

How can political leaders help ensure Community Score Cards in Uganda are sustainable?

The Kibuku Community Score Card project

The Community Score Card (CSC) is a community-level monitoring tool, which brings together service users, service providers and local governments to gather feedback on service delivery. These stakeholders work to identify service delivery and utilization challenges and jointly generate solutions. Since power is a key ingredient in social accountability tools, engaging political leaders is critical for the success of the CSC.

Beginning in June 2017, the Makerere University School of Public Health (MakSPH), in collaboration with Future Health Systems, has been implementing a CSC project focusing on maternal and newborn health service delivery and utilization in six sub-counties in Kibuku district, Uganda. As one of its exit strategies, the project carried out a qualitative study that explored ways of involving political leaders in the CSC process to ensure its sustainability.

Priority actions for political leaders

- 1 Coordinate CSC activities and ensure that political leaders at all levels are involved in the implementation of these activities
- 2 Advocate for the incorporation of CSC activities in the health facility, sub-county and district work plans and budgets
- 3 Participate in the selection and training of CSC facilitators



KAKAIRE AYUB KIRUNDA/FHS

▲ The Kadama Sub County Chairperson Mr Muzamir Masiga facilitating a focus group discussion

Key findings

- 1 Political leaders need to be sensitized on what CSCs are, how they can be used to improve service delivery, and what role the leaders can play in the implementation and sustainability of the CSCs
- 2 Capacity building of political leaders should be provided in order to help them better understand service delivery issues
- 3 It is helpful to provide political leaders with simple tools used in the implementation of CSCs
- 4 Platforms used to air issues concerning CSCs should be functional (e.g. meetings between leaders and other stakeholders should take place regularly)
- 5 Financial, human and infrastructural resources are necessary in the implementation of CSCs. Without these, the implementation process becomes difficult given that releases from central government are conditional and limited
- 6 Political leaders have a critical role in lobbying for the provision of services, adequate human resources, equipment and supplies such as delivery beds, drugs, and referral transport



▲The Kadama Sub County Chairperson Mr Muzamir Masiga facilitating a focus group discussion

Implications

The involvement of political leaders at different stages of the CSC process helps increase community awareness about the CSC project. Political leaders are invited to different functions and meetings within the district, and can use these forums to advocate for the use of CSCs in the district, sub-county, health facility and community. They can also encourage the incorporation of the CSC activities into other programs within the district, as well as their successful implementation. Furthermore, given their power and influence, their involvement in the CSC process enables them to mobilize community members to attend CSC meetings. These meetings are useful for monitoring health service delivery in Kibuku district. Ultimately, this involvement of political leaders will lead to improved service delivery for maternal and newborn child services in Kibuku district.

Involvement of political leaders in the entire CSC process has made entry of the project team, support and subsequent implementation of the CSC project in Kibuku district easier. The involvement of political leaders in facilitating CSC meetings as part of the Kibuku CSC project has resulted in more community members – including other politicians who were reluctant in the beginning – to buy-in to the project. This has led to an improvement in meeting attendance. Moreover, practical solutions have been suggested by the top district political and technical leaders chairing the stakeholders’ meetings held at the end of each scoring session, thus holding other lower-level technical and political leaders accountable for their actions and inactions.

CREDITS

This Issue Brief was produced by Christine Aanyu, Rebecca Racheal Apolot, Elizabeth Ekirapa-Kiracho, and Suzanne Kiwanuka from the Makerere University School of Public Health (MakSPH), and Karine Gatellier from the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), as a part of the Community Score card project in Kibuku district – Uganda.

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