

UGANDA PROGRAM FOR HUMAN AND HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT

UPHOLD

STUDY OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS IN UGANDA

PHASE II REPORT

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Abbreviations

AIM	-	AIDS/HIV Integrated Model District Programme
BUNASO	-	Bugiri Network of AIDS Service Organizations
CAO	-	Chief Administrative Officer
CBO	-	Community Based Organization
CDRN	-	Community Development Resource Network
CEDO	-	Community Enterprises Development Organization
CHAI	-	Community HIV/AIDS Initiative
CSO	-	Civil Society Organization
DDHS	-	District Directorate of Health Services
DDP	-	District Development Plan
DENIVA	-	Development Network of Indigenous Voluntary Associations
FBO	-	Faith Based Organization
HURINET	-	Human Rights Network
INGO	-	International NGO
KINGFO	-	Kitgum NGO Forum
MIA	-	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MOES	-	Ministry of Education and Sports
MOFPED	-	Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development
MOGLSD	-	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
MOH	-	Ministry of Health
MOLG	-	Ministry of Local Government
NACWOLA	-	National Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS
NGO	-	Non-Governmental Organization
NIDs	-	National Immunization Days
NUDIPU	-	National Union of Disabled Persons in Uganda
OCBO	-	Orphans Community Based Organization
RAIN	-	Rakai AIDS Information Network
RDC	-	Resident District Commissioner
TTP	-	Tripartite Training Programme
UAC	-	Uganda AIDS Commission
UACP	-	Uganda AIDS Control Programme
UCRNN	-	Uganda Child Rights NGO Network
UDN	-	Uganda Debt Network
UPHOLD	-	Uganda Programme for Human and Holistic Development
UNASO	-	Uganda Network of AIDS Service Organizations
USAID	-	United States Agency for International Development
UWONET	-	Uganda Women's Network
VCT	-	Voluntary Counseling and Testing

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Executive Summary

This study was conducted to enable better understanding of the nature, operations and scope of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in the 20 districts of Uganda where UPHOLD operates. CSOs can be understood to include a range of non-government, non-profit, voluntary organizations that seek to achieve specified goals to benefit a cross-section of the population. The study is expected to provide information that would enable UPHOLD and districts to maximize the benefits of partnerships with CSOs and communities. The study was conducted in two phases, and the present report integrates results from both phases. Data for phase one was collected through documents review supplemented with key informant interviews. During the second phase, primary data was collected from local governments and a sample of 321 CSOs. In addition, workshops were held in districts with local government staff and representatives from CSOs, during which a dialogue process about CSO-local government relations was facilitated between the two sets of actors.

Key Findings

There has been a rapid increase in the number of CSOs in Uganda over the last 10 to 20 years. The results of Phase I of this study found 3401 CSOs recorded in the 20 districts, involved in the areas of health, HIV/AIDS, education and cross-cutting areas of interest to UPHOLD such as capacity building and gender. Phase II results show that 78.4% of the sample CSOs were founded over the last 12 years, i.e. between 1992 and 2004. The rapid increase in the number of CSOs over the recent past has been a result of: the need to respond to existing social and economic problems, increased funding opportunities, the methodologies and funding mechanisms of government and partner funding agencies, and an enabling environment offered by government. Other factors include survival reasons such as creation of employment, as well as pursuit of political interests. In fact, in many districts, many CSOs are thought to have politicians as their founders or owners. Where economic and financial reasons have been major factors, many CSOs that have subsequently failed to find funding have remained inactive. The district context emerges as a strong factor in the emergence of CSOs and shaping the character of the CSO sector in the respective districts. The challenge is how to identify genuine and viable CSOs to work with, and to make fair assessments of CSOs without falling victim of conflicting interests from district officials.

CSOs have varying degrees of capacity, with the international NGOs and big national NGOs better equipped with skilled staff, financial resources, communication facilities, transport and other physical and material resources. CBOs and many district-based NGOs lack many aspects of capacity. One of the strengths of all CSOs is their ability to involve volunteers and thereby cut on the costs they would otherwise incur to pay staff to do a similar job. Yet reliance on volunteers presents its own challenges in terms of effectiveness and accountability. Staff and volunteers of CSOs have substantial skills in

areas of mobilization, training and community education, and counseling. Most, however, lack key organizational and management related skills including in report writing and financial management. Various training programmes from different sources have been available to CSO staff and volunteers, but most CBOs and local NGOs would need more professional training to validate their claimed skills in technical aspects such as counseling and home based care. There is potential for weak CSOs to improve their capacities and build on their other inherent strengths.

Most existing working relationships between CSOs and local governments fall at the informal end of the continuum, if forms of collaboration were to be arranged along a continuum from informal to formal. The results of this study show that in almost all the 20 districts, relations between CSOs and local governments are largely informal, small scale and irregular. Cases of formal and contractual collaboration are emerging, but they still tend to be limited to the health sector, where they have been established as part of the funding requirements by central government and external funding partners. While informal relations have been beneficial and have the potential to be sustained, they are difficult to rely on and predict, as their objectives are not stated, nor are their expected outcomes articulated. All districts have mechanisms for registering CSOs in their Directorates of Gender and Community Development. However, local government regulation and coordination of CSO work beyond registration remains very limited.

Apparently, the predominant perception among local government staff of the ideal relationship with CSOs is a relationship where the latter seek clearance, get registered, declare plans and budgets, are supervised, and submit reports to local governments; a kind of superior position for local governments. On the other hand CSOs would like a relationship where they are treated as equal partners to local governments, with mutual sharing of information, plans, budgets, implementation, feedback and accountability. These differences in the perception of the desired relationship must be narrowed if fruitful partnerships are to be built. An important question is whether local governments can be both regulators of CSOs and at the same time be equal partners with them.

Collaboration tends to be relatively better at district compared to sub-county level. Where relationships tend to be formal, they are more with big, often international NGOs, compared to CBOs and local/district based NGOs. The question of resources also seems to mediate working relations, with most examples of existing collaboration found to be in the more resourced district directorates, namely health, and the more resourced CSOs, notably, international NGOs.

The major forms of collaboration include: sharing information, sharing staff as well as material and physical resources, and participation in each other's meetings and

workshops. Stronger forms of collaboration such as joint planning and implementation, and contractual relationships are still limited. In the health sector, recent developments whereby government funds for HIV/AIDS/STI activities have been channeled through districts to CSOs represent a major learning experience for contractual engagements between local governments and CSOs. Those experiences, however, need to be well documented to provide lessons for future collaborative arrangements.

Where collaboration has thrived, the major success factors have included; a supportive political environment at district level, existence of a funding relationship – often with requirements for submission of plans, supervision, and reporting; and common concern about existing problems or situations. Once again, the district context seems an important factor in shaping collaboration, a good example being the influence of Rakai's experience with HIV/AIDS and DANIDA's support, now bearing out in better CSO-local government collaboration, compared to other districts.

A number of constraints were found to affect local government – CSO collaboration. These include: lack of policies, strategies and mechanisms to foster collaboration; competition between CSOs and local governments as well as among CSOs themselves; mutual suspicion and mistrust; unfavorable attitudes towards each other; bureaucracy and lack of efficiency on the side of local governments; and lack of adequate resources on both sides.

Existing funding mechanisms by government and donor agencies which use competitive proposals as a basis for awarding grants were found to have promoted a sense of competition unfavorable to collaboration. For instance, CSO competing for funding through proposals cannot share vital information, as this would possibly be used by their competitors. Thus it can be concluded that funding mechanisms play a key role in shaping collaboration and partnerships between CSOs and local governments. Their effect can be positive if they provide for collaborative arrangements and require CSOs and local governments to partner up, but it can be negative if they engender unhealthy competition that makes collaboration difficult or impossible. Using competitive proposals as a basis for selecting partners is also insufficient, as the CSO that produces the best proposal may not necessarily be the most competent.

CSOs tend to perceive local governments as corrupt, money-minded, inefficient and bureaucratic. This is despite of the fact that they recognize their inherent strengths such as having staff, public legitimacy, and stable existence. On the other hand, local government staff look at most CSOs as not transparent, guided by selfish or personal motives, as competitors who threaten to take over the work and resources that would otherwise be for local governments, and accountable only to themselves. These sentiments are aggravated by most CSOs' refusal to disclose their budgets and sources of financial resources. These negative attitudes were found to have been born out of

experience. The negative attitudes towards each other were found to constrain information sharing, and generally to create an environment that prohibits openness and trust – which are essential for successful collaboration. The local government staff, however acknowledge the strengths of some CSOs including close touch with the grassroots, better mobilization capacities, and possession of resources.

With respect to CSO-CSO collaboration, there was more evidence of vertical collaboration – between bigger CSOs with small or local CSOs, and less of horizontal collaboration, i.e. of CSOs at the same level. Many CBOs were being supported financially, technically or otherwise by big CSOs. While NGO network organizations in form of the District NGO Forum have been formed in most districts to coordinate CSOs and promote inter-CSO as well as CSO-local government collaboration, they are still young, under-resourced, and not fully recognized by potential CSO members. In a few districts such as Kitgum and Bundibugyo, the District NGO Forums have achieved some good progress in coordinating CSOs.

Emerging Issues and Recommendations

1. The district context is important in shaping the character of the district-specific CSO sector, and in shaping the extent of collaboration with the respective local governments. Districts where serious development problems such as civil wars and HIV/AIDS have been experienced have witnessed emergence of a strong CSO sector, and the progress towards CSO-local government collaboration has been good. Similarly, districts that have had strong political activity have CSOs intertwined in the politics. The emergence of CSOs therefore is partly a result of genuine response to existing welfare problems and needs of communities. On the other hand, political and economic reasons, particularly individual opportunistic reasons also account for the formation of many CSOs formed within the last about 10 years. Part of this concern is that some CSOs are owned or godfathered by local government staff and political leaders. This perception or possibility weakens the trust that local government staff hold as regulators of CSOs or mediators through which other programmes can reach CSOs. The possibility that many CSOs are formed for economic and political gain, rather than genuine concern for improved welfare in the communities also raises the challenge of distinguishing these from the genuine ones.

Recommendation

Selection processes for possible CSOs for support should involve both the local governments as well as a complementary independent vetting mechanism. The vetting mechanism should include on-spot visits to verify the physical infrastructure of the CSOs and to interact with the surrounding communities and find out about the work and credibility of the CSOs in question. This is necessary

to build trust in the outcomes of the selection processes, given the alleged pecuniary interest of various players. Use should also be made of the information collected by this study on the profiles of sample CSOs (*see annexes to this report bound separately and annexes to Phase I Report*).

2. Current funding mechanisms that use competitive proposals seem to be setting CSOs against each other as competitors and also against local governments. As CSOs struggle to write winning proposals, they cannot share information, strategies or plans with their competitors. Further concern is that a good proposal is not a sufficient basis to determine a good CSO partner, as 'brief case' or other dubious CSOs can easily find mercenaries to write good proposals for them.

Recommendation

There is need to revisit the funding mechanisms and other CSO support criteria – Where as the advantages of competition are acknowledged, there is need to think of ways that build capacity and collaboration among CSOs and local governments, while minimizing unhealthy competition. An alternative option is to identify potential CSOs through other assessment criteria (such as past track record, credibility as perceived by local people, or involvement in a specific area of interest), and then work with them to develop acceptable proposals. The screening process in this case would start with the organization and the idea, rather than the proposal. The proposal development process would then even serve as a capacity building mechanism. Other alternatives include joint development of proposals by two or more CSOs, and by CSOs with local governments. These alternatives will require more time, but this should be planned for.

3. Both parties; the CSOs and the local governments perceive collaboration or partnership to be important and necessary. The local government officials feel that CSOs can bridge the gaps left by government, reaching places where government cannot reach and touching the grassroots more effectively. CSOs on the hand also appreciate that government can strengthen them to achieve their objectives, and see their roles as complementary to those of local governments. This mutual recognition is a positive beginning on which future collaboration can be built. However, the two sets of actors also tend to have differing perceptions of what the ideal relationship between them should be. Local governments see themselves as regulators and supervisors of CSOs, yet the CSOs want local governments to behave as equal partners to them. A remaining question therefore is whether local governments can be both regulators of CSOs and at the same time be equal partners to them!

There are also unfavorable attitudes between CSOs and local governments, characterized by counteraccusations, mutual mistrust, lack of openness, and sometimes competition. These are outcomes of past and present experiences.

Recommendation

Reaching a common ground on the desired relationship is a necessity for effective collaboration. But this requires continued dialogue. There is an opportunity for UPHOLD and its partners to build on the dialogue process that was initiated and facilitated by this study. CSOs and local governments should to be facilitated to continue the dialogue to discuss more and more about what the ideal partnership would look like, their working relations and subsequently to formulate concrete steps for better collaboration.

4. Collaboration takes place based on need. But there also must be deliberate efforts to nurture it and to create mechanisms for fostering it. Collaboration has been successful, where it has been deliberately included as part of the funding mechanisms or funder requirements. Partnerships are likely to be more successful if the different partners start together and plan together, rather than inviting them to join midway.

Recommendation

Partnership should be made a pre-requisite or an ingredient of projects, incorporating it right from the design stage. Appropriate partners organizations and mechanisms for partnership should be included at the design and planning stage of projects, rather than leaving it to “when need arises”. This process may be time-consuming, but it is a necessary investment. Funding should be prioritized for projects that demonstrate partnership from the beginning.

5. Apart from the type of collaboration guided through donor requirements and funding mechanisms, other existing collaboration is largely informal, adhoc, and based on personal contacts. The informal and adhoc type provide flexibility and convenience, and is need-driven. They have also been useful. However they are unpredictable and sometimes undependable, with no clear objectives, targets, or expected outcomes.

Recommendation

Efforts to build partnerships should consider how to build on the existing small-scale, informal and casual relationships, without killing the flexibility and convenience they provide. UPHOLD should investigate more about these informal networks and relationships and document their dynamics. These linkages should then be built on to strengthen partnerships at district level.

6. Collaboration is more in the HIV/AIDS and health sectors compared to the education sector. Partly this is attributed to the nature of activities, with those in the health and HIV/AIDS sectors lending themselves more to community based work. Another reason also seems to be the availability of more resources in these sectors, compared to education. The CSOs that involved in education also tend to be mainly focusing of sponsorship and provision of scholastic materials.

Recommendation

CSOs in the education sector should be facilitated to understand and address the broader factors that affect education, beyond classroom factors. UPHOLD should raise the interest of CSOs in particular aspects of the education sector, including issues of community participation, girl-child schooling, educational quality and so on, where they can participate as partners to the local governments. A social transformation approach to education, including issues of family stability and gender should be promoted.

7. CSOs have varying degrees of capacity, but CBOs in particular still lack many aspects of capacity, including organizational and management aspects such as report writing and financial management. Individual CSOs have specific human resource and other capacity needs, but all CSOs need to be adequately made aware of government processes and procedures. Many CSOs claim to have skills in counseling, but this being a technical area, such skills need to be validated.

Recommendations

There is need to build CSO and local government capacities in areas that enhance better performance and better working relations. The identified areas of capacity building include the following:

- Development and validation of technical skills in aspects such as counseling home based care, immunization, etc.
- Support for organizational development, including aspects of report writing, financial management, and planning and monitoring systems development.
- Orientation in government policies, processes and procedures
- Support for infrastructural development, including communication and document processing facilities.

8. Most CSOs work with volunteers and thereby cut on the costs they would otherwise incur to pay staff to do similar work. CBOs in particular are heavily dependent on volunteer labor for their operations. Dependency on voluntary

labor, however, presents its own problems especially with regard to the reliability and accountability of the volunteers.

Recommendation

With regard to CSOs that depend heavily on volunteers, UPHOLD should pay salaries of core staff or key facilitation allowances for volunteers that work on regular basis to enable them produce the expected results and be in position to be held accountable.

9. The extent of collaboration between CSOs- and local governments as well as between CSOs and CSOs varied from district to districts. There are examples of districts, specific departments, and those of CSOs where collaboration has been good. The major success factors have included a good political environment from the district – such as political support of the leadership, putting deliberate mechanisms for collaboration in place, and to a big extent, existence of funding opportunities or relationships.

Recommendation

UPHOLD should follow up the examples of good collaboration identified in this report, document them in detail and facilitate inter-district sharing of lessons and successes.

10. Whereas there is general recognition of the need for collaboration, and whereas government policy disposition is in favor of partnership, existing laws and policy documents such as the Local Governments Act (1997) provide only scarcely for CSO-local government collaboration. There is also lack of operational guidelines to translate such government policy into clear and practicable modalities, strategies or working principles to foster the desired collaboration.

Recommendation

There is need to advocate for more elaborate policies and clearer guidelines for CSO involvement at local government level. This is an issue that should be taken up with the relevant government ministries, as well as the CSO networks.

Next Steps

To ensure that the results of this work become useful, the following next steps are proposed.

- UPHOLD should organize for wide dissemination of these results to districts, ministries, CSOs, donors, and other UPHOLD partners.

- UPHOLD should plan for production of more user-friendly and summarized/shorter versions of the results – or a synopsis of the findings and recommendations. Other creative ways of sharing the results such as talk shows, pamphlets, etc, should be considered.
- UPHOLD should document in more detail examples of partnerships that seem successful and the processes behind them so as to provide learning experiences for other districts/CSOs.
- UPHOLD should also plan to develop or support the development of a tool kit or guide for local governments to facilitate work with CSOs.
- UPHOLD should follow up, support and facilitate continued dialogue between CSOs and local governments, building on the process undertaken by this study.
- UPHOLD should translate the rest of the recommendations of this study into district level actions that can be implemented.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

During late 2003, the Uganda Program for Human and Holistic Development (UPHOLD) embarked on a study to map Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in the 20 districts of Uganda where it operates and to assess their relationships with local governments. The first phase of this study was conducted between November 2003 and January 2004 and a report was produced. A second phase of the study was subsequently commissioned, informed by the outcomes of Phase I. The current report builds on the results of Phase I, incorporating the results of the second phase.

1.2 Background

UPHOLD is an integrated social services program funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), designed to support the Government of Uganda's social sector, with focus on three integrated areas: health, education and HIV/AIDS. The program seeks to increase the quality, access, utilization, support and sustainability of services in these areas. UPHOLD's key strategy is to work with and through partners, tapping their existing knowledge and experience, while at the same time strengthening their capacities. UPHOLD operates in the framework of Uganda's decentralization policy and the country's strategy of promoting an active role of the private sector in the development process. This strategy includes building of partnerships between the public and private sectors. UPHOLD is operating in 20 districts of Uganda, clustered in six regions across the country.

One set of actors in the envisaged partnership is that referred to as Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). While a concise definition of what constitutes CSOs remains elusive, for purposes of this study CSOs can be understood to include a range of non-government, non-profit, voluntary organizations that seek to achieve specified goals to benefit a cross-section of the population. These may be those specifically known as NGOs, Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs), cultural associations and other institutions of a voluntary nature that are involved in development work. There are also other organizations, such as some micro-credit schemes, which, though they have a profit orientation, have social objectives as well. These were included. Other types of CSOs such as the media and trade unions were not in the scope of this study.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

Whereas it is generally recognized that there is a big and possibly expanding CSO sector in Uganda, UPHOLD and its other partners do not have accurate information on the numbers, nature and operations of CSOs. There is also concern that despite the

potential and actual roles that CSOs play in a decentralized context, they are not sufficiently involved in local government programs.

The purpose of the study was to understand the nature, operations and scope of CSOs in the 20 districts and thereby provide information that would enable UPHOLD and districts to maximize the benefits of partnerships with CSOs and communities. It is important to note that the purpose of this study has evolved over time. The initial idea was to carry out a mapping of CSOs in the 20 districts where UPHOLD operates. From the secondary data review carried out as part of Phase one of this study, the number of CSOs revealed were more than 3,000 making a full-scale mapping practically difficult. At the same time some questions had remained unanswered from Phase I results, including issues of CSO capacities, attitudes, and indeed relations with local governments. The intention of mapping was consequently refined and reoriented to focus on a detailed study of a sample of CSOs in order to generate understanding of CSOs and their relationship with local governments, and facilitating a process of dialogue between CSOs and local governments on matters of their relationships and attitudes towards each other.

The results of the study are expected to feed into the Partnership Development Strategy. UPHOLD is in the process of approving grant funds to CSOs to implement interventions in education, health and HIV/AIDS. The results should be useful in defining the modalities of CSO involvement and support. They should be used by UPHOLD, Ministries and other stakeholders to design support mechanisms for CSOs to enable them play a more effective role in development. They should further be useful in enhancing effective dialogue between local governments and CSOs as the two sets of actors continue to find appropriate modalities for partnership.

1.4 Specific Tasks

This report is an outcome of the tasks undertaken during the two phases of the study. Under phase one, the specific tasks were:

1. Listing CSOs in the 20 UPHOLD supported districts by key characteristics including type, district of operation, whether it is known to the district, sources of support, and affiliation.
2. Determining the geographical coverage of each CSO in terms of sub-counties, parishes and villages covered
3. Documenting the population groups (age-groups, children, women, adolescents, orphans, IDPs, disabled etc) and total number of people targeted by the respective CSOs
4. Determining the sectors, technical areas and actual activities in which CSOs are involved, with specific focus on the sectors of health, education and HIV/AIDS,

but also considering cross-cutting areas such as gender mainstreaming, advocacy, capacity building, management, behavior change communication and counseling.

5. Documenting the strategies used by CSOs and how they interact with the communities
6. Assessing the human, material, financial and technical capacities of CSOs
7. Assessing the existence, nature and quality of relationships between CSOs and the district and sub-county local governments as well as other organizations
8. Collecting information on CSO involvement in district programs, including attitudes, constraints, and requirements related thereto.

During the second phase, the following tasks were undertaken:

1. Refining the methodology for carrying out the Phase II fieldwork, including sampling methods and tools.
2. Organizing planning meetings/workshops in each UPHOLD District prior to commencing new data collection with participants from CSOs and local governments to present an overview of Phase I results, discuss plans for Phase II field work, and facilitate dialogue about relationships between CSOs and local governments, as well as attitudes towards each other
3. Conduct in-depth interviews with the selected CSOs in each District, per the in-depth interview guides. The interviews aimed at assessing the nature and quality of relationships between district-level CSOs and the district and sub-county local governments, as well as other organizations in each UPHOLD district. The interviews were also to fill gaps from Phase I, and collect information on CSO involvement in district programs, including attitudes, constraints, and requirements related thereto, and identify examples of good collaboration between CSOs and local governments.
4. For each District, carry out a rapid analysis on the Phase II findings in order to provide rapid feedback to District personnel.
5. Conduct meetings or other mechanisms at the end of Phase II research to disseminate results to the District and CSO officials and leaders.

1.5 Study Process and Methodology

1.5.1 Overall Approach and Design

This study adopted a predominantly qualitative approach, with a few quantitative analyses. The study was carried out in two phases. The first phase involved a review of documentation on CSOs existing both at national and district levels, and key informant interviews with informants from selected agencies at national level. Starting with a review of documents on CSOs was necessary in order to utilize the information that was

already documented. Phase one results provided lessons and recommendations that shaped phase two. Phase two involved collection of primary data from samples of CSOs drawn from each of the 20 UPHOLD districts. It also involved dissemination of phase 1 results to district stakeholders and engaging CSOs and local governments in a process of dialogue about their relations.

1.5.2 Phase I Methodology

Phase one of this study utilized two major methods, namely, document review and key informant interviews.

a) Document Review

Documents were reviewed from both national and district level. The sources of documents at national level included the following government and non-government offices, including all the major agencies that are involved in health, education and HIV/AIDS. NGO networks as well as government donor-funded programmes were visited to review documents. A full list of sources of documents is included as an appendix.

At district level, documents were obtained from the CAO's office, and the directorates of Health, Education and Sports, Gender and Community Based Services, and the Planning Unit. Documents were also obtained from the district NGO Forum offices where they existed.

Some districts had directories of CSOs, either compiled by the District Directorate of Gender and Community Based Services as in Pallisa, or by the District NGO Forum, as was the case in Gulu. Others such as Lira, Bundibugyo, Rukungiri, Mbarara and Bushenyi were still in the process of compiling inventories of CSOs.

b) Key Informant Interviews

Key informants were drawn from the relevant government ministries and agencies, as well as CSO network organizations. These include the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MOGLSD), the Ministry of Health (MOH), the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES), Ministry of Local Government (MOLG), Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MOFPED), the Uganda AIDS Commission (UAC), the Development Network of Indigenous Voluntary Associations (DENIVA). UPHOLD Operations staff (Community Participation Coordinators) were also part of the study team. The UPHOLD head office team and regional officers provided supervision, monitoring and back-up support where it was necessary.

1.5.3 Phase II Methodology

The methodology for Phase II was shaped by the outcomes of Phase I. The results of Phase I indicated the existence of such a big number of CSOs that a mapping earlier

envisaged was deemed unfeasible. The methodology for Phase II was accordingly designed along two themes, namely: First, collecting detailed information from a sample of CSOs, and second, engaging the districts and CSOs in a dialogue process about their relationships. Phase II sought to disseminate phase I results and build on them, fill gaps, investigate relationships and attitudes, and enhance district-CSO interaction.

Dissemination of Phase I results and the Dialogue Process

In each district, a one-day workshop was organized prior to phase II data collection. The workshops were attended by an average of 30 stakeholders including key district officials as well as representatives from CSOs. The district officials targeted for these workshops included the CAO, Chairperson LC V, Secretary for Social Services Committee, District Planner, District Director of Health Services (DDHS), District Education Officer (DEO), Coordinator for Gender and Community Based Services, Chairperson of District NGO Forum, District Community Development Officer, the Chairpersons of the District AIDS Committees (DACs) and District AIDS Task Forces (DATs), and the Clinical Officers in charge of Health Sub-districts. The meetings were used for the following purposes:

- To share Phase I results with the districts and CSOs. Presentations focusing on district-specific findings were made by the study team.
- To get district input into the planning of phase II, including the type of information to be collected.
- To engage the district and the CSOs in a process of dialogue, paving way for further collaboration between the two groups of stakeholders

Facilitation of the dialogue process involved a combination of approaches aimed at stimulating discussion. These included highlighting issues from Phase I that remained unanswered, posing new questions, group work and group presentations, and other participatory techniques.

The dialogue process was successfully conducted in the districts. The process provided an opportunity for CSOs and local governments to openly discuss their relationships and constraints, and to reflect on how their relationship could be improved. In most of the districts, participants commended this opportunity, and many remarked that it was the first of its kind. In most districts, participants were able to recognize the need to create a forum where such dialoguing can continue to take place, as well as the need for other mechanisms for coordinating CSOs and getting them into better collaboration with local governments.

In some districts, informal arrangements for regular consultation already existed that bring together CSOs and local governments in particular sectors (e.g. health in Rakai,

and Children's issues in Wakiso). The dialogue process reawakened the need to strengthen or even formalize such arrangements.

Another identified avenue for strengthening collaboration is the District NGO Forum. Currently, the functionality and roles of this structure varies from district to district. This is influenced by various factors including its leadership, its perceived functions, and the local politics. The potential for the forum to bring about the desired degree of partnership will also vary from district to district.

However, both CSOs and local governments appreciated the need for stronger collaboration. Each of the parties recognized that collaboration with the other would make their own work better. In most districts, the district leaders who were in attendance pledged to support efforts aimed at strengthening collaboration between CSOs and their local governments.

Sampling of CSOs

A sample of 321 CSOs was selected taking into consideration, the inclusion of different types of CSOs (international, national, local, and CBOs) and the total number of CSOs in the respective districts. This represented 9.4% of the total number of CSOs recorded in Phase I.

To pick this sample, districts were grouped into three categories on the basis of the number of CSOs, i.e. Category A – those with between 1 to 50 CSOs, Category B – those with between 51-100 CSOs and Category C – those with 101 or more CSOs.

A sample of 10 CSOs were targeted from each of the Category A districts, 15 from Category B districts, and 20 from category C districts. However, these targets were refined during the consultative workshops with the district stakeholders, basing on the information obtained about the CSO situation in the respective districts.

To ensure all types of CSOs were captured in the sample, at least 1 NGO network organization and at least 2 CSOs per each of the other types (International NGO, National NGO, Local, CBO) were included in the sample. Where there was a big number of CBOs, they were over-sampled to increase their representation.

1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study investigated CSOs engaged in the target sectors (education, health, HIV/AIDS) as well as the crosscutting technical areas (gender, advocacy, capacity building, management, behavior change communication, counseling etc) in the 20 UPHOLD programme districts.

One of the challenges to this study related to the timing. The study was conducted at the end of the financial year when districts were preparing for the new financial year. As such most districts were busy with budget conferences and other meetings. This delayed some of the district meetings. In some cases, this also meant that some key personalities in the district would not be available to attend the meetings, and they would send in representatives.

Another possible limitation of this study is that the selection of sample CSOs drew from those that were already recorded or known. It was therefore unlikely that CSOs which were not in the district records and not known to other stakeholders could have made it into the sample.

1.7 Organization of this Report

This report is organized into four sections. The first section provides the introductory overview, including the objectives and methodology of the study. The second section provides some conceptual overview about CSOs and partnerships. It also traces the evolution of CSOs and their relations with government. The third section discusses the results of the study, while the fourth section summarizes the emerging issues and presents some recommendations. In addition to this volume, separate files of appendices by district have been prepared showing some key characteristics of sample CSOs including type of organization, where it is registered, target groups, sectors and activities, number of staff, and possession of an office.

2 CSO-GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIPS: CONCEPTUAL AND HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This section gives a brief overview of the conceptualizations of CSOs and partnerships. The understanding of these concepts is important to their application in this study and subsequently in any development work. The section also traces the evolution of the CSO sector in Uganda and the changing relationship between CSOs and government.

2.2 Defining and Understanding CSOs

The term civil society has been variously used to the extent that no single definition apparently appears to satisfy all interests. Most writers however seem to converge on the point that civil society organizations are those that function outside the market and the state. White (1994) defined civil society as;

..an intermediate realm of formal associations situated between the state and the household, populated by organizations, which are separate from the state, enjoy some autonomy in relation with the state, and are formed voluntarily by members of society to protect or extend their interests or values.

CSOs constitute what has also been termed as the “third sector” – third in a sense of government being the first and the business sector being the second¹. Salamon and Anheier (1999) outline five key characteristics of “third sector” organizations;

- (i) Formal or organized – i.e. they have an institutionalized structure and systems, for instance regular meetings,
- (ii) Private – they are separate from government even though they may receive some government support,
- (iii) Non-profit – if they make any financial surpluses, they do not accrue to owners but are ploughed back into the organization,
- (iv) Self governing – they are able to control and manage their own affairs, and
- (v) Voluntary – there is voluntary participation in the organization.

Examples of civil society have been noted to include a wide range of groupings such as NGOs², CBOs, the media, trade unions, cooperative societies, and professional

¹ In some contexts, CSOs are included as part of the private sector. Hence the public-private divide puts the CSOs in the private.

associations (Bazaara, 2000). For purposes of this study, CSOs have been used to refer to a range of non-government, non-profit oriented, voluntary organizations that seek to achieve specified goals to benefit a cross-section of the population. In this study, four major types of CSOs which are of relevance can be distinguished as follows:

1. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) – these are non-government, non-profit organizations usually formed to promote or pursue objectives of common interest, often in the benefit of poor sections of society. NGOs can further be distinguished into:
 - a) International NGOs (INGOs) – these have been formed in one country where they have their head-office, but they may have subsidiary offices and operations in several countries. The common INGOs have their headquarters in Europe, America, of Scandinavian countries.
 - b) National NGOs (NANGOs) – these have been locally formed within a given country. They have operations in either all or most regions/districts of a country
 - c) Local/District Based NGOs – these have been locally formed in particular regions/districts and their operations are restricted to a single or a few districts.
2. NGO Networks/Umbrella Organizations - These are organizations that have been formed as alliances to bring together various organizations with similar concerns or those operating in a particular sector. NGO networks may be formed at national, sub-national or even international levels.
3. Community Based Organizations (CBOs) – CBOs are membership organizations formed voluntarily by a group of people to serve their common interests. CBOs rely on the voluntary service of their members and do not employ paid staff. This attribute is one of the key features distinguishing CBOs from NGOs.
4. Faith Based Organizations – These are organizations that have been formed based on a belief in some super-natural power related to religious belief. They are often associated with religious institutions such as churches, mosques, or are otherwise founded by members or leaders of a given religious affiliation. FBOs may at the same time be classified either as CBOs or NGOs.

² NGOs are distinguished from CBOs in a sense that they employ paid staff, and they seek to serve the needs of a section of the population consisting not necessarily of the founders or members. On the other hand, CBOs are membership organizations that rely on voluntary service from members and seek to serve the needs of the members themselves. FBOs are otherwise known as religious-based organizations, their foundation having roots in some religious faith. They are thus often affiliated to religious denominations and their agencies such as churches and mosques.

2.3 The Growing Interest in Civil Society Organizations

In much of the world, interest in CSOs increased rapidly during the 1980s. It has been argued that this increasing interest was largely associated with the resurgence of neo-liberal, free market ideology, which sought to reduce the role and influence of the state. Civil society was closely linked with democratization, and it came to be seen as a solution to the problems of development policy implementation, bypassing the corrupt and inefficient organs of the state (Clarke, 2003). CSOs, particularly NGOs have increasingly been seen as effective channels for development assistance. Their perceived strengths include being closer to the poor, being administratively flexible, innovativeness, and cost-effectiveness (Lewis, 2003).

2.4 Defining and Understanding Partnership

A partnership can be understood to refer to a joint undertaking between two or more parties. In the literature, there is no agreement about the definition and terminology relating to partnership, and often, other terms such as collaboration, cooperation, coordination, alliance, joint working, networking are used. Because of this lack of clarity, the terms partnership and collaboration are used interchangeably in this study. However, writers tend to identify the common features of partnerships as being common goals, sharing of resources, sharing of responsibilities or joint action, trust, and expectation of mutual benefits (Bentley 2004; Jamali 2004; Wildridge et al, 2004). The rationale for partnerships arises from the likelihood of achieving goals that organizations would not achieve individually.

Whereas different forms of partnership often exist, an emerging form that is attracting a lot of attention is that referred to as public-private partnership (PPP) – meaning partnerships between government agencies and those from the private sector (including CSOs). Nijkamp (2002) has defined a public-private partnership as an institutionalized form of cooperation between public and private actors, which, on the basis of their own indigenous objectives, work together towards a joint target.

The rationale for establishing public-private partnerships is that both sectors have unique characteristics that provide them with comparative advantages in specific aspects of service delivery. A number of potential benefits are envisaged to result from public-private partnerships, including; cost savings, risk sharing, improved levels of services, efficient implementation, minimizing duplication, and so on (Brinkerhoff 2002). Public-private partnerships are also a way of breaking undesirable government monopoly in the provision of certain services.

But public-private partnerships are also just one way of organizing service delivery, and not a substitute for government systems. Whatever form this partnership may take,

government remains responsible and accountable for the ultimate outcomes of service delivery and protecting the public interest.

There are also potential risks associated with public-private partnership. These may include loss of control by government, increased costs, political risks, loss of accountability, and biases in the selection processes of agencies to partner with.

Another important form of partnership is that between bigger CSOs, such as international NGOs and smaller CSOs such as district-based NGOs and CBOs. The interest in this form of partnership focuses on how smaller CSOs can build their capacity by accessing resources, skills and experience from the bigger CSOs. The second interest is how the bigger CSOs can improve the reach and impact of programmes at the grassroots level through the smaller CSOs. This is based on recognition that smaller CSOs are often nearer the families and communities, may have networks of volunteers to effectively operate at this level, and may be more cost-effective and sustainable.

Overall, it can be argued that partnerships are not necessarily a panacea and are not appropriate in all contexts (Wildridge et al, 2004).

2.5 A Historical Perspective of NGOs and CBOs in Uganda and their Relationship with the State

NGOs and CBOs are by far, the most common types of CSOs in Uganda. NGO work in Uganda dates as far back as the 1960s. The pattern of NGO development and activity in Uganda as in much of the developing world has followed three phases;

The first phase, which characterized the 1950s and 1960s, was that of relief and emergency response. NGOs were very few at the time and their main activities during this period were in the sectors of health, education and emergency relief. Their work in health and education was also more charity-oriented, rather than developmental. Government perceived the work of NGOs as temporally and transitional, pending government take over when resources allowed. Their role was also seen mainly in terms of filling gaps – providing services where government could not reach.

The second phase which covered the 1970s and 1980s was a development phase, whereby NGOs became more concerned with issues of supporting self-help development, involving communities, and delivering development oriented services. During the 1970s, CSOs in Uganda suffered restriction from the state, as any attempts at self-organization were perceived as anti-government. The fall of the Idi Amin regime at the end of the 1970s brought with it a new era for CSOs. The number of NGOs is reported to have increased from as few as less than 20 to more than 100 during the early

1980s, as voluntary efforts came in to fill the vacuum created by the collapse of government structures and services. During the early and mid 1980s, CSOs enjoyed much more freedom from the state, although at the same time, they had no fruitful collaboration or support from the state. Some writers have characterized the NGO-government relationship during this time as one of a *laissez-faire* nature. This freedom from state restriction, the collapse of state services in the preceding period, and the availability of donor support, all combined to contribute to a rapid increase in the number of NGOs and CBOs in the country during this period.

The third phase, which cuts through the later part of the 80s, the 1990s and 2000s is associated with the biggest increase in the number of CSOs. DENIVA, the network of local NGOs had registered over 400 organizations (NGOs and CBOs) by 1996 (Ridell et al, 1998). A database generated by the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development in 1998 listed 2,728 NGOs and 743 CBOs in the country. The increase in the number of CSOs has been attributed to both internal factors – such as the increased freedom of association and organization – and external factors, such as the global trend towards a reduced role for the state and an increasing role for non-state actors. It is argued that CBOs and NGOs in Uganda have also been formed for additional reasons including as a form of employment and a means of survival, as a channel for tapping donor assistance (Bazaara, 2000), and more recently for tapping funds channeled through government programmes at district level. This phase of CSO development is also associated with a growing focus by NGOs on higher goals of advocacy, human rights, gender and development, policy influence and good governance. There is also greater attention to issues of CSO-Government collaboration and partnerships.

In fact, CSO-government partnership, or public-private partnership as such, is now part of the Ugandan government policy, and forms a strong element of policy in for instance the health sector. Although the PPP is yet to be fully articulated in all sectors, there seems to be wide recognition that partnership is the way to go.

3 STUDY RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

This section of the report discusses the results from the study in 20 districts of Uganda. Results from Phases I and II have been integrated. The section starts with a description of CSOs in the study districts, and then proceeds to discuss issues of registration and regulation, factors contributing to the emergence of CSOs, sectors and activities that CSOs are involved in, capacities, collaboration with local governments, and attitudes.

3.2 The CSO Sector across Districts

The Size of the CSO Sector in the Districts

The Phase 2 field visits confirmed the existence of a big number of CSOs in the districts, with variations across districts though. Although districts do not have accurate figures of the existing CSOs, stakeholders in almost all districts believed the number of CSOs was actually more than what is documented, as revealed by the Phase I results due to under-registration. Phase I had revealed a total of 3401 CSOs recorded in the 20 districts, mainly in the sectors of health, HIV/AIDS and education. The districts with the biggest numbers of CSOs included Bushenyi, Mbarara, Rukungiri, Gulu and Pallisa. (*see appendix for Table of CSOs by Type from Phase I results*).

Many of the existing CSOs, especially CBOs and local NGOs are not active on ground, mainly due to lack of resources. In some districts, however, it was argued that such CSOs – often described as “brief-case” are not necessarily dubious, rather, they are undergoing a normal stage of organizational development, and they are likely to be functional when resources allow.

Patterns and Types of CSOs in Districts

CBOs are the most dominant type of CSOs in all the districts. International NGOs were more in number in districts that have been experiencing civil strife and insurgency (Gulu, Bundibugyo, Nakapiripirit, Kitgum), and those that have a history of other calamities such as war or HIV/AIDS (Luwero and Rakai respectively).

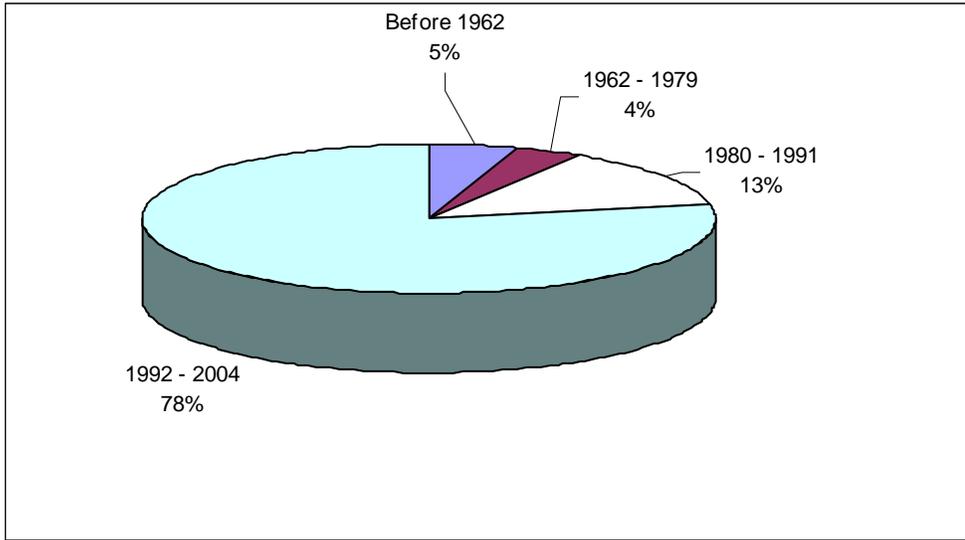
The NGO networks found in the districts were mainly in form of the District NGO Forum that have been established as branches of the National NGO Forum. Some national level networks such as DENIVA were also found to be recorded in some districts as part of the CSOs operating there. There were also a few districts with networks for people living with HIV/AIDS, and those with branches of UNASO. (*see appendix from Phase I results*)

The strength and vibrancy of the CSO sector also tends to vary, with some districts such as Gulu, Bundibugyo, and Rakai, having a stronger and more organized CSO sector, compared to districts such as Kyenjojo, Yumbe, and Bushenyi. Again, the influence of the district history seems to be an important factor here.

Age of CSOs

The length of time that a given organization has existed is an important factor in terms of its capacities, experience, motivation for existence, and possibly its place in the district development arena. This study analyzed the year of foundation of the sample CSOs which is shown in the chart below:

Figure 1: Year of Foundation of CSOs



N=315

Of all the CSOs that responded to the question about the year when they were founded (N=315), it can be noted that more than three quarters (78%) were founded during the last 12 years. The factors already discussed including more freedom of association, increased funding opportunities, and changing development paradigm involving the move to roll back government all combine to explain this.

Geographical Coverage of CSO Activities

As can be noted from the results in Table 1, majority of the CSOs operated only in one district. This was especially the case with CBOs and local/district based NGOs. Few CSOs covered more than 10 districts, and only 4 operated in all the 56 districts of the country. These 4 included the Islamic Medical Association of Uganda (IMAU), the National Association of Women's Organizations (NAWOU), Uganda Change Agent Association, and the National Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS (NACWOLA). There are also organizations with almost a national coverage including the Uganda Red Cross Society, and the Family Planning Association of Uganda.

Table 1: Districts of CSO Operation

Number of Districts of CSO Operations*	Frequency	Percent
1	221	69.0
2-10	80	24.8
11-55	16	5.0
56	4	1.2
Total	321	100.0

**Includes districts outside the 20 UPHOLD implementation districts
N=321*

It was further found that up to 26.1% operated in only one sub-county, while a total of more than half (54.9%) had operations not more than 10 sub-counties. Overall it can be noted that CSO operations remain on a small scale in the majority of cases.

Population Groups Targeted/Served

The major population groups targeted by CSOs include children, particularly orphans and vulnerable children (42.7%), women (35.5%), youth (35.5%), PLWAs (25.9%), widows (14.3%), HIV/AIDS affected families (6.2%), the poor generally (12.8%), and people with disabilities (10.3%). A few organizations also targeted child headed households and the internally displaced persons. Overall, most CSOs reported that they target the vulnerable groups. At the same time, however, about 20% of all the CSOs reported that they also target the general community. This was especially in case of programmes aimed at general development, health, and HIV/AIDS.

In terms of the size of the target population, informants from CSOs were asked to state the size of their target population as well as the size of the population they had actually served. Most CSOs targeted between 100 and 1000 people. This points to the small-scale nature of most CSO interventions. As already noted, more than half of all the

sample CSOs operated in not more than 10 sub-counties. A number of CSOs either did not know the size of their target population, or simply did not have a specific target.

3.3 Registration and Regulation of CSOs in Uganda – National Level

The need to regulate CSOs in Uganda gained importance in the second half of the 1980s following the rapid proliferation of NGOs in the country. There was concern about the big and increasing number of local and international organizations calling themselves “NGOs”, whose activities were not clearly known or accounted for. Government therefore put in place the *Non-Governmental Organizations Registration Statute (No.5 of 1989)*, and the accompanying Statutory Instrument, *The Non-Governmental Organizations Regulations, 1990 (No.9 of 1990)*, the main aim being to provide for the registration of NGOs and to establish a Board for NGO registration and matters connected therewith³. The NGO Registration Board was established with a Secretariat in the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The Board was composed of two members from the public, and one member from the Ministries of Internal Affairs; Relief and Social Rehabilitation; Justice; Lands and Survey; Planning and Economic Development; Finance; Foreign Affairs; Local Government; Women in Development; and representatives from Office of the Prime Minister, Internal Security Organization, and External Security Organization.

The Board is empowered to consider NGO applications for registration, to approve or reject such applications, to keep a register of registered organizations, and to grant or revoke certificates of registration. It is also charged with the duty of guiding and monitoring the work of NGOs. The Board has never played the latter role, due to under-facilitation.

As can be seen from its composition – consisting of representatives from key security organizations – together with its secretariat being housed in the Ministry of Internal Affairs (the ministry responsible for security, law and order), the Board and the statute in general seems to have been established more as measures to control, rather than enable the work of NGOs.

The process of NGO registration itself as provided for by the statute has been described as highly centralized (Ridell, 1998), since the NGO registration Board and secretariat have no structures at local government level. Indeed, up-country based CSOs often find

³ Before the NGO Registration Statute came into force, NGOs were variously registered under The Companies Act, The Uganda Registration Services Bureau Act 1998, or simply as associations and trusteeships. Today, NGOs which register with the Registration Board also have to register under the Companies Act to acquire legal status because the former does not confer legal status.

it difficult to access registration from the Board in Kampala and they settle for registration with the districts.

Civil society groups in Uganda themselves have openly argued against the existing regulatory mechanisms of government vis a vis CSOs. The NGO Registration Statute has been under revision, but apparently not for the better of CSOs. In reference to the NGO Registration (Amendment) Bill, Asiimwe-Mwesigye (2003, P.10) from the Uganda Women's Network (UWONET) argues that:

The present bill treats NGOs as a security threat, provides for an excessive degree of state control and interference in the activities of NGOs and makes registration and revocation or registration of an NGO dependant on government policy, plan or in public interest. The bill makes no attempt to lay the ground for constructive relationship between NGOs and Government, for example by institutionalizing channels of communication and cooperation.

CSOs feel that whereas the NGO law is being revised, it still contains clauses that will make their work very difficult. In 2001, a coalition of CSOs made consultations to agree on a common position in response to the NGO Amendment Bill. The CSOs proposed that the NGO Board should be placed in a more development-oriented ministry such Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, or Ministry of Finance, rather than the Ministry of Internal Affairs. They also called for greater representation of CSOs on the Board, and they rejected the proposed introduction of annual permits (Action Aid 2001).

Some CSOs have argued that the best way to regulate CSOs is for them to regulate themselves through for instance formation of their own Board. Precedents to this include the work of professional associations such as the Uganda Medical Association, which regulates the conduct of medical practitioners. There are no concrete efforts towards this though.

Another government office with responsibility for NGO regulation and coordination is the Office of the Prime Minister, which has an Aid Coordination Secretariat. The secretariat among others is responsible for coordinating and monitoring NGO activities. In the past, this office used to convene monthly meetings for NGOs, which were abandoned with time.

Overall, almost all CSOs (96.6%) of the CSOs studied were registered. This study found that 49% of the sample CSOs (n=151) were registered with the NGO Registration Board, compared to 59.1% which reported to be registered at District level.

3.4 Registration and Regulation of CSOs – Local Government Level

Whereas registration of NGOs with government is done at national level as discussed above, that for CBOs and other district-based associations is undertaken at district level, although there seems not to be any specific law regarding this. In most districts, the Directorate of Gender and Community Based Services is the office registering CBOs. Resident District Commissioners (RDCs) – the central government representatives at district level have also occasionally taken interest in regulating the work of CSOs, again from the security perspective. In some districts such as Bundibugyo, it was reported that all CSOs must obtain approval of the RDC's office in order to operate. Security concerns are the major reason behind this. In Mbarara district, it is the district policy to register and recognize CSOs through issuing of certificates of recognition.

Although the District Directorates of Gender and Community Based Services have a mandate to register CSOs in the districts, not all CSOs register for various reasons. The international and national CSOs often think that registration with the National NGO Board is enough while some local NGOs and CBOs may not be aware of the registration requirements. This study found that 59.1% of the CSOs were registered at District level.

Some districts such as Gulu and Pallisa have directories of CSOs operating in those districts. However, some informants also reported that such inventories are not very useful, as they do not show the capacities of the CSOs. They are also not helpful to tell which CSOs are genuine.

In some districts such as Kamuli and Mbarara, it was found that many CSOs are also registered at sub-county level. Overall, 5.5% (n=17) of the CSOs in the 20 districts reported that they were registered at sub-county level.

3.5 Other Centers of Registration

Apart from registration with government, CSOs also register, voluntarily though, with the umbrella organizations in which they may fall, such as the NGO Forum at national and district levels, DENIVA, and the sector-specific NGO network organizations.

3.6 Factors leading to Emergence of CSOs

In almost all the districts, the CSO sector is young – dating about less than 10 years, but growing. The factors that are contributing to the emergence of CSOs and shaping their character are wide-ranging, with a lot of commonalities but also differences across districts. The factors underlying the formation or coming of CSOs include both, genuine desire to pursue actions that improve people's quality of life, but also pursuit

for individual economic and political gain. More specifically, the following reasons were identified as contributory to the emergence of CSOs.

Response to existing problems and needs - A big number of CSOs have been formed or attracted to districts to respond to the existing social problems, such as poverty, HIV/AIDS, orphans, and lack of social services and welfare programmes. In Rakai district for instance, many local NGOs and CBOs came up to respond to the problems created by HIV/AIDS, while many in Bundibugyo and Gulu, came up to respond to problems resulting from the civil wars that plagued those districts. In many districts, international NGOs are also attracted by the presence of particular problems that may be perceived to be unique or predominantly existing in those particular districts. Groups of marginalized or disadvantaged people have also formed groups so as to be eligible for support. These include PLWHAs, IDPs, widows, and so on. In all these cases, CSOs are founded on the basis of genuine concern about the welfare of the founders or other particular sections of the population.

Gap filling - CSOs have emerged because of failure by government to meet its obligations in serving the communities. Many CSOs came up to fill gaps in service delivery left by government. This is for instance true for CSOs that came on the scene in the 1980s to support orphans' education. In such cases, CSOs have sought to create parallel systems of service delivery to those of government or to supplement the little that there is from government.

Response to funding opportunities - Many CBOs and local NGOs have emerged in response to the opportunities for funding available through the districts and national government programmes. For example the funds from the AIDS/HIV Model District Programme (AIM) and Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF), CHAI, STI project, NAADS, Nutrition and early Childhood Development, all channeled through the districts have been responsible for the sudden increase in the number of CBOs and local NGOs. In this case, CSOs may be justifiably taking up emerging opportunities. This is the case with most CSOs formed during the late 1990s and 2000s. A more specific example are those referred to as 'CHAI groups' – meaning the groups that are funded to implement activities under the CHAI project. It was also reported that under NAADS, there are funds specifically meant to support group formation, and many CBOs had been formed as a result, a good example being in Rakai district. But others may be motivated purely by financial gain.

Some are opportunists, it is just survival driving them. They want to tap funding, wherever it can come from (Workshop participant, Rakai District)

Many CSOs formed for purposes of tapping financial resources often remain dormant after failing to get the expected financial support.

Methodologies of international partners - It was also revealed in the districts that most CBOs were formed due to the methodologies of international agencies and NGOs that support local organizations. Examples include ACTION AID in the districts of Bundibugyo, Pallisa, and Mubende, and GOAL in the districts of Bundibugyo and Bugiri. These NGOs do not implement programs in the districts directly, but support CBOs to carry out the implementation. In Rakai district, DANIDA promoted the visibility of CSOs and their involvement in district processes and programmes. This attracted more CSOs to be formed.

Related to the above, some big CSOs have promoted local CBOs to take over from them as a means of institutionalizing sustainability of programmes. New CSOs are formed to fill the vacuum created by those that have phased out. This is the case when big NGOs are phasing out, they promote CBOs to continue with what they have been doing. In Rakai district for instance there are CBOs that have been promoted to take over from Medicine du Monde (e.g. CIPHA), others to take over from IRCD (e.g. Community Enterprises Development Organization [CEDO]), and Rakai AIDS Counselors' Association (RACA) was born out of Lutheran World federation. In other cases, however, CBOs have emerged out their own initiative but built on past experience with NGO work. In Wakiso district, Sanga Development Association was formed by former volunteers working with BUSO Foundation, building on their skills and experiences gained from Buso Foundation.

Enabling political environment - Another factor is the enabling environment created by the government, for people to organize and form groups without prohibitions from government. Unlike in the 1970s when group activity was restricted, the National Resistance Movement (NRM) government both at central and local levels has encouraged groups and other organizations.

Political motives and political opportunism - Many CBOs are formed on political grounds to tap funds from politicians during campaign and election time. Politicians promise to support organized groups not individuals and sometimes even solicit for proposals from them. The founders of CSOs also go to politicians and present the lists of their members whose political support they trade for financial or other material gains. This scenario was reported to be common in districts such as Rukungiri and Bugiri.

Some groups are formed as stepping-stones to political careers of the founders. In Rukungiri district, for instance, politicians have often used CBOs and NGOs that they founded as a platform for seeking political offices. Most women politicians in the

district have a local NGO or CBO that they founded, subsequently serving as their springboard.

Employment creation - Some CSOs have been formed to create employment. Since there is high rate of unemployment in all parts of the country, some people decide to form CBOs and NGOs as a survival strategy.

Tradition - Some CSOs are formed just as a continuation of history. Most Ugandan communities have historically lived and worked together through communal and informal support groups. When an opportunity to become formal comes people form groups. People also have experience of working together through the cooperative movement of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s.

The different reasons outlined above are applicable to almost all the 20 districts, although to varying extents. To a large extent, the reasons above also reflect the district-specific contexts – because conditions of need/social problems, local politics, and enabling environments by district leadership, all tend to vary from district to district. Thus the district context is emerging as important in shaping the size, character and development of the CSO sector in that particular locality. On the other hand, external influences such as the funding opportunities seem to have a more similar effect on the CSO sector in all the districts.

The reasons outlined above have some implications for working with CSOs:

The ideal CSOs to work with would be those that were founded on a genuine desire to respond to existing problems affecting members of society or gaps in service delivery. Similarly, the best partner CSOs would be those that have some sound institutional structures, have gained experience, and have earned the trust of the community and the local leadership. A number of factors cloud a clear identification of such CSOs. Nonetheless, organizations such as UPHOLD which are seeking to improve service delivery through partnership must innovate ways of distinguishing the good from not so good partners. A combination of physical/on-spot assessments and recommendations from local people and leaders will be necessary ingredients in the selection process of potential partner CSOs. Variables such as age, registration status, and being known in the community will be important ingredients of the selection criteria.

3.7 Sector Composition and Activities of CSOs

The findings of Phase II confirm those of Phase I regarding the big number of CSOs engaged in the sectors of health, HIV/AIDS, and education (*see appendix for results from Phase I*). Table 4 below shows the distribution of CSOs by sector.

Table 2: Sectors Involved in by Sample CSOs

Sector	Frequency*	Percentage
Health	194	60.4
HIV/AIDS	185	57.6
Education	180	56.1
Agriculture	81	25.2
Income generation	62	19.3
Advocacy	26	8.1
Gender issues	18	5.6
Capacity building	14	4.4
Peace and conflict resolution	13	4.0
Others	29	9.0

* Multiple responses allowed *N=321*

The specific activities in which CSOs were engaged are shown in Table 5 below. It can be observed that within the health and HIV/AIDS thematic areas, most CSOs are engaged in sensitization and counseling. The counseling referred to here includes both professional and non-professional counseling and social support.

Activities in the education sector are mainly limited to support for school dues and scholastic materials, vocational skills training and adult literacy.

Table 3: Specific Activities Undertaken

Sectors and Activities	Frequency*	Percentage
Health & HIV/AIDS		
HIV/AIDS sensitization	181	56.4
Counseling	95	29.6
Home based care	56	17.4
PHC sensitization	38	11.8
Medical treatment	36	11.2
Condom distribution	29	9.0
Post test activities	19	5.9
Distribution of mosquito nets	4	1.2
Income generation		
Income generating activities	58	18.1
Micro-credit	15	4.7
Education		
School sponsorship	57	17.8
Support for scholastic materials	55	17.1
Vocational skills training	33	10.3
Adult literacy	16	5.0
Cross-Cutting		
Training/capacity building	50	15.6
Life skills training	31	9.7
Human rights	20	6.2
Others	62	19.3

* Multiple responses allowed *N*=321

3.8 CSO Resources and Capacities

CSO resources and capacities were assessed in terms of availability or access to basic physical resources such as office space, computers, transport, and communication facilities. Financial resources were assessed in terms of the size of their annual budgets as well as the source of their funding.

Physical Facilities: Office Accommodation, Communication and Transport

The table below shows the possession and access to key physical facilities by CSOs.

Table 4: Availability of Physical and Logistical facilities to CSOs

Facilities	Frequency	Percentage
Has office	292	91.0
Transport facilities*		
Vehicle	83	25.9
Motorcycle	108	33.6
Bicycle	76	23.7
None	138	43.0
Communication facilities*		
E-mail owned	66	20.6
E-mail accessed elsewhere	47	14.6
Telephone line owned	128	39.9
Telephone accessed elsewhere	84	26.2
Fax owned	8	2.5
Fax accessed elsewhere	13	4.0
None	74	23.1
Word processing facilities*		
Computers	142	44.2
Type writers	52	16.2
None	151	47.0
Power availability*		
Electricity	188	58.6
Generator	61	19.0
Solar	11	3.4
None	107	33.3

* Multiple responses allowed

N=321

The above findings indicate that most CSOs have an office. However, more than 40% have no means of transport, more than 20 % have no communication facilities, 47% have no word-processing equipment and 33% have no power. CBOs are the most affected by lack of facilities. However, most CSOs that lack communication facilities have devised alternative mechanisms, including reliance of the personal cell phones of their staff, volunteers or leaders.

Human Resources

The human resources of CSOs include both paid staff and volunteers. This study found that most CSOs in the CBO category had no paid staff but relied entirely on the volunteers and members. Among the other categories of CSOs which employed paid staff, the use of volunteers to supplement staff effort was also predominant, as majority

employed not more than 10 paid staff. Overall, 95% of all CSOs reported that they worked with volunteers. About 40% of all the CSOs reported that were working with more than 20 volunteers at the time of the study.

Predominant reliance on volunteers by CSOs enables them to save costs on staff, to reach the grassroots, and to promote community involvement and ownership. However, this presents its own limitations since volunteers may not be very skilled and not as effective as paid staff. They are also difficult to hold accountable.

The human resource capacities of CSOs can also be seen in terms of the skills available among their staff and volunteers. These are shown in the table below. Many CSOs also reported that their staff and volunteers had received various training programmes from different sources.

Table 5: Key Skills available in CSOs

Available skills	Percentage of CSOs reporting availability of skills among staff <i>N=110</i>	Percentage of CSOs reporting availability of skills among volunteers <i>N=270</i>
Counseling	55.9	53.0
Training	31.4	22.2
Mobilization	29.9	30.0
Sensitization	7.3	15.6
Adult education	2.7	3.0
Home based care	2.7	6.7
Vocational skills	6.5	7.4
Drama	1.5	4.1
Proposal writing	14.6	9.6
Report writing	2.7	3.0
Financial management	30.3	13.7
Lobbying and advocacy	10.0	8.1
Participatory techniques	9.6	8.1
Agriculture related	9.2	7.4
Others	20.7	15.2

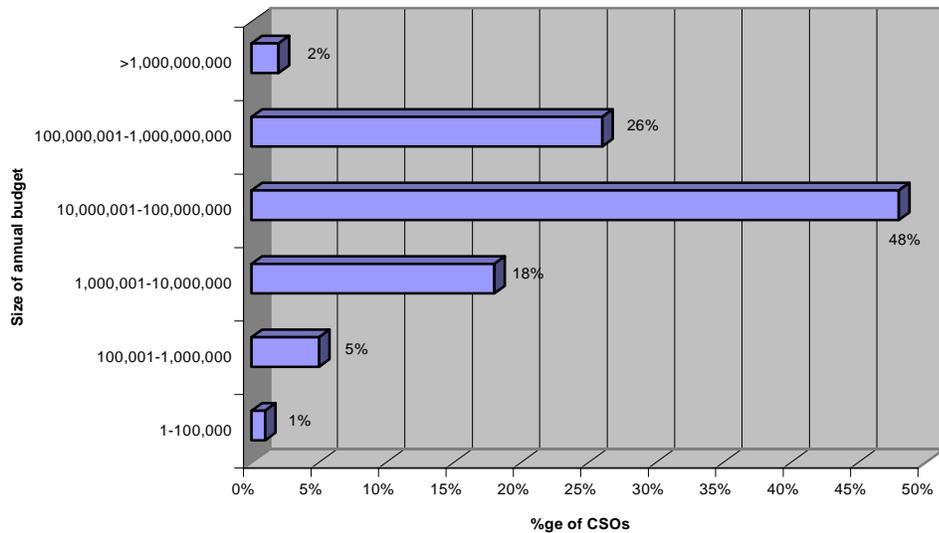
From the above table, it can be observed that most skills were reported in the areas of counseling, training, and sensitization. It is important to observe that the claimed skills in a highly technical area such as counseling need to be verified and validated. For most CSOs could take many other aspects of social support to be equivalent to counseling.

It can also be observed that availability of skills in key organizational and management aspects such as report writing and financial management are lacking in many organizations. Yet these are skills that any organization requires.

Finances

Figure 2 below shows the size of the CSO annual budgets, while Table 8 shows the sources of financial resources for CSOs. It can be noted that the financial resources of CSOs vary widely, with some having annual budgets as small as less than Uganda Shs.100,000 and others with up to billions of shillings. Most CSOs had annual budgets in the range of ten to one hundred million shillings. Yet some CSO staff interviewed could not tell their budgets, either because they did not know, or they were not authorized to divulge this information.

Figure 2: Size of CSO Annual Budgets



N=262

The size of the budget handled by an organization could also point to that organization’s experience in handling and managing funds. It can therefore be deduced that most

organizations had some experience in handling funds in excess of a million Uganda shillings. Those that do not have such experience will require preparation if they are to be entrusted with large sums of funds.

Table 6: Sources of Financial Support for CSOs

Source of Support	Frequency	Percentage
External agency	175	56.3
Local agency (non-government)/donations & grants	104	33.4
Central government agency	29	9.3
Local government	58	18.6
Own or local projects/sources	53	17.0
Membership fees	134	43.1
Others	9	2.9

N=311

It can be noted that most CSOs get their financial resources from external sources, i.e. outside the country. For many CSOs, membership fees continue to be a source of revenue, although its contribution to the overall budget of the organization is small. A number of CSO staff or leaders interviewed could not mention the size of their budgets, claiming they did not know, or were not sure.

Governance and other Institutional Characteristics

The quality of governance and the existence of viable institutional systems and procedures are key factors in the performance of any organization. CSOs were asked to report on their key governance and institutional structures. The table below shows the results.

Table 7: Management and other Institutional Characteristics

	Frequency	Percentage
Registered	310	96.6
Has a leadership /governance body	316	98.4
Has a constitution or other policy document	311	96.9
Has a strategic or long-term plan	213	66.4
Has a work-plan for current year	293	91.3
Has bank account	284	88.5

N=321

It can be observed that most CSOs have governance and institutional structures in place. In fact, having them is usually a requirement for registration and eligibility for funding from many donor agencies and other funding agencies. The scope of this study did not allow further investigation into the application and functionality of the above governance and management tools. Further detailed capacity assessment, appraisal and verification will need to be conducted on CSOs pre-qualified for support.

3.9 Relations between Civil Society and Government at National Level

At national level, relations between civil society organizations and the central government organs tends to vary depending on the type and nature of CSO in question, as well as the extent it has sought to work in relationship with government. Some advocacy NGOs such as the Uganda Debt Network boast of a very positive relationship with government Ministries (Ridell et al, 1998), despite their frequent attack on government policies and practices.

We do not have a problem in working with government. We are respected for being independent. We support government where it is right, we oppose it where it is wrong (Informant, Uganda Debt Network).

CSOs were involved in the drafting of the first Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) which was completed in 1997. When the PEAP was being revised in 1999-2000, together with the formulation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy paper, CSOs were represented on the Task Force that led the consultative process. CSOs on this Task Force included Oxfam (UK), Action Aid (UK), VECO Uganda (Belgium), SNV (Netherlands), MS Uganda (Denmark), Action for Development (ACFODE), the Uganda Women's Network (UWONET), Forum for Women Educationalists (FAWE), World Vision, Uganda Catholic Medical Bureau (UCMB), and the Uganda Debt Network (UDN). It has been pointed out that CSOs were not simply represented on the Task Force but their input was incorporated in the PEAP/PRSP. However, it has been argued that it was a requirement from the World Bank and the IMF that PRSPs are formulated with as wide participation of stakeholders as possible, including CSOs. It is argued that CSO participation in the PRSP formulation represented the first explicit effort on part of government to deliberately involve CSOs in policy design, planning, and implementation (Gariyo 2002).

The Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) also strongly recognizes the important role that civil society organizations are expected to play and seeks to integrate them in the planning process.

CSOs and their network organizations have been actively involved in the Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment process (UPPAP) spearheaded by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MOFPED). These included Oxfam, DENIVA, the National NGO Forum, UWONET and UDN.

Others such as the UDN and the National NGO Forum have been involved in empowering communities to monitor the Poverty Action Fund (PAF) programmes. These have also been involved in the budget policy framework. Some CSOs have also been involved in the Sector Working Groups (SWGs) that discuss sectoral plans and programmes.

The new developments of the Sector-Wide-Approach are not fully welcomed by the CSOs. Particularly, the requirement that CSO budgets should be part of government budgets and the requirement that CSOs get their funds through government channels is seen as dangerous for the independence of CSOs.

The Uganda AIDS Commission, which is the government body responsible for co-ordination of HIV/AIDS work in the country, has initiated a partnership mechanism in which CSOs participate. The partnership consists of 11 self coordinating entities that include faith based organization, international NGOs, the private business sector, PWAs, and research and academic institutions among others. These entities are supposed to hold monthly meetings, and to send a representative to meetings with UAC.

Individual CSOs such as TASO, AIC, Uganda Red Cross, and so on have also good working relationships with the Ministry of Health and the Uganda AIDS Commission on matters of health care, and specifically HIV/AIDS.

3.10 Civil Society – Local Government Collaboration and Partnership

One of the important issues that this study sought to investigate was the existence, nature and quality of relationships between CSOs and local governments, and generally the involvement of CSOs in local government programmes. Data on these issues was collected from both the dialogue meetings as well as from interviews with sample CSOs and local government key informants.

From all the different sources of data, it is evident that many CSOs and local government staff perceived collaboration or partnership in a very limited sense, understandably, because many had never experienced it in full or been part of it. In most cases, collaboration was simply perceived in terms of the fact that CSOs exist and they are providing services that local governments should otherwise be providing. Yet in many cases, CSOs and local governments worked almost independent of each other with minimal or no interaction. Others limited it to the district registering or

supervising CSOs. As a result, many informants often reported existence of very good collaboration and partnership, even where it was weak, from the study team's point of view.

3.10.1 Extent and Modes of Collaboration

The existing relations between CSOs and local governments were found to vary widely. Two important elements were found to be important in the analysis of the existing relationships. These were:

- i) The degree of **formality** of the relationship – In many cases, relations between CSOs and local governments as a whole or departments of specific local governments were more informal than formal, characterized by casual, unplanned or adhoc interactions, and often based on personal contacts rather than institutionalized arrangements. There were limited experiences of formal partnerships established through contracts, agreements or MOUs.
- ii) The **regularity** of the interactions and relations – relations were often exercised irregularly, for instance through one-time events such as during the National AIDS Day celebrations, or the National Immunization Days (NIDs), or the Candlelight Memorial celebrations, or the Annual District Budget Conference, or only as need arose.

Overall, it was found that in all districts, collaboration between CSOs and local governments was still at the casual and informal end of the continuum.

Collaboration between our sub-county and CSOs is limited. There is no streamlined way of working together. We meet these organizations only as a coincidence. It is only during the budget conference that we invite CBOs. When we invite NGOs, they don't even show up (Health Assistant, Nankoma Sub-county, Bugiri District).

While informal relations may not necessarily be bad or weak – indeed some were found to have been very beneficial – they may be difficult to work with. Their objectives are not stated, their occurrence cannot be predicted, and their expected outcomes are not articulated. As such, even their outcomes may be difficult to measure. Nevertheless, efforts to build partnerships should consider how to build on the existing small-scale, informal and casual relationships, without killing the flexibility and convenience they provide.

Indeed, some of the relations that started informally have been almost been institutionalized. In Rakai district for instance, the Directorate of Health Services meets on a quarterly basis with CSOs in that sector. They call themselves Rakai Health NGO

forum, although this is not a registered institution and there is no formal arrangement binding the participants.

More specifically, collaboration and partnership took various forms including:

Sharing information - through informal talks, meetings, reports, IEC materials, and workshops

Sharing staff – for instance local government staff serving as guides to CSOs when they go to work in new communities or CSO staff serving as facilitators at local government workshops and vice versa, CSO staff participating in local government events such as NIDs, and in a few cases, CSOs inviting a local government staff to be part of their teams during implementation, monitoring or evaluation field visits. Another example is for instance in Rakai District, where the District Education Directorate provided technical staff to conduct a refresher training course for teachers, organized and funded by International Care and Relief, a CSO. There were also cases of local governments seconding staff to work with CSOs – for instance in Mbarara district, it was reported that the district had seconded staff to work with TASO and East Ankole Diocese.

Local governments registering CSOs and regulating their operations – through issuing certificates which serve as legitimization for the CSOs to operate and to access funding from donors and other agencies, also by CSOs seeking guidance from relevant local government departments about where to operate

Sharing physical and material resources – like when local governments provide office accommodation, land and other facilities to CSOs. In Rakai district, RACA is housed in the district premises. Lutheran World federation has offices in Kakuto Sub-county, Rakai District, with premises provided by the sub-county. Similar arrangements were also found in Rukungiri and Arua. Rakai District Local Government also gave a vehicle to Lutheran World Federation to implement education activities in two counties. Mubende district and Mityana Town Council donated land to the Red Cross. There were also cases of sharing of resources such as transport, photocopying services, conference halls, etc.

Local governments inviting CSOs for meetings and workshops and vice versa – this also includes local government staff and/or politicians officiating at CSO workshops and other functions

Joint planning, decision-making and policy formulation – cases include CSOs being members of the local government committees - In some districts such as Kamuli and Mbarara, CSOs have been included as members of the district technical planning

committee. In Mbarara, CSOs are represented on coordination committees at district and sub-county level, responsible for coordinating HIV/AIDS activities under the CHAI programme. In other districts, selected CSOs are members of the District AIDS Committees, Disaster Management Committees etc. In all districts, local governments invite CSOs to the Annual Budget Conferences. While this was found to be the case in almost all districts, the actual integration of CSO plans and budgets into those of the district was only in a few districts, such as Rakai and only involving a limited number of CSOs. Kitovu Mobile Home Care in Rakai district had its budget integrated in the district budget. In Mayuge district, IDAAC a local NGO had its plans integrated in the district plans.

Capacity building programmes – Some local governments reported having offered capacity building programmes especially training to CSOs in specific aspects under the district capacity building programme. This was reported in the districts of Rukungiri, Kamuli and Bundibugyo. The reverse, i.e. CSOs training district staff or sponsoring them for training programmes was also found. For instance GOAL in Bugiri district supported the district to train 43 medical professionals in palliative care. In Mbarara district, TASO and AIC had trained district health workers in VCT, PMTCT, and counseling.

CSOs reporting to the local governments through written reports - this was only found in rare cases e.g. in Rakai district, where several CSOs including World Vision, Lutheran World Federation, International Care and Relief, Concern, OCBO (Orphans Community Based Organization) and RACA periodically submit reports to the district. This practice was more common with big international NGOs, compared to the local NGOs. This could be partly explained by the fact that the small and local CSOs may lack the capacity to document their work and produce reports. In Rakai, CSOs were also more likely to give reports to the district because they were motivated by the fact that the reports would be read and discussed, and appropriate follow-up action taken.

Local Governments contracting CSOs to implement – This involves local governments entering into contractual arrangements with CSOs so that the latter implements specified activities with funds from or channeled through the respective local government. This was usually the case under the programmes supported by CHAI, AIM, and STI project. In Rakai district, OCBO, a local NGO implemented a girls' bursary scheme for the district with funding from DANIDA.

CSOs providing financial support to local governments – This involves CSOs and local governments entering into agreements for financial support to the local government to implement specific activities. For instance in Rakai district, Concern Worldwide was funding the District Directorate of Gender and Community Based Services to implement aspects of the District Response Initiative (DRI) programme.

The same CSO was also funding three sub-counties under a programme known as Community Capacity Development for Rakai District. The Directorate of Health Services also signed an agreement with the Lutheran World Federation, by which the latter provides fuel, and lunch for the driver to carry out immunization activities. The district provides a vehicle and the driver.

Agreements for joint implementation – This involves CSOs and local governments entering into agreements for joint implementation of specified activities – each contributing specified resources and sharing other roles and responsibilities for implementation of specific activities. For instance in Rakai district, World Vision constructed classroom blocks and health centers jointly with the district.

The above types of collaboration run from the more casual and informal forms to the more formal and institutionalized forms. The latter were less common.

Patterns of collaboration also seemed to be related to a number of variables including type of CSO, the type of sector, and the level of local government, i.e. whether district or lower local government levels.

Patterns of Collaboration by Type of CSO

To a large extent well-established CSOs especially the international and national CSOs were found to collaborate with local government in terms of information sharing, resource sharing and joint planning and implementation more than CBOs and local NGOs.

Patterns of Collaboration by Level of Local Government

To a large extent international CSOs were found to collaborate with the district local governments rather than the lower local governments. In fact, most tended to by-pass sub-counties and go directly to the communities. This was a major complaint from sub-county staff. In some districts such as Lira, the smaller CSOs such as CBOs collaborate with lower level local governments, while it is the bigger CSOs that tend to collaborate with the district.

However, even at district level, the extent of collaboration tended to vary from one district to another. Districts at the lower end include Arua, Yumbe, Kyenjojo, while those at the upper end include Rakai, Mbarara, and Bundibugyo.

The district has not been actively collaborating with CSOs. CSOs here would interpret any attempts at collaboration as interference (DEO, Yumbe District)

In Mbarara, sub-county officials reported that they mobilize communities for CSOs, and participate in their sensitization programmes. They also have sub-county coordination

committees for HIV/AIDS under the CHAI programme, and CSOs are represented on these committees.

Kalisizo Town Council in Rakai district reported that some CSOs such as OCBO had their budgets integrated into the Town Council budget.

Overall, the extent of CSO-local government collaboration at sub-county level also tended to vary from district to district. Some districts such as Rakai exhibited relatively higher levels of collaboration at this level, compared to other districts. Sub-county chiefs from different districts had this to say:

We don't have a strong link with CSOs. They do not inform us of what they are doing, possibly because they are still in their infant stages of development (Sub-county Chief, Kei Sub-county, Yumbe District).

How do you monitor CSOs if you are not informed of what they are doing (Sub-county Chief from Arua District).

CSOs have never attended our budget conferences and council meetings, much as they are always invited (Sub-county Chief from Yumbe District)

The Sub-county leadership thinks that CSOs want assistance which it cannot provide. The CSOs themselves think the Sub-county is a small entity, which cannot address their problems. So the two parties remain apart. In addition, when you invite CSOs for planning meetings, you need to provide them lunch, which may not be available, so we leave them out (Sub-county official, Nankoma Sub-county, Bugiri District).

Patterns of Collaboration by Sector

Most examples of collaboration were found in the health and HIV/AIDS sectors compared to education. This was partly attributed to the fact that there are more resources in the health sector at district level. The additional reason is that there are also more CSOs actively involved in these two sectors compared to education, and therefore opportunities for collaboration are naturally more than in education.

There were a few exceptions to this. In Gulu district, it was found that the District Education sector collaborates well with Save the Children, which even has a focal person hosted in the district education offices. The district plans together with Save the Children as well as other CSOs involved in the sector, such as World Vision, Christian Relief Services, and Gulu Development Agency, Save the Children.

3.10.2 Examples of Good Collaboration

While it was outside the scope of this study to provide detailed documentation of examples of good collaboration or partnership between local governments and CSOs, some examples were identified for future follow up. In absence of a comprehensive and acceptable criteria to determine good partnership, the examples that were considered good here were those that demonstrated clear joint efforts by the different parties, with clear roles, and sustained collaboration to achieve a given outcome. These examples are outlined in the boxes below:

GOAL Bugiri Partnership with District and local CSOs

In Bugiri district, GOAL, an international NGO is promoting a partnership approach between itself, local CSOs and the district. GOAL supports the local CSOs and the district through training, technical support, and financial support to implement HIV/AIDS activities. GOAL is trying to see how it can be more than just a “donor” by adding value to its relationship with the local partners.

GOAL has been working in collaboration with the district departments of health, planning, and probation and welfare. The main areas of collaboration have included VCT, referral, training of health workers, and planning. It has supported provision of mobile VCT clinics by which district counselors provide counseling during the VCT outreaches, the local NGOs/CBOs host the clinics and provide the post-test club structure to support those who go through the test, and AIC provides the testing service. GOAL also financed the Phase 1 training of 43 medical professionals from the district in Palliative Care in April 2003. The training was facilitated by Hospice Uganda. GOAL community volunteers also get some of the supplies such as gloves and cotton wool from the government health units, exemplifying partnership up to the community level.

This is an example of partnership whereby GOAL, AIC, the district, local NGOs and CBOs, and community volunteers have worked together to deliver an important service, hitherto lacking in the district. It was possible to provide this service in a situation where no single agency would have been able to provide it.

Rakai District Directorate of Health Collaboration with CSOs

The Directorate of Health Services in Rakai District has worked closely with CSOs in the health sector to improve the provision of health services in the district. The office of the DDHS shares physical and logistical resources with RACA, a local NGO that has its offices at the district – taking advantage of this geographical proximity. In other cases, the district provides staff and IEC materials, while CSOs make copies and provide funds for distribution of these materials. The DDHS meets with CSOs on a quarterly basis to review sector activities and any emerging developments. These linkages are not based on any formal arrangement. The DDHS’ office has designated one of their staff to be responsible for coordinating the work of CSOs in the health sector. Most CSOs in the sector have been submitting copies of their reports to the DDHS.

However, the Directorate also has more formal partnerships, based on signed agreements with CSOs. These include, one with LWF for partnership in provision of immunization services and another with World Vision for construction of a health unit ward. As a result of these partnerships, the DDHS’ office is always fully aware of what CSOs are doing in the health sector, and has been successful in working with them to address the priorities of the district.

Other examples include:

- Lutheran World Federation in Rakai District which collaborates with different district departments and sub-counties to support the provision of health and education services
- PACBADI, a local organization in Pallisa District which has written joint proposals with the district and implemented joint programmes with the District Directorate of Health services

3.10.3 Factors enabling/Influencing Collaboration

Good political enabling environment at district level – Good collaboration between CSOs and the district local governments in Rakai, Mbarara and Gulu was attributed to the favorable environment and political support provided by the district leadership. This is reflected in the leadership’s active effort to engage CSOs and to involve them in all district programmes. In Mbarara, the commitment of the district leadership to appoint CSOs on district technical planning and coordination committees was also seen as an enabling practice by the district local government towards effective collaboration. In Arua, although local government-CSO collaboration is still low, it was reported that

the district leadership is trying to provide a conducive environment through good will, willingness to listen to CSOs, intervening to solve problems affecting CSOs, providing political protection, and making district staff available to mobilize people for CSO work. The decentralization policy itself has made it possible for CSOs to work directly with local governments.

Existence of a funding relationship often means that there are other ways of collaboration that are set in motion by this relationship: sharing information, reporting, sharing resources, monitoring and supervision, capacity building etc. Often all these relations usually accompany a funding relationship. Thus District monitoring and supervision of CSO activities often tends to concentrate on CSOs that have been funded by or through the districts. CSOs especially the CBOs also tended to collaborate with the district only when they have accessed financial support through it.

Some relations are formed as a requirement by donors or funding agencies. Some are indeed part of the agreements governing certain organizations' activities. Most formal partnerships that were found in the health and HIV/AIDS sectors emerged because funding agencies required funds to be channeled through district local governments for implementation by CSOs. Thus funding mechanisms as well as other requirements have played a positive role in promoting partnerships. In Rakai district, good collaboration between the district and CSOs was traced to the efforts of DANIDA in involving CSOs. DANIDA used to fund CSOs such as the Rakai AIDS Information Network (RAIN), OCBO and World Vision and the responsibility for supervision and accountability was vested with the district. In Bugiri, GOAL has a clear organizational strategy based on partnership, and this explains its deep involvement with local governments and other CSOs.

Collaboration emerges or exists based on need – During the district stakeholders' workshops, it was argued that two parties cannot just collaborate, unless there is need to. This also tends to explain the irregularity of most collaborative arrangements between CSOs and local government departments.

Some relationships between CSOs and local governments are built on the personal relations and contacts of the individuals in those agencies. Departments and CSOs whose heads or other staff are outgoing and social are likely to forge good working relationships than those who have poor public relations.

Resources and the capacity to collaborate – stronger collaboration was found to be with CSOs that have more resources (such as international NGOs) and with the more resourced district departments (such as Health). In most districts, this was the case.

Establishment or existence of mechanisms and frameworks for pursuing and maintaining collaboration – for instance regular review and coordination meetings in Kitgum district were pointed out as a factor promoting collaboration. The example of Mbarara where the district has appointed CSOs to the district committees also demonstrates the need for formal mechanisms to pursue collaboration. In other cases where CSOs have collaborated well with local governments, such as in the health sector, they have been guided by MOUs, or agreements, or donor guidelines. There needs to be a framework specifying the modalities, rules, roles, obligations and expected outcomes if collaboration and partnership are to be effective.

Existence and work of the CSO networks, e.g. KINGFO in Kitgum, BUNASO in Bugiri, and the District NGO Forum in Gulu, and Wakiso. In these districts, the networks have provided CSOs with a stronger force to interface with the district, and in some cases have changed the district environment in favor of increased collaboration.

Similarity of objectives and activities and common concern about existing problems or situations was yet another factor - CSOs, which share similar activities with the district sectors, coordinate with those respective sectors. For instance CSOs in the health sector coordinate with the District Directorate of Health Services. In districts where natural and man-made disasters are common, the CSOs and district collaborate well through the district Disaster Management Committee to plan and respond to emergencies. Such districts include the war and insurgency-affected districts such as Kitgum and Katakwi.

Other factors identified include:

- Recognition of each other's unique strengths and weaknesses
- Mutual respect and treating each other as partners
- Transparency and openness
- When the core business, objectives, values, and methods of the two partnering agencies are compatible.
- Where the resources to be used have been identified, secured, or made available or the sources established.
- Where the expected benefits to either party are known
- When the two parties learn each other's systems

It is also interesting to note some of the criteria that are used to determine whom to collaborate with. Because of the difficulties in deciding which CSOs to collaborate with amidst their big numbers, some districts have tended to collaborate with CSOs that have a track record, those they have worked with in the past, or those they know well. There are also tendencies to work with those in which some local government staff may have some personal/pecuniary interest. This was reported in several districts.

CSOs are too many and it is difficult to know which ones are genuine. We therefore tend to work more closely with those we have worked with in the past, whose track record we are sure of (DDHS, Kamuli District).

Some CSOs such as ACORD, TASO, AIC and Hospice already have a good track record and we know their capacities. For such CSOs we do not hesitate to collaborate with them (Director, Gender and Community Based Services, Mbarara District).

We made it a district policy that CSOs must register with our Community Based Services Directorate. The CSOs we work with must have institutional capacity, must have systems and personnel, and must have been in existence for some time (ACAO, Mbarara District)

The quotations above reflect how districts have attempted to deal with the big number of CSOs as well as the questionable credibility of some of them.

In some cases, district officials also make choices of which CSOs to work with depending on the task at hand.

For big and long-term interventions, we prefer to work with the big CSOs because they have the resources, they are influential, and they are good at infrastructure development. However, we prefer the small CSOs for short-term and more specific interventions. The big CSOs tend to be bureaucratic and take long to make decisions. You cannot easily push them (DDHS, Rakai District).

3.10.4 Outcomes of Collaboration

The reported outcomes from collaboration between CSOs and local governments include increased coverage of the population with services, reduced duplication, efficient use of limited resources, increased appreciation of each other's roles and contributions, and increased capacities on both sides.

In some cases, district officials appreciated that their success is partly due to the work of CSOs.

Most of my successes in this district are a result of NGO work. In the health sector you can never succeed working alone (DDHS, Rakai District).

In some cases, some lessons have also been learnt by local governments about collaboration with CSOs. One of the lessons is that it is safer to work with CSOs that

have a track record, and those ever worked with in the past. The second is that for instance in the health sector, government cannot succeed working alone. The third is that CSOs are willing to bring in resources, as long as they are not asked to pay allowances to district staff. In other cases, local governments have learnt that CSOs do not want to directly fund local governments, but rather to use their funds to implement tangible activities.

We don't ask CSOs to give us their money, we know they have the money, so we tell them what we would like them to do and we interest them in certain activities. And they go ahead and do them (DDHS, Rakai District)

In Luwero district, planning meetings held between the district, the District NGO Forum and CSOs resulted into demarcation of geographical areas of operation between CSOs so as to avoid duplication and to ensure equitable distribution of CSO services to the district.

3.10.5 Factors constraining Effective Collaboration

Lack of deliberate strategies, efforts and mechanisms for collaboration – Collaboration and partnership cannot just happen, they have to be planned for and put in place. In many districts, no such effort has been taken to build collaboration between CSOs and local governments and no institutional framework exists. As a result, collaboration only exists informally, or only on adhoc basis. There is also lack of a clear policy at district level concerning CSO involvement. The Local Governments Act (1997) itself is silent on CSO involvement in local government programmes. As a result, CSOs have for instance been denied participation in district tendering processes because they are not registered as payers of value added tax (VAT).

Competition between CSOs and local governments – Where CSOs and local governments feel that they are competitors; this has become a constraint to effective collaboration. Competition has tended to arise in many ways. In the first instance, both CSOs and local governments may be looking up to the same funding agencies for financial support. In other cases, some CSOs may actually be owned or founded by people who work in local governments. Thus in the latter case, competitor CSOs are disguised under local governments. In such situations, CSOs are reluctant to share information, to reveal their financial matters, or to trust local government staff. In Pallisa, the issue of competition came out of the dialogue as one of the key constraints to collaboration. Competition between CSOs and local governments, and indeed amongst CSOs themselves was seen to have been fueled by the funding mechanisms of donors and government programmes, which require CSOs to access funds through competitive proposals.

It is impossible for a CSO to share its information with a competitor organization (CSO participant, Pallisa Stakeholders' Workshop)

Workshop participants in several districts (Pallisa, Rukungiri, Bugiri) also argued that 'brief case' or otherwise incompetent CSOs could easily hire other people to write good proposals for them. Thus the CSOs that produce the best proposals may not be the best to work with or to support. Participants in this case considered competitive proposals as an insufficient basis for determining which CSOs to work with.

In addition, district officials tend to see CSOs as threatening to replace them or usurp their roles. More of concern is the fact that for a long time, districts have been trying to perform their roles with minimal resources. The new trend is that when more resources have become available, they are given to CSOs and the private-for profit sector to do the roles formerly assigned to government, instead of giving the same resources to government. Local government staff feel they would do an equally good job if they were given the kind of resources given to CSOs.

If activities are taken away from government and assigned to CSOs, will the two be friends? CSOs are given much more money than government workers, and as a result, government workers get demoralized. Why not give those millions of shillings to district officials? (District participant, Pallisa Stakeholders' Workshop)

In some cases, CSOs and local governments tend to operate in competition with each other. This is the case, when both are vying for resources from the same source, or for control of certain projects, or even competing for staff and other resources. In Rukungiri district, an example was cited of how the district leadership attempted to take over control and implementation of a project initiated and planned by a CSO.

Failure by CSOs to reveal their budgets – At the time of local government planning and budgeting, most CSOs are not ready to reveal the size of their budgets and the sources of their funds. This constrains proper planning and is one of the major constraints to joint planning between the two parties. Local governments say that without information on how much CSOs are going to put in, they cannot properly determine how to allocate their own resources, or how to work with the CSOs. CSOs claim that they are usually uncertain of how much funds they will get, and therefore cannot commit themselves. The fear among CSOs to reveal their sources of funds to perceived competitors is also another reason. Further information, however, indicates that CSOs fear to reveal their budgets because they would later on have to be judged or held accountable against those budgets. Many may be intending to do less than what they are funded to do, so they do not want to put themselves in trouble by declaring

what they are supposed to do. Others may have some hidden motives as illustrated in the words below:

There is a possibility of a CSO implementing the same activity with funding from two different sources. In such a case, they would not reveal their budgets and funding sources. (Workshop participant from Mbarara District Local Government)

Mutual Suspicion – there is suspicion on either side about the intentions and dangers of the other party. Local government staff and politicians suspect that CSOs have hidden motives, serve personal interests, want to take over their roles, or support political opponents. On the other hand CSOs suspect that local government staff want to fail them, or support competitor CSOs, or want to interfere in their work. This mutual suspicion results into holding back of information, and failure to work in a transparent atmosphere.

Bureaucracy and lack of speed in local governments – CSOs and local governments work at different paces. The latter are often not time-conscious and decisions may take months to be passed.

Local government staff are not time-conscious. After all local governments are there to stay and have all the time. The staff are permanent and pensionable, so there is no hurry to do anything (CSO official, Rakai District Workshop).

On the other hand CSOs often have to meet strict deadlines and always want quick results. CSOs implement programmes with a short life span. Because of these differences which get reflected in the work methods, CSOs resent having to be kept behind by local governments, by working with them.

Under-facilitation of the district – Because district staff are often under-facilitated, when they get involved in work with CSOs, they expect to be paid allowances. Sometimes they may fail to have transport of other resources necessary to play their part.

Lack of capacities and resources in some CSOs – Most CSOs, especially CBOs lack the capacity to collaborate. Collaboration requires that you contribute something to the task at hand. Many belong to the category of *brief case* CSOs, which are seen to be unscrupulous, inexperienced, and incapable of delivering desired results. This poses a challenge to the local governments as to whom they can work with. Even established and functional CSOs may lack competence in certain aspects. In Bugiri district for instance, the DDHS reported that they could not find an NGO with expertise in the field of malaria to work with.

Tendency for the districts to look for faults in CSOs, rather than looking at the positive side – CSOs resent being treated as suspects, with the local governments all the time trying to find faults with their work. Where this is the case, CSOs may try to avoid local governments and operate independently. There is also a tendency for the districts to see themselves in a superior position vis a vis the CSOs, yet the latter want to relate with the districts at the same level.

Politicization of CSOs – In cases where CSOs have got involved in the local politics, or where the founders of CSOs are at the same time politicians, such CSOs are held in bad faith by local government staff and politicians that subscribe to opposing political camps. In Rukungiri district for instance, local governments were reported to discriminate between the CSOs they collaborate with, on the basis of the political orientations of the founders or managers.

High expectations – High expectations from either side, sometimes based on unfounded premises lead to frustration when they remain unmet. Local government staff expect allowances from CSOs, and CSOs expect funding and other favors from the local governments. Each party seems to look at what they can gain, rather than what they can contribute.

From the individual interviews with CSO staff and leaders, the following constraints in working with local governments were identified.

Table 8: Constraints faced by CSOs in working with Local Governments

District	N	Reported Constraints							
		LG Bureaucracy	Politics & discrimination	Poor LG capacity	Lack of commitment	Lack of appreciation	Mistrust & Suspicion	Poor communication	Others
Arua	10	20.0	30.0	20.0	30.0	0.0	10.0	20.0	40.0
Bugiri	9	55.6	44.4	55.6	11.1	11.1	33.3	22.2	0.0
Bundibugyo	13	15.4	7.7	53.8	23.1	23.1	0.0	15.4	15.4
Bushenyi	17	23.5	41.2	35.3	17.6	17.6	11.8	0.0	17.6
Gulu	14	21.4	21.4	21.4	28.6	7.1	14.3	7.1	21.4
Kamuli	12	12.5	25.0	37.5	37.5	25.0	0.0	0.0	12.5
Katakwi	13	7.7	15.4	30.8	30.8	15.4	30.8	23.1	23.1
Lira	15	46.7	33.3	20.0	40.0	0.0	13.3	6.7	6.7
Kyenjojo	8	37.5	12.5	37.5	37.5	12.5	25.0	0.0	12.5
Kitgum	11	54.5	54.5	18.2	36.4	0.0	18.2	18.2	27.3
Luwero	7	42.9	14.3	42.9	28.6	0.0	0.0	14.3	28.6
Mayuge	17	47.1	11.8	23.5	5.9	0.0	0.0	29.4	29.4
Mbarara	17	35.3	29.4	11.8	0.0	0.0	11.8	11.8	47.1
Mubende	5	0.0	20.0	60.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0
Nakapiripirit	11	27.3	36.4	27.3	0.0	9.1	9.1	9.1	36.4
Pallisa	17	52.9	11.8	17.6	17.6	17.6	17.6	17.6	5.9
Rakai	13	38.5	30.8	15.4	7.7	0.0	15.4	38.5	23.1
Rukungiri	13	15.4	23.1	15.4	7.7	0.0	7.7	23.1	38.5
Wakiso	18	22.2	5.6	22.2	5.6	11.1	33.3	38.9	0.0
Yumbe	8	25.0	37.5	25.0	12.5	12.5	12.5	50.0	12.5
Total	248	31.3	24.7	27.2	18.1	8.2	14.0	18.1	21.0

The above figures also show the commonly mentioned constraints to collaboration as including local government bureaucracy, politics and discrimination, and poor local government capacity. The category others which accounts for 21% includes a wide range of other issues including poor time management in local governments, local government staff demanding for allowances, and some district officials being uncooperative.

3.11 Attitudes and Perceptions

This study was interested in the attitudes of the local government staff towards CSOs and vice versa. The rationale for investigating attitudes was that they seem to be underlying the behavior of CSOs and local governments towards each other. Attitudes

are about feelings, perceptions, and sentiments that an individual or a group may hold towards another, or towards an issue, and therefore are important in shaping behavior.

3.11.1 Perceptions about the Desired/Ideal Relationship

There are parallels between CSOs and local governments in the way the two perceive the ideal relationship that should exist between them. In most cases, local governments feel that CSOs should seek from them permission to operate, report to them, and seek their guidance. In a way, local governments see themselves in a supervisory and superior position vis a vis non-government organizations. CSOs do not perceive the ideal relationship in the same way. They feel they have no obligation to report to the districts, if they are not getting funding or other support from them, or if the report will not be read or used. CSOs feel the ideal relationship with local governments should be one in which they are treated as partners, not subordinates or subjects.

These parallels are also evident in issues of registration, reporting, and so on. For instance NGOs that register with the National NGO Registration Board in Kampala often do not bother to register with the district. The districts feel this is wrong and makes their oversight role difficult. In most districts, CSOs also promptly and religiously submit reports to their financiers without giving copies to the districts. A series of counter-accusations surrounds this; the districts want copies of the reports to know what CSOs are doing, so those that do not submit reports may be dubious; the CSOs on the other hand say the district has never taken genuine interest in their work and it would be a waste of time and resources to give them reports.

These differences in perception obviously make it difficult for the partnership being expected by agencies such as UPHOLD to be realized. There seems to be an unresolved question of whether local governments can be regulators and supervisors of CSOs and at the same time be their (equal) partners.

3.11.2 What local governments think about CSOs

Overall, local government officials recognize the potential and actual contribution of CSOs to service delivery in the districts and would want stronger collaboration with them. However, they are conscious of the fact that not all CSOs are good or genuine, and that even those which may be good intentioned may have their 'gray' sides. More specifically, the following illustrate the local government attitudes towards CSOs.

- Local governments feel that under the new financing mechanisms that involve working through CSOs, the latter are paid more to do what local governments have been doing without any resources. Local governments were kept underfunded for a long time, and then their roles were assigned to CSOs who were

given much more resources than what local governments used to have. Local governments feel if they were given the amount of resources that CSOs are being given, they would do an equally good job.

- CSOs are not transparent especially on financial matters

CSOs are very difficult to penetrate. Some don't want to reveal what they are doing (Sub-county Chief, Lakwana Sub-county, Gulu District)

While local governments have opened up, CSOs are still closed, especially with regard to their budgets. They cant tell you their budget, they are not transparent. Some CSOs solicit funding for the same activity from two sources! (Participant, Mbarara District Workshop)

- Some CSOs are formed to benefit individuals and not the community
These is an NGO which came here, collected money from people promising to give them loans, and it disappeared (Participant, Bugiri stakeholders' Workshop)
- Some CSOs suffer from the 'founder member' syndrome –
Some CSOs here are not democratic, the founders tend to personalize them and they do not want to relinquish leadership positions (District official, Lira District)
- Some district officials also felt that CSOs were not willing to involve local governments in their work.
We invite CSOs when we are planning, but they do not invite us when they are planning. It should be two-way (Assistant District Education Officer, Rakai District).
- In some districts, local government staff felt that CSOs are sometimes to inaccessible.
They live behind closed doors, with huge gates and wall fences. You cannot walk in and out. They create a situation that blocks information flow (Government official, Arua district).
- Some district staff think CSOs are going to take up their roles and render them redundant
- CSOs interpret government efforts to regulate them as interference
- CSOs pay more allegiance to their donors than to the district
- CSOs are only accountable to themselves

On a positive note, local governments acknowledge that:

- CSOs are better situated to reach the grassroots than local governments

- Some CSOs are doing a good job – In Mbarara district, local government officials pointed out that some CSOs have a good track record and they are trusted. Examples given included ACORD and TASO.

3.11.3 What CSOs think about local governments

To CSOs, local governments are a given which cannot be done away with. They recognize the strengths and limitations of local governments, but they also seem to have little faith in the possibility of local governments changing their ways. The following illustrate the sentiments of CSOs towards local governments.

- There is corruption in local governments
The district people allocate funds to their own organizations. The process is not fair to all (CSO workshop participant, Kyenjojo District)
- The district discriminates between CSOs on the basis of financial prowess and political interests, some CSOs feel they have been sidelined or excluded unfairly.
When the district is inviting CSOs, they don't invite everybody, they only pick those whom they favor (CBO leader, Bugiri District)
- Local governments want to control CSOs rather than treating them as partners
They demand that we declare our budgets, but they never tell us why they want them! It is an attempt to control CSOs. (Chairperson NGO Forum, Luwero District)

These sentiments reflect the attempt by local governments to control and supervise CSOs, and the counter attempt by CSOs to resist this relationship.

- Local governments are slow in programme implementation

On the positive side, CSOs acknowledge that local governments have a big number of human resources, are relatively permanent and stable, have funding from central government.

Overall, it can be observed that these attitudes have been acquired through past experiences in interacting with each other. Fostering effective collaboration between the two sets of actors will require addressing the areas of discontent reflected in the negative attitudes held against each other.

3.12 CSO-CSO Relations

Collaboration amongst CSOs themselves is in this respect important for two main reasons. First, coordination of their strategies can be an important means of ensuring maximum benefit from their work, avoiding duplication, and sharing best practices.

Second, local governments would find it easier to deal with an organized CSO sector. CSOs themselves have often argued that they need to organize into a strong force to counteract the force of government. This sub-section therefore highlights some aspects of CSO-CSO collaboration. Three aspects of CSO-CSO collaboration discussed here include collaboration through the CSO network organizations, bigger CSOs working through and supporting small ones, and bigger CSOs nurturing small ones.

CSO-CSO Collaboration through the CSO Networks

The District NGO Forum

Majority of the districts were found to have a branch of the NGO Forum. Those without include Bushenyi and Kyenjojo, where efforts to initiate one are just beginning.

The NGO Forum in most districts remains weak and lacking the mandate of the CSOs they claim to represent or to be constituted of. They suffer from poor membership, lack of resources, and poor legitimacy.

The question of poor legitimacy among the NGO Forum chapters seems to stem from the way they were formed. The National NGO Forum was the first to be formed, and then it went to the districts to initiate the district chapters, making it a top down scheme. Coupled with the requirement for intending member CSOs to pay a membership fee, the scheme immediately provoked questions about its motives, what the benefits to members would be, and whether it was not another NGO like the rest. In addition, some CSOs suspect that subscription to the District NGO Forum would take away their freedom, as the Forum would have to monitor their work.

Some NGOs did not want to be monitored, so they undermined the Forum. They look at it as an 'IGG' (Inspector General of Government) for NGOs that would curtail their freedom (Workshop Participant, Rakai District)

The District NGO Forums seem to have become strong in districts where the CSO sector itself is strong such as Gulu, and where they have been supported to perform identifiable roles.

In some districts, international NGOs have not joined the District NGO Forum, perceiving it as meant for local CSOs. Yet in others such as Rukungiri, the local politics have determined who becomes a member of the District NGO Forum and who doesn't depending on their political inclinations.

In yet other districts, the NGO Forum lacked support or was undermined by district officials basing on the fear that the forum would expose the district failures and weaknesses. Such views were expressed in Yumbe district.

Other CSO Networks

Some districts were found to have the district chapters of UNASO, the Uganda Network of AIDS Service Organizations. These districts included Bugiri and Lira. The UNASO branches are involved in promoting coordination, collaboration and capacity building of CSOs involved in HIV/AIDS. In Bugiri, it was reported that BUNASO, the Bugiri Network of AIDS Service Organizations was holding quarterly meetings with member CSOs.

Bigger NGOs working with/through/supporting local CSOs

In some cases bigger, especially international NGOs have moved away from direct implementation, and are instead working through local NGOs and CBOs. In Bugiri district, GOAL, an internal NGO is supporting over 10 local NGOs and CBOs with training in organizational development, technical support and financial support to implement HIV/AIDS activities. These relationships are based on MOUs signed between GOAL and the local CSOs. Action Aid has also been using a similar strategy in Mubende, Pallisa and Bundibugyo.

Thus there was more evidence of vertical collaboration and less of horizontal collaboration. Many CBOs were effectively collaborating with big CSOs especially those that extend support to them than fellow CSOs at the same level of operation. In Bundibugyo district for instance, it was clear that collaboration between different CSOs and Action Aid and GOAL was higher than between any two or more CSOs.

Bigger CSOs Nurturing Smaller Ones

There are situations where bigger, usually international CSOs have groomed or nurtured local CSOs, initially working with them, and then preparing them to take over as the former phase out. In Rakai district, Medicine du Monde and IRCDD have prepared some local CSOs to take over their activities.

Other Mechanisms

In Kitgum districts, a forum known as UN-OCHA coordinates the activities of international NGOs and UN agencies, through monthly meetings.

4 EMERGING ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Introduction

This last section of the report pulls out the key issues emerging from the foregoing discussion and attempts to draw conclusions. The section also outlines some recommendations for UPHOLD and its partners regarding strengthening local government-CSO collaboration.

4.2 Emerging Issues and Recommendations

1. The district context is important in shaping the character of the district-specific CSO sector, and in shaping the extent of collaboration with the respective local governments. Districts where serious development problems such as civil wars and HIV/AIDS have been experienced have witnessed emergence of a strong CSO sector, and the progress towards CSO-local government collaboration has been good. Similarly, districts that have had strong political activity have CSOs intertwined in the politics. The emergence of CSOs therefore is partly a result of genuine response to existing welfare problems and needs of communities. On the other hand, political and economic reasons, particularly individual opportunistic reasons also account for the formation of many CSOs formed within the last about 10 years. Part of this concern is that some CSOs are owned or godfathered by local government staff and political leaders. This perception or possibility weakens the trust that local government staff hold as regulators of CSOs or mediators through which other programmes can reach CSOs. The possibility that many CSOs are formed for economic and political gain, rather than genuine concern for improved welfare in the communities also raises the challenge of distinguishing these from the genuine ones.

Recommendation

Selection processes for possible CSOs for support should involve both the local governments as well as a complementary independent vetting mechanism. The vetting mechanism should include on-spot visits to verify the physical infrastructure of the CSOs and to interact with the surrounding communities and find out about the work and credibility of the CSOs in question. This is necessary to build trust in the outcomes of the selection processes, given the alleged pecuniary interest of various players. Use should also be made of the information collected by this study on the profiles of sample CSOs (*see annexes to this report bound separately*).

2. Current funding mechanisms that use competitive proposals seem to be setting CSOs against each other as competitors and also against local governments. As CSOs struggle to write winning proposals, they cannot share information, strategies or plans with their competitors. Further concern is that a good proposal is not a sufficient basis to determine a good CSO partner, as 'brief case' or other dubious CSOs can easily find mercenaries to write good proposals for them.

Recommendation

There is need to revisit the funding mechanisms and other CSO support criteria – Where as the advantages of competition are acknowledged, there is need to think of ways that build capacity and collaboration among CSOs and local governments, while minimizing unhealthy competition. An alternative option is to identify potential CSOs through other assessment criteria (such as past track record, credibility as perceived by local people, or involvement in a specific area of interest), and then work with them to develop acceptable proposals. The screening process in this case would start with the organization and the idea, rather than the proposal. The proposal development process would then even serve as a capacity building mechanism. Other alternatives include joint development of proposals by two or more CSOs, and by CSOs with local governments. These alternatives will require more time, but this should be planned for.

3. Both parties; the CSOs and the local governments perceive collaboration or partnership to be important and necessary. The local government officials feel that CSOs can bridge the gaps left by government, reaching places where government cannot reach and touching the grassroots more effectively. CSOs on the hand also appreciate that government can strengthen them to achieve their objectives, and see their roles as complementary to those of local governments. This mutual recognition is a positive beginning on which future collaboration can be built. However, the two sets of actors also tend to have differing perceptions of what the ideal relationship between them should be. Local governments see themselves as regulators and supervisors of CSOs, yet the CSOs want local governments to behave as equal partners to them. A remaining question therefore is whether local governments can be both regulators of CSOs and at the same time be equal partners to them!

There are also unfavorable attitudes between CSOs and local governments, characterized by counteraccusations, mutual mistrust, lack of openness, and sometimes competition. These are outcomes of past and present experiences.

Recommendation

Reaching a common ground on the desired relationship is a necessity for effective collaboration. But this requires continued dialogue. There is an opportunity for UPHOLD and its partners to build on the dialogue process that was initiated and facilitated by this study. CSOs and local governments should to be facilitated to continue the dialogue to discuss more and more about what the ideal partnership would look like, their working relations and subsequently to formulate concrete steps for better collaboration.

4. Collaboration takes place based on need. But there also must be deliberate efforts to nurture it and to create mechanisms for fostering it. Collaboration has been successful, where it has been deliberately included as part of the funding mechanisms or funder requirements. Partnerships are likely to be more successful if the different partners start together and plan together, rather than inviting them to join midway.

Recommendation

Partnership should be made a pre-requisite or an ingredient of projects, incorporating it right from the design stage. Appropriate partners organizations and mechanisms for partnership should be included at the design and planning stage of projects, rather than leaving it to “when need arises”. This process may be time-consuming, but it is a necessary investment. Funding should be prioritized for projects that demonstrate partnership from the beginning.

5. Apart from the type of collaboration guided through donor requirements and funding mechanisms, other existing collaboration is largely informal, adhoc, and based on personal contacts. The informal and adhoc type provide flexibility and convenience, and is need-driven. They have also been useful. However they are unpredictable and sometimes undependable, with no clear objectives, targets, or expected outcomes.

Recommendation

Efforts to build partnerships should consider how to build on the existing small-scale, informal and casual relationships, without killing the flexibility and convenience they provide. UPHOLD should investigate more about these informal networks and relationships and document their dynamics. These linkages should then be built on to strengthen partnerships at district level.

6. Collaboration is more in the HIV/AIDS and health sectors compared to the education sector. Partly this is attributed to the nature of activities, with those in the health and HIV/AIDS sectors lending themselves more to community based

work. Another reason also seems to be the availability of more resources in these sectors, compared to education. The CSOs that involved in education also tend to be mainly focusing of sponsorship and provision of scholastic materials.

Recommendation

CSOs in the education sector should be facilitated to understand and address the broader factors that affect education, beyond classroom factors. UPHOLD should raise the interest of CSOs in particular aspects of the education sector, including issues of community participation, girl-child schooling, educational quality and so on, where they can participate as partners to the local governments. A social transformation approach to education, including issues of family stability and gender should be promoted.

7. CSOs have varying degrees of capacity, but CBOs in particular still lack many aspects of capacity, including organizational and management aspects such as report writing and financial management. Individual CSOs have specific human resource and other capacity needs, but all CSOs need to be adequately made aware of government processes and procedures. Many CSOs claim to have skills in counseling, but this being a technical area, such skills need to be validated.

Recommendations

There is need to build CSO and local government capacities in areas that enhance better performance and better working relations. The identified areas of capacity building include the following:

- Development and validation of technical skills in aspects such as counseling home based care, immunization, etc.
- Support for organizational development, including aspects of report writing, financial management, and planning and monitoring systems development.
- Orientation in government policies, processes and procedures
- Support for infrastructural development, including communication and document processing facilities.

8. Most CSOs work with volunteers and thereby cut on the costs they would otherwise incur to pay staff to do similar work. CBOs in particular are heavily dependent on volunteer labor for their operations. Dependency on voluntary labor, however, presents its own problems especially with regard to the reliability and accountability of the volunteers.

Recommendation

With regard to CSOs that depend heavily on volunteers, UPHOLD should pay salaries of core staff or key facilitation allowances for volunteers that work on

regular basis to enable them produce the expected results and be in position to be held accountable.

9. The extent of collaboration between CSOs- and local governments as well as between CSOs and CSOs varied from district to districts. There are examples of districts, specific departments, and those of CSOs where collaboration has been good. The major success factors have included a good political environment from the district – such as political support of the leadership, putting deliberate mechanisms for collaboration in place, and to a big extent, existence of funding opportunities or relationships.

Recommendation

UPHOLD should follow up the examples of good collaboration identified in this report, document them in detail and facilitate inter-district sharing of lessons and successes.

10. Whereas there is general recognition of the need for collaboration, and whereas government policy disposition is in favor of partnership, existing laws and policy documents such as the Local Governments Act (1997) provide only scarcely for CSO-local government collaboration. There is also lack of operational guidelines to translate such government policy into clear and practicable modalities, strategies or working principles to foster the desired collaboration.

Recommendation

There is need to advocate for more elaborate policies and clearer guidelines for CSO involvement at local government level. This is an issue that should be taken up with the relevant government ministries, as well as the CSO networks.

4.3 Next Steps

To ensure that the results of this work become useful, the following next steps are proposed.

- UPHOLD should organize for wide dissemination of these results to districts, ministries, CSOs, donors, and other UPHOLD partners.
- UPHOLD should plan for production of more user-friendly and summarized/shorter versions of the results – or a synopsis of the findings and recommendations. Other creative ways of sharing the results such as talk shows, pamphlets, etc, should be considered.

- UPHOLD should document in more detail examples of partnerships that seem successful and the processes behind them so as to provide learning experiences for other districts/CSOs.
- UPHOLD should also plan to develop or support the development of a tool kit or guide for local governments to facilitate work with CSOs.
- UPHOLD should follow up, support and facilitate continued dialogue between CSOs and local governments, building on the process undertaken by this study.
- UPHOLD should translate the rest of the recommendations of this study into district level actions that can be implemented.

Appendix 1: Number of CSOs in the 20 Districts by Type (From Phase I results)

NB: Only those in the target sectors and crosscutting themes are included, although for some districts, this distinction could not be made

District	NGO Networks	INGOs	NANGOs	Local/ District NGOs	CBOs	FBOs	Others/ Unspecified	Total
Wakiso	0	9	19	11	33	11	50	133
Luwero	1	6	9	6	3	6	16	47
Mubende	2	4	3	1	22	6	46	84
Rakai	1	7	3	3	34	1	9	58
Mbarara	1	1	5	1	332	1	9	350
Rukungiri	1	2	3	1	231	2	3	243
Bushenyi	0	0	1	2	1,153	1	3	1,160
Kyenjojo	0	0	0	0	35	0	23	58
Bundibugyo	0	7	2	1	35	2	63	110
Arua	1	4	0	15	18	0	3	41
Yumbe	0	2	0	1	12	0	4	19
Gulu	1	11	3	29	135	8	68	255
Kitgum	1	5	1	0	22	0	11	40
Lira	0	2	0	3	173	0	0	178
Katakwi	0	3	3	1	0	1	3	11
Nakapiripirit	0	8	0	1	2	5	6	22
Pallisa	1	1	1	-	-	-	345	348
Mayuge	1	2	3	14	121	2	1	144
Bugiri	1	0	2	9	20	1	1	34
Kamuli	3	3	6	3	10	5	36	66
Totals	13	76	63	102	2391	52	355	3401

Source: Phase I Report

Appendix 2: CSOs by Sector and by District (From Phase I results)

District	Education	Health	HIV/ AIDS	Gender	Capacity Building	Advo- cacy	Agriculture /Livestock	IGAs	Peace & Conflict Resolution	Others
Wakiso	56	39	33	2	4	2	21	9	-	30
Luwero	13	12	5	1	4	3	5	5	-	15
Mubende	8	8	25	5	4	2	10	3	-	9
Rakai	24	22	26	1	3	-	8	1	-	9
Mbarara	68	161	210	18	36	3	52	76	-	180
Rukungiri	4	4	20	1	4	-	70	10	-	77
Bushenyi	198	498	388	26	7	-	112	341	-	843
Kyenjojo	14	5	13	-	2	-	18	3	-	21
Bundibugyo	30	33	30	14	8	4	27	22		34
Arua	20	14	12	-	-	-	12	-	-	1
Yumbe	3	10	4	-	-	-	2	3	-	6
Gulu	23	66	-	-	34	38	163	-	-	142
Kitgum	3	7	15	1	4	2	4	5	3	15
Lira	26	14	57	2	8	2	18	9	2	15
Katakwi	1	4	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Nakapiripirit	3	4	2	1	1	-	6	-	5	3
Pallisa	18	44	5	1	9	-	297	72	-	89
Mayuge	7	11	17	-	1	-	27	19	-	23
Bugiri	4	14	13	-	-	-	7	2	-	8
Kamuli	6	7	18	-	3	8	11	2	-	18
Totals	262	318	304	29	89	61	706	165	10	517

** Figures may add up to more than the total number of CSOs since most CSOs are involved in more than one sector

** "Others" includes: trade, financial services, savings and credit, infrastructure development, psychosocial support, water and sanitation, emergency relief services,

** For Gulu, HIV/AIDS is included together with Health, while conflict resolution is included together with advocacy.

Appendix 3: Sources of Documents at National Level

- UPHOLD
- AIM
- Development Network of Indigenous Voluntary Associations (DENIVA) – has a directory of member organizations compiled in 1997, which lists 300 member organizations.
- NGO Forum - has a listing of its registered member NGOs, both local and international.
- NGO Registration Board - The Board has a listing of all registered NGOs since 1989. The listing contains 3,650 organizations, showing the name of the organization, file number, overseer, and postal address.
- Uganda AIDS Commission (UAC) - in collaboration with AMREF also compiled a directory of CSOs involved in HIV/AIDS in 2001, which revealed 730 active CSOs in the field of HIV/AIDS countrywide.
- Human Rights Network (HURINET) - has compiled a directory of human rights and development organization in Uganda. This directory lists over 200 organizations.
- Action for Development (ACFODE) - produced a book that profiles 47 NGOs involved in gender and women emancipation work entitled *Visible at Last: NGO contribution to women's Recognition in Uganda*.
- Uganda Network of AIDS Service Organizations (UNASO) - has a directory of its member organizations. The member organizations include organizations involved in HIV/AIDS work.
- The Parliament of Uganda - The Parliament of Uganda with support from USAID published a directory on CSOs and public policy experts in Uganda, dated 2001.
- The IMCI/RBM NGO Secretariat - was compiling an inventory of CSOs involved in malaria control countrywide.
- Tripartite Training Programme (TTP) - (TTP) is implemented by DENIVA, ACFODE and URDT and has a collection of profiles from the organizations that have participated in its trainings.
- Action Aid Uganda
- AMREF
- Uganda Debt Network (UDN)
- Community Development Resource Network (CDRN/UPDNET)
- Makerere Institute of Social Research (MISR)
- Network of Ugandan Researchers and Research Users (NURRU)
- Centre for Basic Research (CBR)
- Inter-religious Council of Uganda (IRCUCU)

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List of National Level Key Informants Met

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