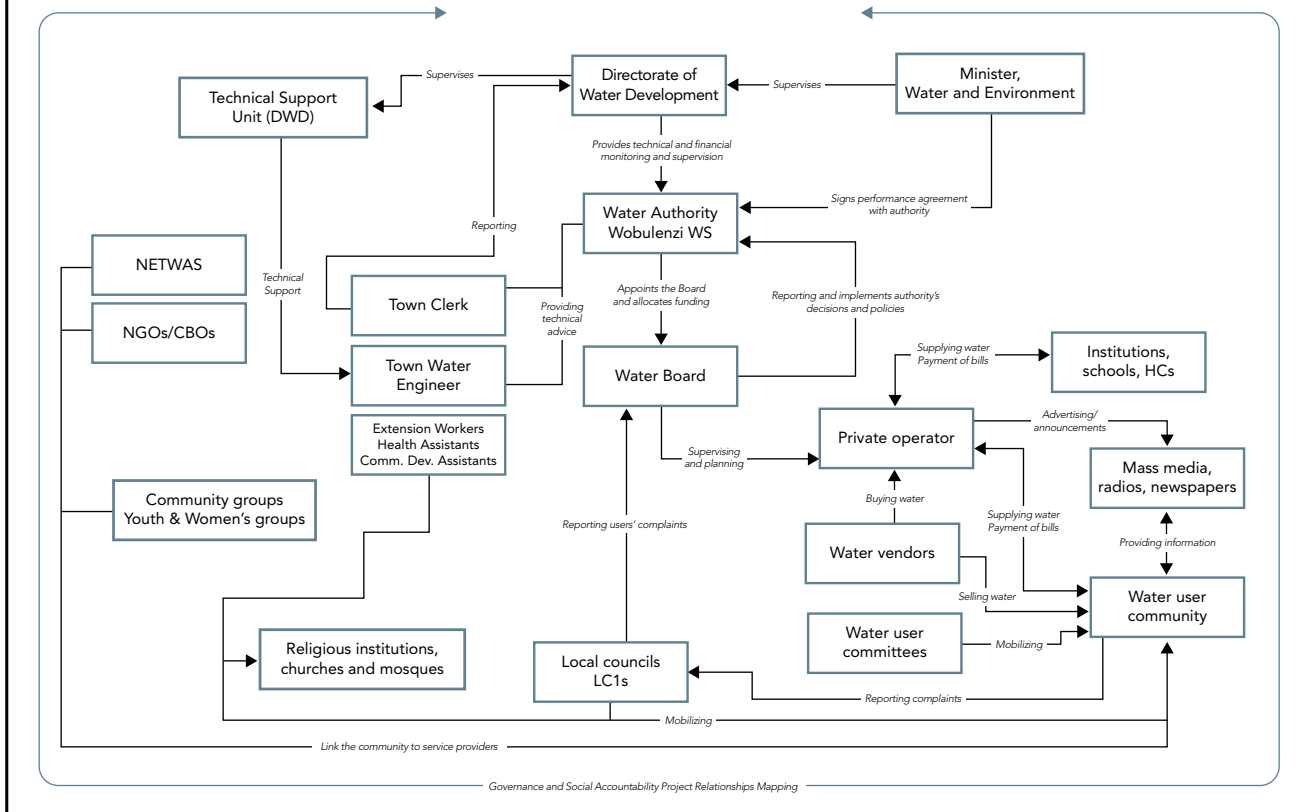
ability, and transparency. To accommodate the participants, the workshop was conducted in Luganda, the local language.

The participants identified the following stakeholders in Wobulenzi’s water sector—community water users, members of the Water Board, service providers, and others identified in Figure 1.

The participants were asked to consider the connections among the stakeholders, including dependency for services, the payment of rates, election constituencies, and advisory roles. Based on participants’ feedback, NETWAS developed a relationship map of the stakeholders as depicted in Figure 1.

The workshop participants then created an “influence pyramid” to display the relative influence that various stakeholders had over decision making and policy formulation in Wobulenzi’s water sector. The stakeholders with high influence included the water authority, the town clerk, and the Water Board. Those with low influence included community groups, vendors, local councils, the courts, and the police. The

Figure 1. Stakeholder Mapping Produced by NETWAS Workshop Participants



relative influence of other stakeholders fell between the two extremes.

Training Interviewers to Use CRCs. WBI hired a consultant with experience in the health sector to train NETWAS members on the use of CRCs. NETWAS then selected a team to receive training and administer the CRCs to the local water users and water service providers. The team comprised 15 people: 10 interviewers, 2 supervisors, and 3 data entry officers. They were drawn from staff from NETWAS and other Ugandan NGOs and community members from Wobulenzi.

Team members were encouraged to recognize the importance of CRCs in identifying problems in the water sector and improving water service delivery by both private and public providers. Data entry officers understood the importance of quickly and accurately entering data.

NETWAS organized a four-day training session (August 21–25) for interviewers and field supervisors. WBI hired an international expert to facilitate the training and develop an interview manual for participants. Training modules included (i) an overview of CRC processes; (ii) roles of the interviewer; (iii) selection criteria for households and replacements; (iv) instructions for conducting interviews; (v) fieldwork exercises to help interviewers become comfortable with the process; and (vi) guidance on how to process feedback from field practice. The three individuals hired for data entry received training from August 26–29, ensuring that data entry could begin immediately after the first house-

holds received their questionnaires.

Interviewers were trained to select households according to the target sample demographics specified by NETWAS and to replace a household, if necessary, without altering the sample's representation. The following information would be collected:

- Characteristics of household members
- Access to water services
- Availability of water (hours of service)
- Household water usage
- Cost of water
- Water pressure
- Quality of service delivery
- Quality of water (such as color, smell, and taste)
- Gender issues (for example, the disproportionate share of women responsible for collecting water)
- Community participation in service delivery
- Information dissemination on water services
- Characteristics of respondents

Designing a Representative Sample. A representative sample of stakeholders in Wobulenzi's water sector was selected to receive CRCs. NETWAS divided the stakeholders into two categories: (i) core urban and (ii) peri-urban. The core urban segment comprised households in Wobulenzi East, Wobulenzi West, and the zones of Luzzi and Katale in Wobulenzi Central, the most densely populated areas of the town. The peri-urban segment comprised households in Katikamu, Bukalasa, and the zones of Kikoma and Kikasa in Wobulenzi Central.

Box 6. What Constitutes a Household?

According to the Government of Uganda, a household is defined as a group of people who normally live and eat together. These criteria are important: the government uses this definition as part of its census. Households include families and are generally comprised of some combination of a head (male or female), a spouse, children, and perhaps relatives and visitors. Where two or more people with separate living arrangements simultaneously occupy the same dwelling, they are treated as separate households. Cultural variations have also been addressed by the household

definition. For example, if the head of a household has more than one spouse, with more than one line of children, but the entire group lives and eats together, the group comprises a single household. However, if each spouse—each with a line of children—lives and eats separately (regardless of whether the head of the household travels back and forth between them), then this family comprises more than one household. A single household may also consist of one person who lives and eats alone, or may otherwise comprise a group of unrelated people who live and eat together.

Credible survey results depend on a reliable representative sample. WBI therefore ensured that NETWAS relied on two experts to design the sample. NETWAS hired one expert, a local statistician with significant experience in census administration. As for the other expert, WBI contracted Jakob Svensson, a Swedish expert with experience designing samples in Uganda. He also ensured that the sample design complied with international standards. Households were defined as described in Box 6.

Listing Wobulenzi Households to Populate the Sample.

At the start of the program, 14 villages in Wobulenzi were randomly chosen by the statisticians to participate. The supervisors and interviewers were tasked with developing a comprehensive list of households in each of the 14 villages, from which random samples would be selected to participate in CRC surveys. This process took four days. The interviewers visited each household to ensure the accuracy of the final list, which was going to be compared to the census, and carefully screened the list for omissions and duplications. They then assigned a random number to each household. Each interviewer drew a series of random numbers to generate the sample. The idea behind the household listing was to verify the data from the census and to update the numbers using statistical approximations. The final household list included the number of households in each of the 14 villages. Household data from Wobulenzi's 2003 census

were obtained for purposes of comparison (Table 1).

For each sample segment (core urban or peri-urban), seven zones or villages were randomly selected for sampling. For each zone or village selected in Stratum I, the one corresponding to core-urban Wobulenzi, 33 households were randomly selected. Stratum II, corre-

sponding to the peri-urban segment, included 36 households per zone or village.

Each trainer received a copy of two letters of introduction: one from NETWAS Uganda to the Wobulenzi Town Council; and another from the Wobulenzi Town Council to the local community chairpersons of selected wards informing them of the purpose of the survey. To ensure household privacy and prevent discrimination, neither the local community chairperson nor his or her representative was permitted to participate in the household interviews (unless in their own household).

Designing the CRC Survey Questionnaires.

While the interview team compiled a representative sample of Wobulenzi's households, NETWAS and WBI developed separate questionnaires to target the key stakeholders in the water sector in Wobulenzi: water users, water providers, and the Water Board. For example, the household questionnaire included more questions concerning possible feedback mechanisms that would enable water users to participate in decision-making and identify obstacles to effective service delivery. The questionnaires administered to water services providers emphasized training and capacity building of staff and engineers, while those administered to Water Board members focused on communication mechanisms used to inform water users and monitoring mechanisms used to supervise the water provider.

Table 1. Results of the Household Listing in Comparison to the Census of 2003

<i>Village</i>	<i>Listed households</i>	<i>2003 census figures</i>
Gwafu	74	46
Morden	155	162
Katale	234	161
Kigulu	265	202
Bukorwa Central	126	243
Upper West	34	55
Upper East	21	
North Central	15	
Lutamu	150	206
Luzzi	351	352
Nakadingidi	828	533
Kikasa	126	151
Katikamu Proper	175	167
Kitante	252	235
Kikoma	270	

Throughout the survey design process, WBI and NETWAS held lengthy discussions with the town clerk, water engineers, community development officers, members of the Water Board, and community members to identify focus areas for each questionnaire. The questionnaires were piloted in Bombo, Luzira, Luwero town, and Mukono. The household questionnaire was translated into Luganda, the local language.

Conducting the CRC Survey. The household CRC surveys were administered over a 10-day period from August 29 to September 7 in partnership with the Town Council, local councilors, and Water Board members. The survey team comprised nine research assistants, two field supervisors, and three monitoring specialists. From among all those who had participated in training sessions, the interviewers were selected for their ability to communicate and their understanding of the tool.

In total, 632 households (as defined in Box 6) were interviewed. Five replacement households were also selected for each village, although this figure increased to 10 when field workers found that some residents had either vacated their homes between the finalization of the household list and the launch of the survey process, or could not otherwise be located. The survey team also interviewed Wobulenzi's two service providers and eight members of its Water Board.

Data entry officers entered the results into a matrix between September 9 and September 20, and the data were subsequently analyzed by NETWAS and WBI. More than a year later, in December 2009, the partnership administered a second round of CRCs to track progress in stakeholder actions in Wobulenzi's water sector and evaluate changes in stakeholder's opinions.

Implementing Community Score Cards

In addition to the 2008 and 2009 CRC surveys, NETWAS deployed CSCs to facilitate dialogue among the various stakeholders identified earlier in the pilot.

A CSC 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 CRCs, social audits, and community-

driven monitoring and evaluation. Similar to the CRC process, the CSC seeks to foster social accountability and responsiveness from service providers. The difference is that CSCs also encourage service providers to meet with members of the community to facilitate immediate feedback and foster grassroots empowerment.

These CSCs were used to enhance stakeholder awareness of governance challenges in Wobulenzi's water sector and to promote partnerships among stakeholders to respond to these challenges. Their use enabled the community to provide detailed feedback on water services by both providers. Community members were trained to select from a variety of quality indicators and shown how to use them to score water services from each provider.

The interface between users, service providers, and local authorities was an important feature of the CSC process; it allowed community members to voice complaints, concerns, problems, and suggestions to improve the quality and coverage of water services. The CSCs facilitated a constructive dialogue among a cross-section of stakeholders in an effort to raise awareness of problems to be corrected and achieve consensus on the importance of community participation in water sector reforms in Wobulenzi.

Training Participants to Use CSCs. NETWAS convened two training sessions to train the Wobulenzi Town Council and other water NGOs on the use of CSCs. The first session lasted from February 7 to 13, 2009, and the second from February 23 to 27, 2009. WBI contracted an international expert on CSCs to facilitate the sessions and to support NETWAS during the training.

The training sessions taught selected participants, especially those from Wobulenzi, to understand the differences between CRCs and CSCs and to interact effectively with diverse stakeholders, including the local community, the Water Board, and water service providers. The CSCs would bring those stakeholders together for the first time to candidly discuss the quality of local water services. NETWAS also instructed the interviewers to encourage stakeholders to use fieldwork and practice sessions to identify, implement, and sustain water sector reforms.

The first training session consisted of two days of classroom training, followed by three days of practice fieldwork to acclimate participants to the CSC process. Participants included seven members of NETWAS; five community facilitators from Wobulenzi; seven representatives from the Wobulenzi Town Council; one manager from Trandit; six representatives from Bukalasa College; and a small number of visitors, including representatives of the MWE, the World Bank's water sector staff in Uganda, WaterAid (a well-known NGO), Uganda's Community Development Facilitation Unit, Luwero District authorities, and NETWAS's partners, such as the Buso Foundation.

The second training session, held two weeks later in Kampala, sought to increase awareness of water sector issues and create a climate of trust among water sector stakeholders. Most participants from the first training attended the second session. NETWAS therefore conducted follow-up exercises designed to strengthen skills developed in the first training. The original participants were joined by members of the Water Board of Wobulenzi Town Council, staff of both water services providers, a Community Development Officer from Luwero District Local Government, and staff from the MWE. A total of twenty-seven participants attended the second workshop

Administering the CSCs. To facilitate dialogue among the stakeholders in Wobulenzi's water sector, NETWAS administered CSCs in six communities that receive water either from

Trandit or Bukalasa. During these sessions, community participants (representing water users) were asked to prioritize three to four types of water services requiring improvement within six months. Representatives from Trandit and Bukalasa participated in CSC meetings. They were asked to evaluate their respective provider's service delivery and identify areas for improvement.

Meetings brought service provider representatives together with community representatives from Sikanusu, Upper East and West Luwero, Kikasa, Gwafu, Kitante, and Kigulu to share perspectives and receive feedback. Prior to this, Wobulenzi Town Council had no formal mechanisms for involving the community in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of water services. Results from a 2008 CSC exercise for the water service provider in Sikanusu are presented in Table 2.

The priority areas identified by stakeholders were next compiled into a comprehensive joint action plan, which was agreed to at subsequent meetings.

Some of the action items from the joint action plan were executed quickly. For example, in the Kikasa community, members requested telephone contact particulars for key personnel from the water service provider at Bukalasa. These contact particulars were promptly provided. Quarterly action-learning meetings were also held to facilitate participatory reflection and learning processes, assess progress, fine-tune activities under development, and highlight those activities

Table 2. Example of a Community Score Card Developed by Water Users in Sikanusu

<i>Areas for improvement</i>	<i>Desired changes</i>	<i>Score %</i>	<i>Reasons for the score</i>	<i>Proposed activities</i>
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

completed successfully. Other action items have seen no movement.

NETWAS held a second round of CSCs six months after the first. The same representatives from the community and the water providers participated to follow up on the action plan and to determine whether the service providers had improved water delivery.

Testing Water Quality

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.

Communication for Governance

In the past, the World Bank and other development organizations relied on one-way information dissemination and communication

to achieve development goals. Recently, however, two-way approaches that engage stakeholders and empower them to voice their opinions and identify issues important to them have become the accepted form of communication for achieving sustainable development results. NETWAS, WBI, and the World Bank's CommGAP program jointly oversaw the development of a communication strategy for Uganda's water program. The strategy aimed to foster trust among water sector stakeholders and facilitate dialogue and knowledge sharing regarding the importance of social accountability and transparency.

A CommGAP communication specialist accompanied WBI staff on two missions to Wobulenzi to collaborate with a local consultant on a communications assessment. NETWAS used the reports prepared by CommGAP to develop a strategy for informing stakeholders of priority issues in the water sector and soliciting feedback about areas in need of further improvement. Furthermore, to ensure the sustainability of improvements, stakeholders were encouraged to continue to exchange ideas after the completion of the program.

NETWAS, WBI, and CommGAP used various channels to share knowledge and perspectives on the program with diverse local and national audiences and to disseminate and explain the results of surveys and water quality tests. Those channels were:

- Regular meetings with stakeholders, including officials from the MWE, local government authorities, water service providers, and users' associations
- A bulletin 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 program 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 convened by

Box 7. Monitoring and Evaluation Activities and Outputs**Activities**

- Routine administrative data recording
- Process reporting
- Process documentation
- Activity reporting
- Team meeting
- Regular inspections/spot checking
- End of project report

Outputs

- Financial records of expenses
- Quarterly reports
- A website that documents the project over the process
- Specific report for each major activity
- Minutes from each meeting
- Field visits by the M&E coordinator
- Final report and case study about the program

the MWE, joint sector review meetings convened each September, and water integrity workshops held in Kampala

- Television, radio, and print media, including the Uganda Broadcasting Council (a national television program) and the national newspaper, to disseminate survey and test results

Monitoring and Evaluation

NETWAS and WBI collaborated to develop a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) strategy for tracking stakeholder feedback and water sector improvements. M&E activities enabled the public to sustain progress after completion of the program (Box 7).

An important aspect of the M&E process was the careful documentation of program activities, which will inform subsequent analyses and promote sustainable outcomes.

Results and Outcomes

Results of CRC Survey. The results of the 2008 and 2009 surveys indicated that water provision in Wobulenzi improved after the deployment of social accountability tools. This was despite the malfunction of two water pumps, which prevented Trandit from providing water for two months before the administration of the 2009 survey, until the MWE intervened to procure replacement parts.

Notwithstanding this difficulty, overall stakeholder satisfaction improved significantly between 2008 and 2009. Many households used more piped water than they had before, partly because Trandit added 43 water tap access points to its piped water infrastructure. The number of users encountering difficulties in accessing water—such as children harassed by adults competing for water at access points—decreased significantly. Users also reported that improved communication with service providers had increased the transparency of the costs of certain water services, such as connections

Table 3. Improvements in Water Service, by Provider

Variables	Trandit		Bukalasa	
	2008	2009	2008	2009
Percentage of households using piped water	22.4	34.9	40.4	50.0
People encountering long queues, wet season	37.0	25.8	23.9	0.0
People encountering long queues, dry season	73.1	63.9	47.5	13.8
Harassment of children by the adults at the water source, wet season	7.0	3.6	0.0	0.0
Harassment of children by the adults at the water source, dry season	14.7	4.8	0.0	0.0
Average cost of connection to the piped water system (U Sh)	4,220	65,310	10,280	40,000
Percentage of households satisfied with the quality of water services	69.9	82.2	81.7	94.6
Percentage of households satisfied with the quality of water (somewhat satisfied, satisfied, and very satisfied)	80.2	92.1	86.2	97.0

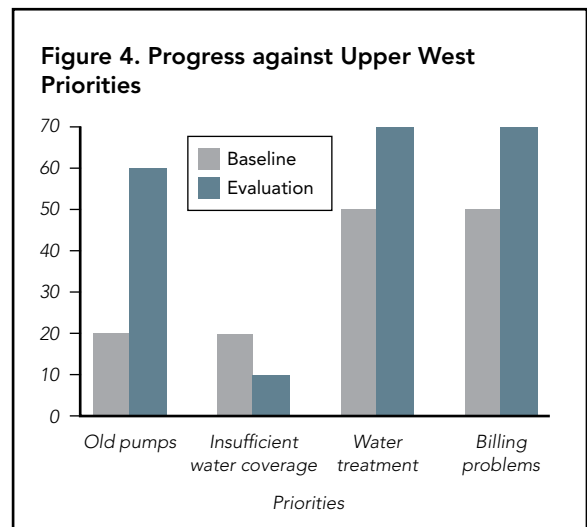
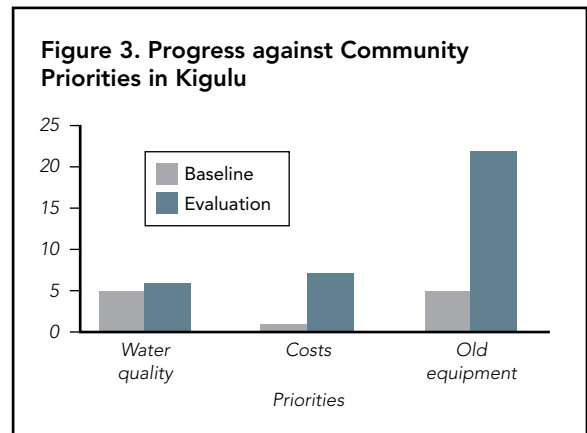
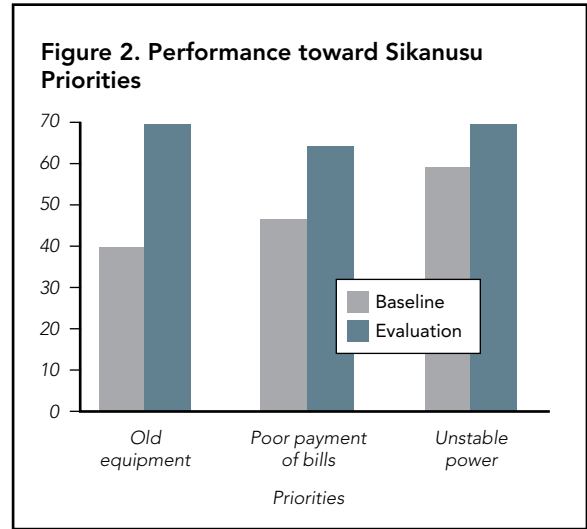
to the piped system. Finally, service providers began to adjust their practices to improve services in response to public feedback. Table 3 summarizes the improvements in water service provision for each of Wobulenzi’s service providers based on household survey results.

Results of CSCs. The service providers quickly executed several items from the joint action plan. In the Kikasa community, for example, members requested—and promptly received—telephone contact information for key personnel at Bukalasa. Quarterly action-learning meetings were also held to facilitate participatory reflection and learning, assess progress, fine-tune activities under development, and highlight successfully completed activities completed. Other items from the action plan have received no attention.

Figures 2, 3, and 4 illustrate progress in addressing the priority areas in the water sector over the six months since the first CSCs. In each of the six communities participating in the follow-up survey, participants received a summary document detailing priority areas identified during the 2008 survey, indicators devised to measure progress towards these goals, initial scores, explanations of initial scores, proposed activities to improve scores, progress as of the most recent quarterly action-learning meeting, and any information from more recent CSCs, such as new scores. Each community has demonstrated progress in the water sector in short time between the first CSC and the second.

In the community of Sinakusu, for example, priority areas for improvement included old equipment, poor payment of bills, and unstable power. The results of the second CSC indicate that the community’s perception of each of these indicators had improved. Similarly, in Kigulu, priority areas included water quality, cost, and old equipment; in Upper West Wobulenzi, priority areas include old pumps, insufficient water coverage, water treatment, and billing problems.

In both the 2008 and 2009 CSCs, each community evaluated the pillars of governance—transparency, accountability, and communication—in their local water sector. The CSC results indicate that users saw improvements in each of these areas.



Results of Water Quality Testing. The results of the first of the two water-quality tests revealed that some water outlets, notably reservoir tanks and several tap stands, were contaminated with fecal matter or contained turbid water. During the CSC interface meetings, corrective measures were suggested, such as increasing the frequency of tank cleanings and repairs of leaking pipes. In 2009, the testers revisited the original water points to track improvements in water quality. The results of the follow-up testing suggest that water quality had generally improved.

Less Fecal Contamination. The first test revealed that water samples from a cylindrical water tank in Kikasa and from tap stands in Bukalasa and Kitante were contaminated with fecal coliform. Although the unprotected spring was still contaminated by the time of the second test, the remaining water points were found to pump safe drinking water. Improvements were due to more frequent tank cleanings in Bukalasa and increased awareness of the importance of covering tap stands to prevent contamination. Information disseminated during the CSCs also motivated commu-

nities to conduct routine maintenance and to clean boreholes on their own.

Less Corrosion in Water Source. Although the pH of water samples in Wobulenzi was low, boreholes did not show signs of corrosion. This is possibly a result of routine maintenance and the continuous movement of water. Water pH also improved between the first test and the second.

The follow-up tests revealed that some water points in Wobulenzi had stopped functioning altogether. For example, the service provider disconnected one users' tap stand for non-payment of tariffs and two boreholes had ceased functioning.

Table 4 summarizes the improvements in water quality between the first and second tests.

Although tests results indicate overall improvements in water quality by both service providers, communities still need to increase their awareness of proper techniques for water transport and storage. Based on observations at the water sources, the jerricans that most people use to collect water, were contaminated with algae.

The success of the water program in Wobulenzi demonstrated how social account-

Table 4. Results of Tests of Water Quality

Parameter	Trandit	Bukalasa
pH	The average pH value tended to rise toward neutrality. The average pH was 6.98, compared with the previous pH value of 6.41. The neutral pH value is 7.00. The recommended pH range of untreated water supplies is 5.0–9.5	There was also a rise in the average pH from 5.99 to 6.44. The pH value of the source outlet was 6.40, indicating no significant change along the distribution system.
Turbidity	Average turbidity was 1.98 NTU compared with the prior value of 2.11 NTU. This was an indicator of an improvement in the clarity of water. The maximum recommended turbidity value in untreated water supplies is 30 NTU	Average turbidity was 1.59 NTU. Previous turbidity was 1.88 NTU, also signifying an improvement in the clarity of water.
Conductivity/TDS	The average TDS value was 167.8 mg/l compared with the previous value of 148.4 mg/l. However, there was no significant change in the value from the sump, which was 164 mg/l. The maximum acceptable DS value in untreated water supplies is 1,500 mg/l	The average TDS value was 127.4 mg/l compared to the previous value of 112.3 mg/l. However, there was a difference with the source value of 109 mg/l.
Fecal coliform (<i>e. coli</i>)	All the results were satisfactory. The maximum acceptable <i>e. coli</i> concentration in untreated water supplies is 50 cfu.	All results were satisfactory, in contrast to previous tests, where unsatisfactory results were obtained in the cylindrical water tank and Sakaza tap-stand.
Total coliform (<i>T. coli</i>)	All water points showed satisfactory results. Previous results showed some contamination in several tap-stands—Semaganda, Florence Nabowa, and Betty Nakajubi. The maximum acceptable concentration in untreated water supplies is 100 cfu.	All results were satisfactory. Previous results showed contamination in the elevated cylindrical water tank and Sekaza tap-stand.
Katongole Expedito Kiosk The supply is located in Luzzi zone. All the results were satisfactory.		
Unprotected spring Results remained unsatisfactory.		
Boreholes Results from all 4 boreholes were satisfactory.		

ability tools helped stakeholders to build effective partnerships and improve communication. They also allowed water users to provide feedback to their water service providers for the first time. Even though Wobulenzi's two service providers operated under different types of contracts (Bukalasa as a private service provider and Trandit under an output-based aid contract with the MWE), both benefited from social accountability tools to significantly improve service provision and water quality.

In 2009, the MWE identified a list of "golden indicators" for service delivery in the water sector to provide a standard for evaluating the success of water programs. The golden indicators for Wobulenzi's two water service providers are summarized in Table 5. Data was gathered in interviews, the two program surveys, CSCs, and field visits.

The water program significantly improved the relationships among Wobulenzi's various water sector stakeholders, including the Water Board, the water service providers, and the community. Water users can now voice complaints at regular stakeholders meetings, and stakeholders are encouraged to respond to user feedback.

The participation of Water Board members was critical to the CSC training sessions. Chairman Stephen Sawa Loboowa and Ms. Sarah Nagujja—two of the participating Board members—were very supportive, assuming facilitation roles and lobbying for transparency and inclusion of users in the water sector. After the program launch, they were also instrumental in convening the first Board-driven community meetings in Wobulenzi. Within six months, they had visited ten of Wobulenzi's 20 communities to collect feedback on water services.

Table 5. Improvements Measured against Indicators of the MWE, by Provider, June 2008–August 2009

Indicator	Trandit		Bukalasa	
Access Number of people connected to piped water during the period of the program	In-house connections increased from 25 in June 2008 to 28 in August 2009. Public standpipes increased from 32 to 33 and yard taps from 471 to 514.		A new pipeline is being extended in Kikasa community to supply more households.	
Number of people with in-house connections	25	28	22	22
Number of standpipes providing water	68	61 (some closed because not sustainable)	0	0
Number of kiosks providing piped water	32	33 (one closed because of insufficient clients)	0	0
Number of yard taps providing piped water	471	514	66	66
Functionality Water sources improved during the period of the program	Two back-up generators and two new batteries were purchased. A unit called the "change-over" was purchased to ease the interchange between the national power grid and generator power supply. A pump to move water from the borehole to the reservoir was repaired.		The college had completed repairs of one pump and was working on the second one at the "fish pond." Work was to be complete by February 2010. The college had already procured the materials for the second pump, which participants reviewed at the end of the Action Learning meeting.	
Investment Amount of money invested in the water schemes during the period of the program	More than US\$2,000 spent in repairs by the Town Council (Water Board). Trandit has invested more than U Sh 20,000,000 in new connections and extensions to the poor communities.		More than U Sh 5,000,000 (US\$2,688) was invested in repairing 2 pumps that were not functioning. The rest of the repairs required an additional U Sh 25 million (US\$13,440), which the college did not have at the time.	
Quality of water Improvement in quality based on samples analyzed comparing first quality test with second water quality test, that complies with national standards.	The quality of piped water improved in general.		The quality of water from all sources improved. All water reservoirs that had high <i>e. coli</i> values were cleaned. Covers were installed and leaks plugged.	
Quantity of water Increase in cumulative capacity of reservoirs and other storage means during the period of the program.	During the program one pump was repaired, increasing volumes. It is still operating below capacity.		At least two pumps are now functioning. During the program two pumps were repaired, thus increasing water volumes in reservoirs. Current capacity is 220 m ³ but pump supplies 190 m ³ , up from 10.5 m ³ and 4.5 m ³ per day, respectively, at project start. One pump needs to be repaired	
Equity Sub-county deviation from the district average in persons per improved water point.	Output-based aid is an approach to reach poor people. Subsidies go only to connect people who cannot afford to connect. During the program, the poor communities of Kitante, unconnected to the system for many years, obtained 16 connections.		The villages of Kikasa, long neglected, saw excavation of pipelines begin. Villagers hope to be connected to the main line.	

The water program marked the first time that a combination CRCs and CSCs were deployed in Uganda's water sector. The first round of CRCs provided baseline data to monitor improvements in quantitative and qualitative indicators of water quality and services. The CSCs employed communication techniques to engage participating communities and empowered them to provide feedback and become partners in efforts to improve water services. Water service providers were likewise trained in the use of communication tools and came to understand the importance of using feedback from water users to improve their services. Local authorities, including the Water Board, were encouraged to use social accountability tools to promote good governance.

NETWAS was trained to use CRCs and CSCs to monitor water quality and the provision of water services. NETWAS is also a member of UWASNET (Uganda Water and Sanitation Network), an umbrella NGO that promotes cooperation and knowledge sharing among 150 NGOs and community-based organizations working in Uganda's water and environment sectors. Through UWASNET, NETWAS is sharing information and lessons learned from the Wobulenzi water program with other local NGOs, both online and through participatory learning activities, such as seminars and workshops.

Limitations and Recommendations

WBI and NETWAS originally expected that because of incentives in its OBA contract, Trandit would improve its level of customer satisfaction more than Bukalasa, which did not have an OBA contract. Based on the data, however, this does not seem to be the case. Satisfaction with both providers improved almost identically. Except for the 47 new yard taps announced by Trandit, which will soon be functioning, there is no statistical evidence so far that Trandit improved more than Bukalasa during the implementation of this program. The NETWAS-WBI team believes that one year is not time enough to evaluate the impact of an OBA contract on the provider performance. Another year of monitoring of Wobulenzi's service providers would provide a better basis for evaluation. Implementing OBA contracts requires a change in behavior from various stakeholders in terms of moving from a public

provider to a private provider. The service provider, the local government, and the MWE are still learning how to use subsidies to better respond to the needs of the poorest within a private sector scheme. With another year, Trandit may learn to better respond to stipulations in the OBA, and the differences between the two providers may become clearer. The MWE may also have to provide further training to service providers to increase their awareness of the results-based terms and conditions of OBA contracts. In April 2009, for example, one of Trandit's backup pumps broke, and water could no longer run through the Trandit network in Wobulenzi. Based on the OBA contract, Trandit was responsible for maintaining its infrastructure and replacing any broken parts. Trandit did not understand its contract, however, and immediately requested that the MWE replace the broken part. Because the water system was obsolete (more than 10 years old), the Ministry could not find a replacement part in Uganda, and although it was not responsible for the repair, it was forced to buy a replacement part from Sweden. It took more than two months for the part to be replaced, and water did not run in Wobulenzi during this time.

Despite the fact that Trandit neglected its responsibility to maintain its network, the Ministry of Water did not levy a penalty against the service provider. OBA contracts should therefore incorporate terms that specify what constitutes a breach of responsibilities, along with clear penalties for breach, such as the payment of damages. The Ministry of Water should inform service providers of these terms before entering into an OBA contract. Service providers should be sufficiently prepared and financially stable to quickly handle repairs and maintain service to users without depending on the Ministry.

The government of Uganda should institutionalize the social accountability tools used in the water program. Cooperation between centralized government agencies and representatives from specific service sectors would allow the tools to be developed for a wide range of sectors at low cost. For example, Uganda's statistical bureau could consult with a representative from the MWE to design surveys, allowing the MWE to avoid duplicate costs associated with developing surveys in cooperation with

lower levels of government with authority in the water sector.

Social accountability tools should also be translated into local languages (for example, Luganda in the case of Uganda). In the Wobulenzi project, translations were cumbersome and time consuming since the tools, surveys, and reports were translated from English to Luganda, and then back from Luganda to English for national-level stakeholders.

The success of the water program in Uganda led the MWE to request replication in other towns. NETWAS is now implementing the program in two smaller towns, one with an

OBA contract (Rukungiri), and the other one with a typical government contract (Busia). NETWAS deployed the same social accountability tools, and baseline and follow-up surveys will be used to monitor and evaluate progress in water quality and service delivery. The team anticipates that consolidated data from both program stages (and hopefully data from a second follow-up in Wobulenzi) will demonstrate the effectiveness of combining social accountability with governance approaches (similar to OBA contracts) in improving water provision in small towns.