

January 2013

No. 2013-01

International Development Group Working Paper Series

Strengthening Local Councils in Uganda

Eva Mulema and Anna Wetterberg

A working paper of the
Governance and Economic Development Division,
International Development Group,
RTI International

3040 East Cornwallis Road
P.O. Box 12194
Research Triangle Park, North Carolina 27709-2194
USA





International Development Group Working Paper Series

Strengthening Local Councils in Uganda

Eva Mulema and Anna Wetterberg

Governance and Economic Development Division,
International Development Group (IDG),
RTI International
3040 East Cornwallis Road
Post Office Box 12194
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709-2194

January 2013
No. 2013-01

IDG working papers allow staff of RTI's International Development Group to reflect on experience and data accumulated through project implementation and research. The analysis and conclusions in the papers are preliminary, intended to share ideas, encourage discussion, and gather feedback. They are a means of furthering the goal of translating knowledge into practice. The views expressed herein are the authors' and do not necessarily represent those of RTI or its clients.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables	iii
List of Figures	iii
Acknowledgments.....	iv
Introduction.....	1
Background.....	2
Decentralization in Uganda	2
Analytical framework	3
Overview of LINKAGES	4
Data and results.....	6
Quantitative data: Performance measures across treatment and control sub-counties	7
Qualitative data: Interventions and outcomes in council strengthening	10
Discussion.....	16
Conclusion	20
References.....	22

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Performance measures for sub-counties (L=treatment [LINKAGES], NL=control [non-LINKAGES]), by district.....	8
Table 2. Comparison of steps in the simplified MOLG and LINKAGES planning and budgeting processes	11
Table 3. Mapping of LINKAGES activities policy implementation tasks (Brinkerhoff & Crosby, 2002).....	17

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Decentralized local government structures in Uganda	5
Figure 2. Graphical representations of performance measures for Kisoro and Amolatar Districts	9

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors are grateful to Tom Kyakwise, for sharing his wealth of experience and insights as the LINKAGES Local Government Team Leader; and to Stephen Pereira, for initiating this paper and offering comments on earlier drafts. We also thank David Eckerson for the suggestion to frame LINKAGES using the tasks for implementing policy change outlined by Brinkerhoff and Crosby (2002).

INTRODUCTION

Uganda moved to a decentralized form of government in 1992, which devolved extensive political, administrative, and fiscal responsibilities to local governments (districts and sub-counties).¹ Three outcomes were expected from this process. First, decentralization would allow for increased efficiency in the delivery of local services; secondly, it would increase citizens' participation in their own local governance; and, third, with decentralization would come greater ownership of interventions and responsiveness to local needs. These outcomes would be realized through the activities of the local government technical staff and the elected political team that form the district and sub-county councils.

Turning the lofty goals of decentralization into reality has proven challenging in Uganda, however, as it has in many countries (Awortwi, 2011; Dauda, 2006; Devas & Grant, 2003). In part, Uganda's ambitious decentralization program lacked a focus on "organizing the 'how' of reform" through coordinating multiorganizational processes involving central and subnational governments, as well as civil society groups (Brinkerhoff & Crosby, 2002, p. 1). As a result, district officials and local council members have been poorly prepared to deliver on the expected benefits of decentralization (Kjær, 2009; Manyak & Katono, 2010; Singiza & De Visser, 2011).

In this paper we describe one project's experience with addressing the shortcomings of local councils. The Strengthening Democratic Linkages in Uganda Activity (LINKAGES)² worked with councilors in 10 districts on implementing legislated requirements by simplifying processes for planning and budgeting, and clarifying administrative procedures. While these efforts helped local councils to realize the intent of reforms, they also illuminate specific challenges of implementing policy change, particularly at very local levels. We analyze LINKAGES' activities and explore their contribution to local council strengthening using Brinkerhoff and Crosby's (2002) framework for implementing policy change. As the project came to an end, it was suggested that LINKAGES embodied the policy implementation tasks enumerated in the framework. To explore this proposition, the paper uses these tasks to organize the analysis.

In the sections that follow, we first provide background on decentralization in Uganda generally and on LINKAGES specifically, before describing the project's activities and outcomes. The discussion maps LINKAGES' efforts to Brinkerhoff and Crosby's framework of policy implementation tasks, noting additional mechanisms required for mobilization of resources to realize reforms. In the conclusion, we draw implications for similar efforts in other countries.

¹ For a graphical summary of local government structures in Uganda, see Figure 1.

² The project Strengthening Democratic Linkages in Uganda (Contract Number: 617-C-00-07-00006-00, Subcontract Number: 1064408-2-43605), known as LINKAGES (2007–2011), was sponsored by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and led by the State University of New York (SUNY). RTI International was a major subcontractor, focused on support to local councils. The first author was directly involved in implementation of that project component, as Chief of Party.

BACKGROUND

Decentralization in Uganda

Decentralization is often promoted as a means of reducing poverty and enhancing economic development by improving efficiency, governance, and/or equity (Smoke, 2003, p. 9). The devolution of power, finances, and administration has been undertaken in many countries in the Global South over the past several decades, with some (for example, Indonesia) shifting quickly from centralized governance and others, such as Ghana and Uganda, transitioning more gradually.

Part of the motivation behind the trend is a tendency to perceive decentralization as a standard and straightforward procedure, instead of a complex process that must be tailored to local contexts and adjusted over time. While enthusiasm may be high among policy makers and donors, and reforms highly developed on paper, implementation is frequently given insufficient attention (Smoke, 2003: 14). The details of reforms may be unclear, causing confusion over the roles, duties, and expectations of local officials (Eckardt, 2008). Another common problem is that the central government is reluctant to give up control, failing to transfer sufficient resources and power to local agencies (Awortwi, 2011). Further, the capacity of local officials to take on decentralized duties is often neglected. Such abilities are assumed to exist, even in contexts where long experience with centralized decision-making and top-down directives has discouraged independent initiatives to solve local problems. As Smoke (2003, p. 10) notes, however, without “adequate local capacity to manage the political and fiscal functions of sub-national governments, decentralization will fail.”

In comparison with many other countries, decentralization in Uganda has been relatively successful. In 2005–2006, 40% of citizens reported that their local representative “often listens” (nine percentage points higher than the rest of Africa) and 50% rated local government performance as “good” overall (eight percentage points higher than other African countries) (Gilley, 2009, p. 96). While these figures were much lower than for the rates of satisfaction with national officials and services (which ranged in the seventies), they nonetheless illustrate that Uganda’s process of devolving functions, resources, and power has been more successful than in many other countries. In part, the comparative success of decentralization may be explained by the fact that Uganda had fairly autonomous locally elected resistance councils³ before decentralization (Smoke, 2003). Further, community participation is relatively strong in Uganda, with high turnout for elections and high turnover of local officials, indicating that citizens are engaged in governance and willing to hold leaders accountable (Awortwi, 2011, p. 366).

In spite of these successes, the low capacity of elected officials has been a continuing challenge for local government performance. Although many elected leaders had deep local knowledge and popular support, they were inexperienced with government processes, as well as lacking basic education and administrative skills (Devas & Grant, 2003). Since decentralization, the number of districts has grown

³ Resistance councils were established by the now-ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) during the 1981–1986 war against the government of Milton Obote. These structures persisted after the NRM seized power, with popular elections of councilors but without political party affiliation (Gilley, 2009). Multiparty democracy was reintroduced in 2005.

rapidly, resulting in an accompanying rising demand for local councils and exacerbating observers' concerns about low qualifications and lack of experience (Singiza & De Visser, 2011). The introduction of multiparty democracy in 2005 has presented an additional test for local governance, introducing the need to compromise across party lines. Political parties were outlawed for much of Uganda's recent history, ostensibly to avoid ethnic factionalism that has historically plagued the country (Gubser, 2011). While the reintroduction of parties has been applauded as an extension of political rights, it also has complicated local decision-making.

Finally, some scholars note a recentralization of power and resources in Uganda (see, among others, Awortwi, 2011, p. 368; Gubser, 2011). The central government has gradually taken back appointments of key officials, and administration of important functions, in some cases in response to perceived low capacity of local officials (Tumushabe, Muyomba-Tamale, & Ssemakula, 2011, p. 25). Local councils have not been able to resist these changes, indicating a continuing lack of capacity and a weakening as responsibilities and control are taken away. In fact, Gubser (2011) points to donors as complicit in undermining local capacity by failing to provide appropriate support as decentralization reforms lost momentum.

Analytical framework

Local councils thus occupy a keystone position in fulfilling the anticipated outcomes of decentralization, in Uganda and elsewhere. As noted above, to detail LINKAGES' work with local councils, we draw on Brinkerhoff and Crosby's (2002) policy implementation framework as a means of identifying the elements involved in strengthening local councils. Note that the purpose is to explore the project's fit with the framework, using the policy implementation tasks as a guide for the analysis. As such, the paper is an experiment to try on the framework, rather than an attempt to situate LINKAGES in a broader literature on decentralization and local capacity development.

Brinkerhoff and Crosby's framework outlines six main tasks required for policy implementation. First, *creating legitimacy* is needed to develop ownership of reforms. An individual, group, or organization with established political standing and resources must champion changes to convince others that they are necessary and worth pursuing. Second, *building constituencies* involves broadening support from the legitimating actor to others who have a (potential) stake in reforms, and who therefore have an interest in realizing them. Third, securing initial and continuing funding is part of *accumulating resources*. Necessary resources also include human capital, in our case embodied in the skills and capacities of local officials. Fourth, key to policy implementation is *modifying organizational structures* such that intended changes to practice occur. This task is often encumbered by entrenched patterns of behavior, as well as difficulties in grafting new structures and procedures onto existing agencies. Fifth, *mobilizing resources and actions* "shifts the policy from paper to action" (Brinkerhoff & Crosby, 2002, p. 28) through planning and implementation. In the broadest sense, this task was the main focus of LINKAGES' activities. Finally, *monitoring impact* ensures that reforms are producing intended outcomes and allows for corrections in design and implementation if they are not.

Each task contributes to bringing about policy change, but the emphasis may vary depending on the specific policy objectives pursued. The tasks are roughly sequential, as well as cyclical; monitoring of results can feed into strengthening (or weakening) the legitimacy of changes, and set off adjustments that

require renewed attention to mobilizing constituencies and resources. While the tasks are oriented toward strategic interventions that promote policy change, they also tie into implementation mechanisms and tools.

The framework is designed to map out implementation strategies, assess progress on policy implementation, and diagnose bottlenecks that impede policy reform. In this paper, we use the framework to identify the aspects of policy reform that LINKAGES addressed in its work with local councils. By breaking down the project's activities into distinct policy implementation tasks, we disentangle the elements required to address the challenge of lacking local capacity. LINKAGES' work to strengthen local councils mobilized resources and actions as a means of modifying organizational structures. However, as we demonstrate below, these efforts can be further deconstructed to show how they contributed to the other policy implementation tasks.

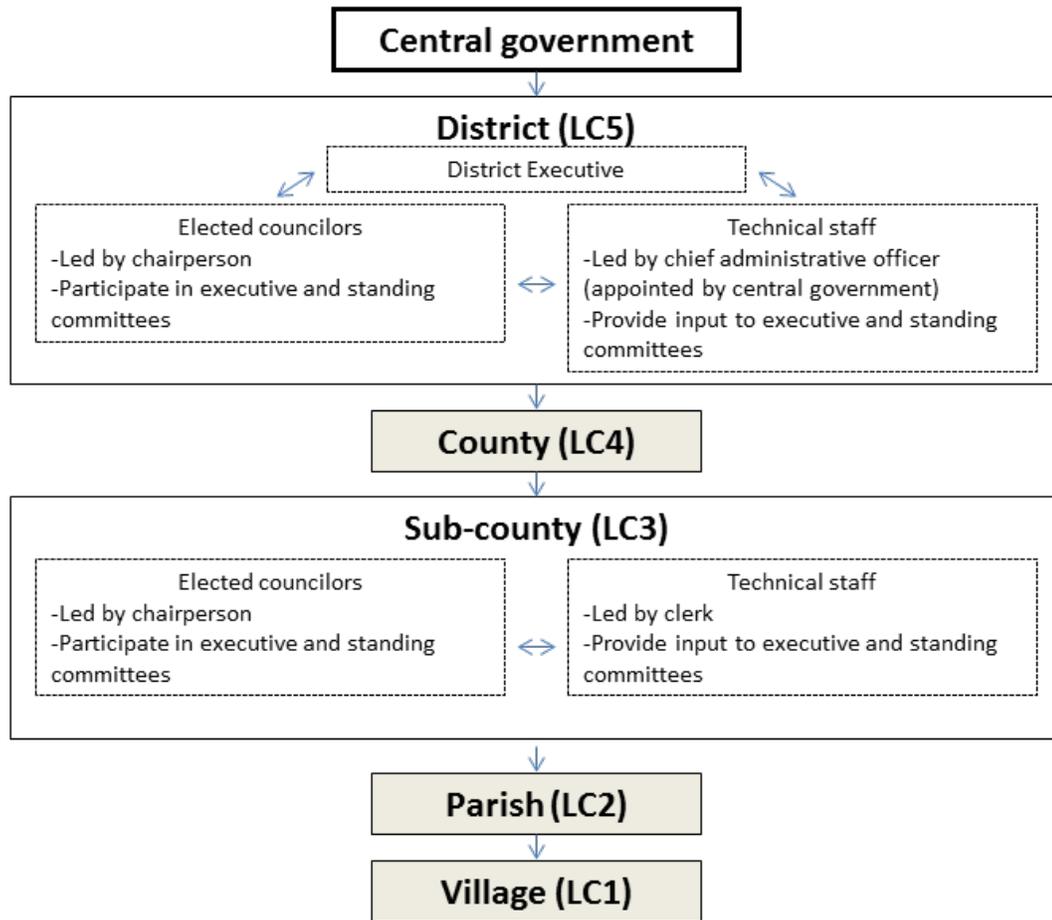
Overview of LINKAGES

The LINKAGES activity was designed to strengthen democratic linkages within Parliament, among selected local governments, and among civil society groups in Uganda through work with the Parliament and in 10 districts and in 50 sub-counties across the country. At the district and sub-county level, interventions focused on increasing local government capacity to plan and budget effectively, strengthening councils for improved representation in the newly reinstated multiparty system, carrying out participatory multiyear planning for service delivery, and enhancing local revenue generation.⁴

Uganda has a five-tiered local governance structure (Figure 1). In this paper, our focus is on sub-county councils, with some reference to LINKAGES' work at the district level. At both levels, the council consists of councilors (elected every 5 years) and technical staff. The sub-county technical team is headed by a clerk, while the elected chairperson leads the executive committee. At the district, the technical team is led by a chief administrative officer, appointed by the central government, and also includes other technical staff such as the planner, responsible for providing technical support to the preparation and production of the district development plans. The elected chairperson and district executive are responsible for initiating and formulating policy for approval by the council, overseeing the implementation of government and council policies, and monitoring and coordinating activities of nongovernmental organizations in a district. Councils also elect speakers to preside over meetings of the council and to enforce the rules of procedure, to ensure the progression of matters that need to be addressed by council and the meeting of statutory deadlines. At the end of each financial year, the executive branches of the councils are mandated to consider and evaluate the performance of the council against approved work plans and programs.

⁴ Due to space constraints, work with Parliament (led by SUNY's Center for International Development), multiyear participatory planning for service delivery, and local revenue generation are not discussed here (for more information, see Ashaba, Noor, & David, 2011; Ngunyi et al., 2010).

Figure 1. Decentralized local government structures in Uganda



Notes: LC=local council. Shaded boxes are administrative levels of local government without official budgets.

At both sub-county and district levels, councils appoint a subset of members to serve on standing committees to focus on sectors such as social services, public works, education, health, and finance and planning. These committees oversee sector budgets and plans and oversee implementation of services within their sector. They are responsible for recommending actions to the council in regard to matters arising from their sector.

When the project started in 2007, public-private dialogues (PPDs) were held among political, technical, and civil society leaders in the 10 districts. These fora helped to legitimize the project’s interventions and began the mobilization of stakeholders among the political leadership, civil servants, and civil society organizations (CSOs). The meetings established that:

- Many sub-county officials lacked the capacity and skills to engage with the communities or to work within the tight planning and budgeting schedule to develop the technical inputs prescribed by the central government to feed into sub-county and district plans;⁵
- Councilors had little experience with or understanding of how multiparty councils would function; and
- There was only limited sharing of information within the sub-county technical teams, between the technical staff and the politicians, and with the communities that they served.

Other studies (such as Manyak & Katono, 2010) also reported that the differences between political leaders and technical leaders at the district were aggravated by (1) the political team's limited understanding of the processes of local governance and (2) the technical team's taking over the roles of a weak, ill-informed, political team. When the political team tried to assert its authority, it faced challenges as political leaders many times did not know what specific authority they had and when they could exercise it, thereby fostering an environment of mistrust and friction.

In response to the findings from the PPDs, LINKAGES worked with the Ministry of Local Government (MOLG) to expand an existing MOLG orientation exercise for councilors elected in 2006 to an additional 10 districts. The expanded training included two main components. First, all 10 districts received training on new Rules of Procedures for multiparty councils.⁶ Second, four districts were also trained in participatory planning. LINKAGES staff adapted a participatory strategic planning (PSP) methodology and manual that RTI International had used successfully in a number of other countries to simplify Uganda's Harmonized Participatory Planning Guides (HPPG) for LLGs. The planning trainings were repeated for two consecutive years (and an abridged version over the third year) in the four selected districts. LINKAGES selected 15 MOLG trainers (as described later in this document) and provided technical, financial, and logistical support for all the meetings. Monitoring started after the first round of training and informed the second year of trainings. LINKAGES created an assessment tool to monitor compliance with the Rules of Procedure and the Local Government Act and to identify training needs and skills gaps particular to each council.

Data and results

To explain LINKAGES' work and what outcomes resulted, we rely primarily on qualitative descriptions, drawing on the first author's personal involvement in the project, and a range of reports and assessments (including an independent evaluation). To put these qualitative data in context, we also draw on the MOLG's *Annual assessments of minimum conditions and performance measures for local*

⁵ Article 176 (2e) of the Constitution of Uganda gives powers to local government units to plan, initiate, and execute policies in respect of all matters affecting the people within their jurisdiction. Section 35 of the Local Government Act similarly stipulates that the district council is the planning authority in the district and mandates local governments to prepare a comprehensive and integrated development plan, incorporating plans of lower local governments (LLG) for submission to the National Planning Authority, and lower-level local governments to prepare plans incorporating plans of lower councils in their respective areas of jurisdiction.

⁶ Resources for these training workshops were provided jointly by the Government of Uganda and LINKAGES.

governments (2006–2010) for each district.⁷ We selected two performance measures to compare outcomes in those sub-counties where LINKAGES was active to others *in the same district* where the project did not have a presence.⁸ For each measure, we compared the annual average outcome for LINKAGES sub-counties (treatment, designated “L”) to the annual average outcome for non-LINKAGES sub-counties (control, designated “NL”) in Table 1.

Selected because they closely matched the scope of LINKAGES’ work, the two indicators were (1) performance of council and executive committees and (2) performance of council standing committees, scored on a scale from 1 (lowest) to 10 (highest) in each year (MOLG, 2011). The first measure assesses sub-county council and executive committee performance (Figure 1), based on the number of times that the full council, as well as the executive committee, met during the previous fiscal year. In assessing the number of qualifying meetings, evaluators review meeting minutes, attendance, and the issues discussed. To achieve the maximum score, the council must have met at least four times and the executive committee at least 11 times.

The second measure is composed of three elements: the number of qualifying sector committee meetings during the prior fiscal year, the number of reports received and discussed from technical departments, and committee participation in sector planning and budgeting processes. To earn the maximum total score, each standing committee must have met at least four times and discussed at least four reports from its respective departments. For the third component of this performance measure, evaluators review minutes of sector committee meetings, as well as final sector budgets, to identify whether meeting priorities are reflected in final plans and allocations submitted to the council. If this is the case, the sub-county receives the maximum score for this component.

Quantitative data: Performance measures across treatment and control sub-counties

Compared to the 2006 baselines, both LINKAGES and non-LINKAGES sub-counties showed improvements on most averages. Over time, there was an encouraging overall improvement in local council performance, although the magnitude of increases varied considerably (Table 1, rows 4–8; for more detail see also Figure 2).⁹

⁷ These assessments evaluate sub-county governments’ function and performance using 11 measures, each scored on a 10-point scale. For details, see MOLG (2011), Onyach-Olaa (2003), and Figure 2.

⁸ By design, LINKAGES had selected control and treatment sub-counties in every district (except Amolatar, where all five sub-counties were included in project activities).

⁹ Note two exceptions: the non-LINKAGES standing committee average for Mubende declined, as did both LINKAGES averages for Pader.

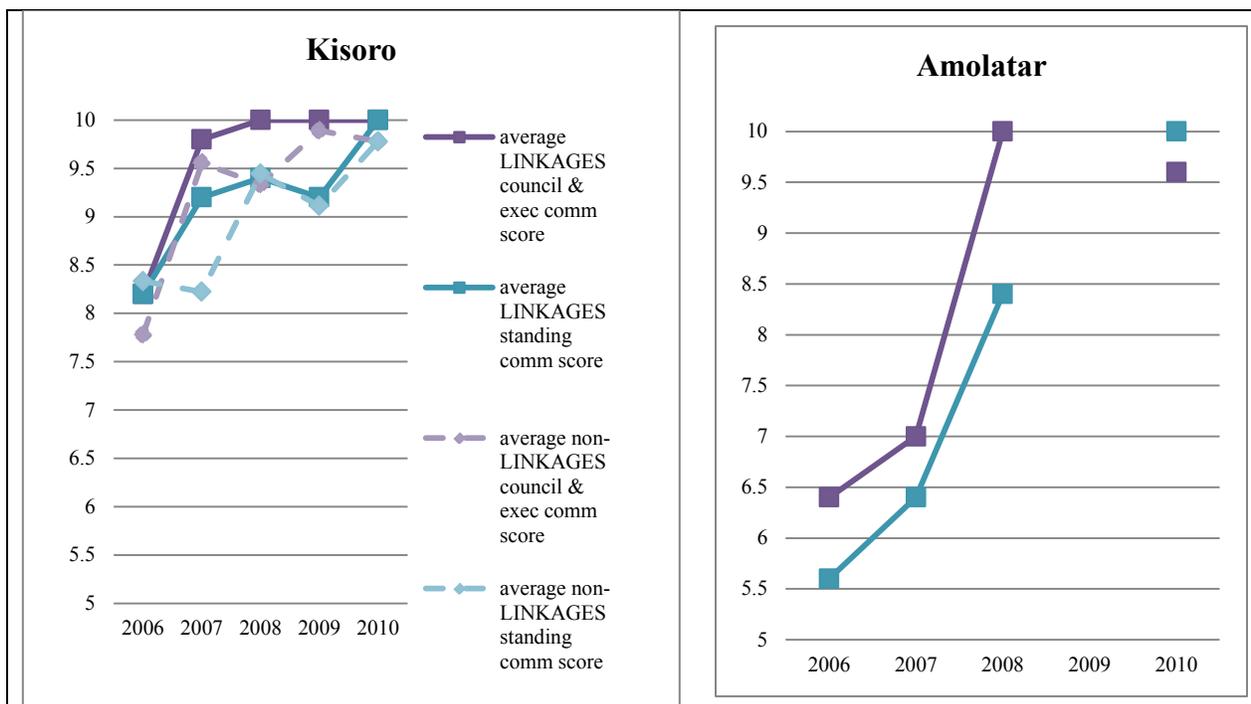
Table 1. Performance measures for sub-counties (L=treatment [LINKAGES], NL=control [non-LINKAGES]), by district

Row	Indicator	Amolatar	Arua	Hoima	Kisoro	Mubende	Mukono*	Pader*	Katakwi*	Kitgum*
1	Difference at baseline (2006)									
2	- council and executive committee score	n.a.	L>NL	NL>L	L>NL	L=NL	NL>L	L>NL	L>NL	L>NL
3	- standing committee score	n.a.	L>NL	NL>L	NL>L	NL>L	NL>L	L>NL	L>NL	NL>L
4	2006–2010 change within sub-counties in...									
5	- average L council and executive committee score	3.2	0.6	4.8	1.8	1.2	1.0	-1.2	2.8	2.6
6	- average L standing committee score	4.4	3.0	1.6	1.8	1.4	4.7	-1.0	3.4	6.4
7	- average NL council and executive committee score	n.a.	1.5	1.9	2.0	0.2	1.0	1.2	3.5	1.6
8	- average NL standing committee score	n.a.	2.8	1.1	1.4	-0.2	2.2	1.9	7.0	3.5
9	Difference in change between L and NL sub-counties (i.e., L – NL, rows 5–8)									
10	- average council and executive committee score	n.a.	-0.9	3.0	-0.2	1.0	0.0	-2.4	-0.7	1.0
11	- average standing committee score	n.a.	0.2	0.5	0.4	1.6	2.5	-2.9	-3.6	2.9

* Changes calculated between 2006 and 2009, as no data available for 2010.

Source: MOLG *Annual assessments of minimum conditions and performance measures for local governments (2006–2010)*.

Figure 2. Graphical representations of performance measures for Kisoro and Amolatar Districts



The data from the MOLG *Annual assessments of minimum conditions and performance measures for local governments* are scheduled to be collected every year. However, the reports summarizing the scores and findings are not readily available for every district in all years. In addition, several districts were split between 2006 and 2010, complicating graphical comparisons of changes. We therefore do not include graphs for all districts here, instead including only two districts with relatively complete data for illustrative purposes (the full data are available from the authors upon request).

Kisoro was one of the few districts for which consistent, stable data were available for graphical comparison. As the graph shows, there was improvement across all sub-counties, but improvements in LINKAGES sub-counties occurred more quickly and ended at a slightly higher level than in control sub-counties.

In Amolatar district, LINKAGES worked in all five sub-counties, as well as with the district council. Amolatar was also one of four districts in which the HPDP activity was implemented. Although there are no comparison sub-counties for this district to use as controls, substantial improvements in both executive and standing committee performance are clear during the period that LINKAGES worked in Amolatar.

For the *council and executive committee assessments*, the LINKAGES sub-county average increased in every district, except Pader (row 5). In addition, average scores generally ended higher in 2010 than the non-LINKAGES sub-county averages.¹⁰ Note, however, that five of the districts had 2006 baseline averages that were higher for LINKAGES sub-counties than for the non-LINKAGES sub-

¹⁰ Except Mukono, where both LINKAGES and non-LINKAGES averages ended at 10. Note that data on 2010 average scores are not included in Table 1, but are available upon request.

counties (rows 1–2), indicating that executive committees in sub-counties receiving interventions often were performing relatively better even before LINKAGES activities began.¹¹

For the *standing committee assessments*, all LINKAGES sub-county averages increased over baseline¹² and all but two districts showed larger increases in average scores for LINKAGES sub-counties than for controls (rows 6 and 8). At baseline, five non-LINKAGES averages were higher than LINKAGES averages, whereas in only three districts did the LINKAGES average exceed that for comparison sub-counties (rows 1–3). For this measure, most standing committees that received LINKAGES training thus started at a substantial disadvantage but overcame it during the period that the project was active.

While changes over time were sometimes small and mirrored higher capacities at baseline, on average, councils in LINKAGES sub-counties often performed better over time than control sub-counties in the same districts (rows 9–11). These changes cannot be directly attributed to the project but nonetheless provide an indicator that councils (particularly the standing committees) at project sites made notable improvements between 2006 and 2010.

A possible confounding factor in interpretation of these data is that although the initial project design designated control and treatment sub-counties in each district, non-project sub-counties made a substantial number of requests for LINKAGES assistance (Ngunyi et al., 2010). While these requests are a testament to the project's perceived effectiveness, they underscore that control sub-counties were often aware of the interventions undertaken in treatment sub-counties and, in some cases, acted on their own initiative to attend training and access LINKAGES resources. To the extent this occurred, it could be considered leakage between treatment and control sites, resulting in smaller apparent differences in performance.

Qualitative data: Interventions and outcomes in council strengthening

LINKAGES' efforts to strengthen local councils began with the PPDs (described above). Based on the issues identified in the PPDs, the project designed and implemented activities in 10 districts and 50 sub-counties from June 2007 to July 2011, working with the first multiparty councils elected after a 20-year hiatus. The project's major activities were to involve councils in planning and budget scrutiny (in four districts) and to lead training on new council Rules of Procedure (in all districts). In addition to operationalizing these policies, which had previously existed only on paper, the project's activities clarified roles and responsibilities of councilors, enhanced the working relationships between the technical and political staff, and improved the use of council time.

(i) Involving councils in planning and budget scrutiny

To address capacity and participation gaps in the local government planning process, LINKAGES consolidated the 18 steps of the MOLG's Harmonized Participatory Planning Guide for Lower Level

¹¹ Note that comparisons are possible for only 9 of the 10 intervention districts, as there were no control sub-counties in Amolatar. Also, Sironko district is excluded from the quantitative data comparisons, as the number of districts assessed changed every year, precluding consistent comparisons over time.

¹² Except in Pader, where there was a decline for LINKAGES sub-counties.

Local Governments (HPPG)¹³ into the 10 steps of the Harmonized Participatory Development Process (HPDP). These steps start with prioritized needs to be identified at the village level, then aggregated and prioritized again at the parish level, through to the sub-county level, and finally to the district level (Table 2). However, due to resource constraints, LINKAGES started technical support to the planning process at the parish level.

Table 2. Comparison of steps in the simplified MOLG and LINKAGES planning and budgeting processes

MOLG Harmonized Participatory Planning Guide for Lower Local Governments (LLG) Summary Planning Steps	LINKAGES Harmonized Participatory Development Process (HPDP)	Participants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Step 1: Review Technical Planning Committee (TPC) functionality 	Step 1: Generating the necessary conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members of the TPCs, councilors, and civil society organizations (CSOs)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Step 2: Dissemination of planning information for parishes/wards Step 3: Support to village/parish level planning 	Step 2: Parish-level planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parish council, Parish Development Committees (PDCs), villages, and CSOs representing the wider community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Step 4: Situation analysis at LLG level Step 5: LLG SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis Step 6: LLG visioning and goal setting 	Step 3: Sub-county situation assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sub-county councilors, TPCs/technical staff, and CSOs Sub-county councilors, TPCs, and CSOs TPCs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Step 7: Identification of LLG investment priorities 	Step 4: Sub-county priority setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councilors, TPCs, and CSOs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Step 8: Budget conference Step 9: Forwarding projects for district/municipal consideration 	Step 5: Sub-county budget conference and capital investment plan (CIP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councilors, Investment Committees, PDCs, TPCs, and CSOs TPCs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Step 10: Development of the project profiles Step 11: Review of project profiles by standing committees 	Step 6: Development of the sub-county project profiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TPCs and Investment Committees (IC) Standing committee members <i>(CSOs will be supported for pre-standing committee lobbying)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Step 12: Compilation of the draft Comprehensive Development Plan Step 13: Review of the Draft Comprehensive Plan by the Executive Step 14: Refinement of the Draft Comprehensive Plan by the TPC 	Step 7: Formulation of the sub-county development plans, work plans and budgets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TPCs and Planning Units Executive committee members TPCs

¹³ The HPPG has been criticized for being poorly adapted to the conditions of local councils as it uses unfamiliar concepts, is not available in local languages, and requires 11 months to complete (ECI Africa, 2007).

MOLG Harmonized Participatory Planning Guide for Lower Local Governments (LLG) Summary Planning Steps	LINKAGES Harmonized Participatory Development Process (HPDP)	Participants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step 15: Discussion and approval of the Comprehensive Plan by the Council • Step 16: Finalization of the Comprehensive Development Plan • Step 17: Submit the Approved Comprehensive Development Plan to the higher-level government 	<p>Step 8: Approval and dissemination of the sub-county development plans and budgets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clerks to council/sub-county chiefs/speakers and councilors • TPCs, chairpersons • Sub-county chiefs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step 18: Final feedback to the LLGs (parishes/wards and villages/cells) 	<p>Step 9: Feedback on the plans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project staff (year 1); • district and sub-county technical teams (year 2)
	<p>Step 10: HPDP barometer for CSOs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project staff

LINKAGES provided support for HPDP steps 1 to 9 (Table 2). This was the first time that most executive committees and sub-county committees had carried out a formally structured process of reviewing plans and corresponding budgets. LINKAGES had also planned to administer a survey instrument to measure CSO involvement in the planning process (step 10), but a pilot showed that the tool needed further simplification to produce reliable information from sub-county level CSOs. Given competing project priorities, the LINKAGES team decided that resources were better used elsewhere.

For two consecutive years, the HPDP cycle was run in 21 local governments in four districts (Amolatar, Kitgum, Arua, and Pader) and 20 sub-counties. During this time, LINKAGES local governments developed multisectoral and multiyear plans that linked activities with financing sources. The plans also identified unfunded priorities to attract other donor funding. These plans were of distinctly better quality than those produced in control sub-counties. For example, the district planner in Kitgum district reported that:

...the plans in those sub-counties where LINKAGES had been are quite different from the plans in non-LINKAGES sub-counties. They are plans of high quality, they reflect the needs of the people on the ground and their planning activities are in line with their resource envelope...LINKAGES sub-counties are more critical in their planning process. They follow local government timelines and held their budget conferences in time.
(Ashaba et al., 2011, p. 13)

The improved plans resulted from changes in the way that the political teams, as well as the technical teams, worked. First, frequent meetings with a range of actors to review priorities and budgets strengthened the political arm of local governments by broadening the information and fora to which councilors in LINKAGES districts were exposed. The HPDP process alone had up to eight different opportunities for engagement per year. In addition, LINKAGES implemented other interventions around local revenue mobilization, which also involved both political and technical leadership. These fora were channels of much-needed information for councilors to build their knowledge and confidence,

empowering them to hold informed discussions as their respective committees scrutinized relevant sectoral budgets.

Through the planning process, both technical and political teams also received hands-on experience reviewing and approving work plans and budgets. Their specific roles—whether as individual councilors or as members of executive or standing committees—were clarified, and could be exercised in the forums provided by the simplified planning process.

(ii) Operationalizing new Rules of Procedure

As stated previously, with the move to multiparty practice in Uganda in 2005, new Rules of Procedure came into effect. LINKAGES trained councils elected in 2006 (10 district councils and 50 sub-county councils) in the content and implementation of these rules. For this activity, LINKAGES worked with the MOLG on the standard Rules of Procedure and provided a copy of these rules and the Local Government Act to each councilor in the 60 local governments. Trainers were selected from the MOLG resource pool, which is an annually updated list of persons the MOLG draws on for training services. Then a training-of-trainers session was held as a means to harmonize approaches and clarify content.

In 2008, LINKAGES ran a 3-day training for councilors in each local government covering topics such as sitting and adjournment of the council, conduct of meetings, the committee of the whole council, questions and petitions, motions to council, and votes of censure. Two days of instruction were followed by a day of mock sessions and feedback. In the mock sessions, councilors were given a scenario and asked to discuss the issue using the new council practice. During feedback sessions, both councilors and the trainers could respond to the earlier mock session. In combination, the mock and feedback sessions simplified and operationalized the technical language of the rules and made them more usable.

In 2009, LINKAGES undertook a monitoring assessment to gauge the level at which the Rules of Procedure had been adopted and to identify training needs and skills gaps particular to each council. The assessment showed improved ability of councilors to effectively and efficiently conduct council business. Ngunyi et al. (2010) found that the Rules of Procedures had become operational in LINKAGES target districts and that the confidence of councilors had increased, overcoming poor academic qualifications. For example, the speaker from Sironko district stated that the Rules of Procedure greatly improved his ability to manage council sittings. He was more able to determine when interjections were inappropriate and had the confidence to rule people out of order (Ashaba et al., 2011).

Another key result was improved record keeping. One testimony during a focus group discussion at Lagoro sub-county for councilors noted:

... before LINKAGES, our sub-county chief lost the minutes of council twice. One time he actually claimed that the rebels had stolen them. But now the minutes are well kept. We can now refer to past decisions and follow – up on their implementation. (Ngunyi et al., 2010, p. 41)

Delineation and clarification as to what business should be handled in council and what should be handled in committee greatly improved council use of time and decision-making processes, and strengthened the committee system. Before LINKAGES' interventions, council meetings would last for a whole day and at times stretch into another; but after trainings, meetings lasted an average of 3 hours

(Ngunyi et al., 2010). All 60 councils reported improved efficiency in both the deliberations and the development of resolutions. The Hon. John Ogwok, chairperson of Kitgum district, stated that:

There is a lot of improvement in the quality of the council and the debates. Most of the different committees are now active after knowing their roles and responsibilities. They take less time to discuss issues in council because the committee would have done their work. I am currently so proud of my council because they debate real issues and we take less time compared to the past where we would take two to three days.

Similarly, the Hon. Santoreno Oringa, chairperson of Orom Sub-county said, “We no longer spend days in our meetings but just a few hours and with quality outcomes. This is because we are focused and very clear about our roles.”¹⁴

In addition, there was significant improvement in the working relationships between councilors belonging to different political parties in the local councils. For example, before the 2008 training, the district council in Kitgum district was in advanced stages of censuring the district chairperson. However, after the training, upon realizing that they had used a wrong procedure and as a result could make themselves and the district liable to a civil suit and the payment of significant damages, the councilors withdrew their petition and agreed to work with the chairperson to resolve the dispute (Tom Kyakwise, personal communication). In Mukono district, where the whole council save one member was from the ruling party, it was agreed that the minority member would always be provided an opportunity to speak on any matter that was under consideration before the floor (Ashaba, et al., 2011).

The training on Rules of Procedure helped councilors understand their designated roles and they increasingly began to take them on, reclaiming tasks that had been ceded to technical staff. For example, in Sironko, the district planner reported during the 2010 evaluation exercise that it took him and other technical staff by surprise when the council began to ask for documentation as they were preparing to go into session. The technical staff had been used to responding directly to issues during the council sessions. They initially thought that the council secretaries were seeking to build cases against them for wrongdoing; it was only later that they realized the councilors were simply trying to prepare for the meetings. Clarification of the rules and roles emphasized that the secretary to the standing committees was responsible for responding to and addressing council concerns. This clarification eased tensions, although many technical staff remained uneasy with their perceived loss of control.

With a strengthened understanding of their mandate, councils increasingly asserted their authority. In Sironko district, for example, the district councilors insisted that the district planner adhere to the provision of the law that requires councilors to be given 7 days’ notice of council meetings and to be supplied with advance copies of all documents to be reviewed and approved at those meetings. As a result, the district planner was forced to give the councilors the draft 2010/2011 district development

¹⁴ The productive use of council time was particularly notable where the Rules of Procedure training and HPDP processes reinforced each other. On the one hand, the HPDP process strengthened the functionality of committees by providing space for discussions and reviews that had previously been taken into the council. This discussion was now held at committee stage and only the recommendations went to the floor of the house. On the other hand, enforcement of the rules forced councilors to prepare for council, the council sessions had to have an agenda, and proper minutes of the council had to be kept. Ad hoc interjections were ruled out of order and this made meetings much more productive.

plans 7 days before the council meeting so the councilors could review them before voting on them. In the past, the councilors had accepted the development plans given to them for the first time on the very day of the council meeting, passing and approving them without requisite review and scrutiny. Requiring the 7-day notice allowed councilors time for review and discussion, resulting in more thoughtful, consultative plans.

Similarly, the chairperson of Agoro sub-county instituted weekly meetings to keep track of the activities of technical staff, who previously appeared only irregularly at the sub-county headquarters. These examples reflect the improving capacity of the local government political leadership to supervise the local government technical staff and thereby strengthen the management and decision-making process.

The assessment also showed certain weaknesses. Whereas most councils claimed to have adopted customized Rules of Procedure, only three district councils (Kitgum, Arua, Mukono) and two sub-county councils (Paloga and Najembe) had actually done so. The rest of the councils only adopted the standard rules, without tailoring them to their own context.

The assessment also revealed additional infrastructural needs. Council offices could have benefited from equipment such as computers, printers, and photocopiers to enable proper council minutes to be written, records kept, and council reports documented. Unfortunately, LINKAGES was not able to provide such equipment.

Finally, in spite of some general improvements in record keeping, another weakness was poor or incomplete documentation of meetings and decisions. Council clerks said they had difficulty in preparing council minutes, standing committee reports, and other council documents.

Following the assessment, LINKAGES undertook further training to respond to identified weaknesses. These included providing feedback to councils on their findings and holding further mock sessions to address the gaps. The most fundamental revision of the Rules of Procedure training was to include technical staff. In the first round of LINKAGES training, only the elected officials were trained on the Rules. However, following the assessment and the discussions that ensued, it became clear that the technical officers needed this information as well, to reduce the friction that was arising as a result of the increased empowerment of the elected officials. In the second round of training, LINKAGES trained speakers, council clerks, and technical staff on their roles and responsibilities in council business, including writing council minutes and reports, maintaining council documentation, managing public information, and maintaining the relationship between the Office of the Speaker and other key offices and departments in the local government structure. Including technical staff also helped to address record-keeping and documentation needs.

As a result of this change in training scope, some of the remaining tensions with political teams were alleviated. In Kisoro district, technical officers often appropriated councilor roles before LINKAGES training. However, as a result of training and mentoring interventions, technical officers learned to respect the boundaries and only intervened if asked by the speaker to give advice. Ashaba et al. (2011) reported that the Kisoro chief administrative officer appreciated council development in the district:

LINKAGES has done a lot ... because when you compare this council and the councils that were not trained there was a big difference. It was quite complex for us to manage

the affairs of the council because we all had our styles that lacked harmonization; a thing that LINKAGES came and change[d]. This time around we spend very little time in the meetings but a lot is done which is credit to LINKAGES.

In addition to the expanded scope, assessments showed particular aspects of the trainings to be important. Councilors particularly valued the mock sessions. At these events, concepts came alive for them. Office holders such as the speaker and clerk to council had their roles validated and affirmed. Errors or misconceptions were observed in practice within a setting where corrections could be provided immediately.

Also, holding training-of-trainers sessions before each council training session, as well as a review and feedback session once the training was concluded, greatly strengthened interventions. These meetings harmonized trainers' approaches and became a forum of learning for the trainers and project staff. Some proposals for further action actually arose from these sessions.

Another element that worked well was the use of qualified and experienced trainers who were respected by the audience. In Uganda, a common practice is to have district-based staff undertake the training of their peers and of lower-level local governments. The argument for this practice is that it encourages sustainability as the skills are retained by the trainer who resides in the district. However, these staff are not always highly regarded by their peers or may be active participants in power struggles between political and technical staff. LINKAGES trainers not only were respected, but also many times were approached to mediate disputes or to provide information to assist in solving local crises. For example, in Pader district there was a standoff over the selection of the vice chairperson between the district chairperson (from a minority party) and his councilors, the majority of whom came from another party. A team of LINKAGES trainers mediated this standoff and the council and chairperson agreed on a vice chairperson.

Unfortunately, LINKAGES did not have specific resources and mechanisms to consistently address such disputes. Amolatar district faced a similar conflict over the chairperson's nomination of the vice chairperson. LINKAGES staff were also asked to mediate the dispute, but were unable to comply due to limited resources and authority. Nonetheless, it is notable that councilors respected and trusted the LINKAGES team sufficiently to approach them to resolve this issue. It also highlights the need for explicit conflict-resolution mechanisms to accompany the contentious process of policy reform.

DISCUSSION

Categorizing LINKAGES activities across the policy implementation tasks shows that they spanned all six (Table 3). The project's interventions were most broadly focused on *mobilizing resources and actions* as a means of *modifying organizational structures*. The structures and responsibilities of local councils had already been formally altered by the decentralization reforms and shift to multiparty democracy. In practice, however, newly elected councilors were unaware of their duties and relevant procedures, and technical staff had appropriated many of the functions designated for the political team. To realize reforms, LINKAGES laid the groundwork for these changes through *creating legitimacy, building constituencies, accumulating resources, and monitoring outcomes*.

Table 3. Mapping of LINKAGES activities policy implementation tasks (Brinkerhoff & Crosby, 2002)

LINKAGES activities	Policy implementation tasks					
	<i>Creating legitimacy</i>	<i>Building constituencies</i>	<i>Accumulating resources</i>	<i>Modifying organizational structures</i>	<i>Mobilizing resources and actions</i>	<i>Monitoring impact</i>
1. Public-private dialogues (PPDs) at project outset to identify issues	Stakeholder involvement	Identification of priorities			Logistical support for PPDs	
2. HPDP process	Clarification of roles for individual councilors, members of standing and executive committees	Clarification of role => assertion of mandate, therefore a constituent for reform?	Information to address councilors' knowledge gaps	Realization of planned reforms	Training, organization of meetings for budget review, and information fora	Planned but not implemented
3. Training on new Rules of Procedures for multiparty councils	Clarification of councilors' roles	Expansion of training to include technical officers, who otherwise might have obstructed reforms	Information to address councilors' knowledge gaps	Realization of planned reforms	Training (including mock sessions and feedback); mentoring	LINKAGES monitoring assessment => further training; feedback sessions for each training

The initial PPDs created legitimacy through broad agreement on the weaknesses in local councils that needed to be addressed. This consensus built support for LINKAGES' subsequent efforts. The HPDP process and training on Rules of Procedures clarified individual councilors' and committees' roles, thereby strengthening councilors' confidence and elucidating their role relative to technical staff. As a result, councilors were perceived as legitimate contributors to budget and planning negotiations, speakers gained standing to run regular meetings and facilitate constructive debate, and committees' preparatory work was both expected and considered an appropriate input to council business.

Constituencies were built in two ways. First, councilors themselves became supporters of reforms by insisting on their recently discovered responsibilities and rights. Second, and perhaps more subtly, LINKAGES efforts to involve technical staff helped lessen these officials' tendencies to obstruct reforms. While frictions remained as councilors took on tasks previously carried out by technical staff, improved understandings of the formal underpinnings of this shift likely reduced resistance from the latter group. In this sense, LINKAGES built constituencies by reducing opposition to reforms.

LINKAGES' *accumulation of resources* was wholly focused on information as a resource for implementing policy change. While disseminating this information to relevant actors in local councils required considerable financial and logistical inputs, local officials themselves received little in the way of concrete additional resources. This emphasis on accurate information, communicated in a practical and understandable manner, underscores the frequent failure of decentralization reforms to prepare local officials for changes in roles and responsibilities. While such formal changes appear straightforward, they require shifts in long-standing behaviors of existing officials and unfamiliar tasks for new ones. Both thorough explanations of these realignments and practical training are critical to implementing decentralized governance.

Where *monitoring* of LINKAGES' impacts occurred, it significantly altered the course and design of interventions, by reinforcing and expanding training materials as well as involving additional participants. Built into the project design was the opportunity for review and change of approach, which enabled the team to respond to opportunities and identified needs of beneficiaries. Quarterly and annual reviews, combined with programming flexibility, substantially improved the LINKAGES training in operationalizing the Rules of Procedure. The target audience was widened from just political leadership to include technical leaders, and expanded to cover specialized training for clerks and speakers on record keeping as a result of the project's built-in capacity to make the change. However, the failure to complete planned monitoring of CSO involvement in the HPDP process underscores the need to build in multiple means of regular assessment.

The policy implementation tasks outlined by Brinkerhoff and Crosby (2002) identify the different dimensions that LINKAGES addressed through project interventions and how they contributed to realizing reforms. In addition, however, some specific characteristics of LINKAGES' training efforts are not readily captured in the policy implementation framework but nevertheless contributed to local councils taking on the responsibilities envisioned in reforms. Specific mechanisms for mobilizing resources and actions—such as providing officials with concrete experience combined with ongoing mentoring, and relying on professional and nonlocal trainers—contributed to stronger local councils.

Hands-on experience proved to be instrumental for LINKAGES. It was not sufficient to provide information on written policies during trainings; it was the mock sessions that helped these concepts come alive for local officials and enabled them to establish shared interpretations of how rules and responsibilities would be implemented in their councils. These sessions also allowed officials to consult with trainers to reconcile different understandings. Also, trainers returned to the same project sites over 3 years, allowing them to gain familiarity with local issues, personalities, and processes to tailor mentoring and subsequent training. Implementation of decentralization reforms in Uganda thus underscored the need for practical experience and ongoing mentoring, beyond the mobilization of more straightforward training resources. The LINKAGES experience points to the high level of detail and effort required to effect change in practice.

Gains in experience will of course occur over time, as local officials run through repeated cycles of planning and budgeting. Such learning is reflected in the consistent increase in performance across all sub-counties, whether they received LINKAGES interventions or not (Table 1). However, elevated performance of LINKAGES standing committees relative to that found in the nonproject sub-counties suggests that the mentoring and more structured practical experience facilitated by the project may have produced additional gains.

The important role of mentoring in LINKAGES sub-counties also highlights the value of providing high-quality project trainers. A high degree of professionalism was expected and those who failed to live up to these standards (through absenteeism, for example) faced clear sanctions. Further, feedback sessions were built in after each training to ensure a common understanding and approach across sites. Finally, as previously noted, the consistent use of the same trainers over the life of the project in each district built shared trust and understanding between trainers and local officials. The knowledge gained over time was important to the mentoring of councils.

Trainers also had a hand in mitigating the inevitable conflict that arises from shifts in roles and responsibilities. Local officials often asked trainers to mediate at both project and nonproject sites because of their expertise and objectivity. Notably, however, such mediation took place on an ad hoc basis, and sometimes was thwarted due to lack of time or because such involvement was outside the project's jurisdiction. Implementing reforms that empower new actors, and thereby curtail the role of others, must involve a formal mandate, process, and resources to address conflict (Barron, Diprose, & Woolcock, 2011). Failure to do so is likely to impede progress and may, in some cases, negate the intended outcomes of reforms if existing behaviors and relationships become further entrenched.

Finally, the use of trainers from outside the project districts helped enhance their legitimacy and objectivity in the eyes of local officials. In contrast to ideals of community-driven development (Mansuri & Rao, 2004) and empowerment (Narayan, 2005) where local actors are the critical agents of change, LINKAGES highlighted the need for collaboration with external actors to bring about policy reforms. Decentralization is one example where increased distance of actors from the local context can facilitate change. Other centrally initiated policies that involve realignment of local behaviors and power relationships are likely to require similar constellations of actors.

Although LINKAGES helped to advance decentralization reforms in Uganda, implementation gaps remain. Tensions between national and local legislators often run high, and more must be done to

prevent confrontations that threaten reforms. Further, the low educational qualifications of local council members continue to limit the scope of decisions to which they can contribute and resources they can access. Civil society engagement and input need to be further strengthened (Tumushabe et al., 2011). Finally, while new guidelines and regulations exist in written form, they are not communicated to relevant audiences and appropriate resources for their implementation typically fail to materialize. The LINKAGES model could be used to implement such reforms but effective outcomes could only be achieved if appropriate mentoring, monitoring, and time are dedicated to such efforts.

This caveat on replication carries over to other contexts to which the LINKAGES model might be adapted. It is critical to ensure that sufficient time and resources are dedicated to mentoring and an iterative training process. Information alone is not enough; it was the practical application of new knowledge with ongoing access to external experts that enabled LINKAGES to translate decentralization reforms into improved local council performance in Uganda. It is this depth and length of interventions that underlie improvements; a scaled-back replication is likely to fail.

CONCLUSION

The LINKAGES experience with decentralization reforms in Uganda has several implications for similar efforts in other contexts. First, the need for flexibility of design and programming, combined with regular monitoring input, cannot be underestimated. Without midcourse corrections to expand trainings and shift focus, project activities would not have been as well received by local councils.

Second, information is insufficient to build capacity. Training is often seen as a discrete activity, to introduce new techniques and knowledge. In LINKAGES, hands-on experience, supervised by knowledgeable mentors who remained involved over a long period, strengthened local councilors' capacity. Such investments require considerable resources in terms of staff and time, but short-changing these will undercut results.

Third, more intensive interventions may benefit individual councils but may not be the most effective use of resources overall. Comparing outcomes in sub-counties¹⁵ that received both HPDP and Rules of Procedure training with those that received only the latter does not show stark differences. It may be more cost-effective to focus on lower-intensity training, spread regularly over a long period, rather than the intense, and very expensive, facilitation that accompanied HPDP.

Fourth, to maximize the effectiveness of iterative training and mentoring, interventions need to start soon after officials are elected. Although officially begun in 2007, LINKAGES started training only in 2008 due to project start-up processes. Outcomes would likely have improved if interventions had started immediately after the 2006 elections.

Fifth, efforts to enact reforms in practice need to encompass all relevant actors. Including technical staff in the LINKAGES trainings reduced tensions and facilitated collaboration with councilors.

¹⁵ Note that these data are not presented in the paper due to space constraints, but are available from the authors upon request.

Excluding these actors, who provide important skills and inputs to strengthen local councils, would have jeopardized progress.

Perhaps the most encouraging aspect of LINKAGES efforts to realize the intent of Uganda's decentralization reforms is that, as councilors gained experience and knowledge, they themselves became constituents for reinforcing these reforms. As local officials learned their designated roles and responsibilities, they began to insist on them, taking back tasks that had been assumed by technical staff, to perform the duties for which they had been elected. Strengthening local capacity can thus empower officials not only to understand reforms but also to take personal ownership of them, reinforcing capacity-building efforts.

REFERENCES

- Ashaba, M. A., Noor, M., & David, M. (2011). An assessment of strengthening democratic linkages in Uganda (LINKAGES) in the six districts of Arua, Kitgum, Katakwi, Mubende, Hoima and Kisoro. Kampala, Uganda: LINKAGES.
- Awortwi, N. (2011). An unbreakable path? A comparative study of decentralization and local government development trajectories in Ghana and Uganda. *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 77(2), 347–377.
- Barron, P., Diprose, R., & Woolcock, M. (2011). *Contesting development: Participatory projects and local conflict dynamics in Indonesia*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Brinkerhoff, D. W., & Crosby, B. (2002). *Managing policy reform: concepts and tools for decision-makers in developing and transitioning countries*. Sterling, VA: Kumarian Press.
- Dauda, C. L. (2006). Democracy and decentralisation: local politics, marginalisation and political accountability in Uganda and South Africa. *Public Administration and Development*, 26(4), 291–302.
- Devas, N., & Grant, U. (2003). Local government decision-making—citizen participation and local accountability: Some evidence from Kenya and Uganda. *Public Administration and Development*, 23(4), 307-316.
- ECI Africa. (2007). *Final evaluation of UNCDF's Local Development Programme*. Johannesburg, South Africa: ECI Africa.
- Eckardt, S. (2008). Political accountability, fiscal conditions and local government performance - cross-sectional evidence from Indonesia. *Public Administration and Development*, 28(1), 1–17.
- Gilley, B. (2009). *The right to rule: How states win and lose legitimacy*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Gubser, M. (2011). The view from le Château: USAID's recent decentralisation programming in Uganda. *Development Policy Review*, 29(1), 23–46.
- Kjær, A. M. (2009). Sources of local government extractive capacity: The role of trust and pre-colonial legacy in the case of Uganda. *Public Administration and Development*, 29(3), 228–238.
- Mansuri, G., & Rao, V. (2004). Community-based and -driven development: A critical review. *The World Bank Research Observer*, 19(1), 1–40.
- Manyak, T., & Katono, I. W. (2010). Decentralization and conflict in Uganda: Governance adrift. *African Studies Quarterly*, 11(4), 1-24.
- Ministry of Local Government (MOLG). (2006-2010). *Annual assessment of minimum conditions and performance measures for local governments*. Kampala, Uganda: MOLG.
- MOLG. (2011). *Assessment Manual of Minimum Conditions and Performance Measures for Local Governments: August 2011*. Kampala, Uganda: MOLG.

- Narayan, D. (2005). Conceptual Framework and Methodological Challenges. In D. Narayan (Ed.), *Measuring empowerment: Cross-disciplinary perspectives*. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- Ngunyi, M., Namakula, V., Nyirikindi, L., Kavuma, J. B., Kago, W., Gathungu, P., Ahabwe, C., Kabinga, E., Nansubuga, J., & Apopo, J. (2010). *Strengthening Democratic Linkages: Program evaluation final report*. Nairobi and Kampala: The Consulting House & Centre for Justice Studies and Innovations. http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PDACT058.pdf
- Onyach-Olaa, M. (2003). The challenges of implementing decentralisation: Recent experiences in Uganda. *Public Administration and Development*, 23(1), 105–113.
- Singiza, D. K., & De Visser, J. (2011). Chewing more than one can swallow: The creation of new districts in Uganda. *Law, Democracy & Development*, 15(1), 1–24.
- Smoke, P. (2003). Decentralisation in Africa: Goals, dimensions, myths and challenges. *Public Administration and Development*, 23(1), 7–16.
- Tumushabe, G. W., Muyomba-Tamale, L., & Ssemakula, E. (2011). Uganda local government councils score-card report 2009/10: Political accountability, representation and the state of service delivery. In *Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE) (Ed.), Policy Research Series (Vol. 42)*. Kampala, Uganda: ACODE.