



Strengthening Civil Society and Public Authorities to Promote Transparency and Accountability in Uganda

Partner:	Uganda Law Society (ULS)
Years:	2008 – 2009 (1 st phase) 2010 – 2011 (2 nd phase)
Country:	Uganda
Amount:	\$ 35,000 USD
Sector:	Legal: Strengthening anti-corruption legal frameworks and promoting the rule of law

Corruption Problem:	Public authorities as well as civil society lack resources, capacity and drive to combat corruption efficiently and effectively
Tools employed:	Advocacy, Capacity Building, Expert Advice, Information Campaign, Complaints Handling, Third Party Expert Monitoring, Coalition Building

The Uganda Law Society (ULS) is the National Bar Association of Uganda and is uniquely positioned to advance anti-corruption efforts in Uganda. Its statutory objectives state, *‘[...]to protect and assist the public in Uganda in all matters touching, ancillary or incidental to the law; and to assist the Government and the Courts in all matters affecting legislation and the administration and practice of law in Uganda.’*

PTF funded a first ULS anti-corruption project in 2008. ULS started monitoring the proceedings of the anti-corruption court (ACD) and created a Legal Experts Committee (LEC), with members drawn from various official bodies influencing the legislative anti-corruption agenda. The role of ULS as well as its own efforts to strategically position itself within the set of anti-corruption actors has allowed ULS to advocate for good governance and highlight anti-corruption work essential for the country’s progress over time. The PTF grant allowed ULS to provide meaningful outreach to all relevant actors, from the Supreme Court to individual citizens.

The 2010 project ‘Promoting Transparency and Accountability in Uganda’ (PACT) builds on the

recommendations and conclusions of the 2008 project.

Corruption Problem Addressed

In Uganda, poor governance and the prevalence of corruption contribute to the non-delivery of basic public services in the areas of health, education, water and access to justice. ULS identified the continued need to counter and elevate entrenched instances of corruption for public scrutiny by mapping and highlighting inefficiencies in the state’s capacity to effectively deal with corruption.

In addition, ULS recognized that members of the organization itself were not aware of anti-corruption standards. Furthermore, there was a lack of capacity in civil society organizations – specifically Regional Anti-Corruption Coalitions (RACCs) – responsible for helping citizens file anti-corruption claims.

ULS therefore decided to target individual citizens, the intermediary level of civil society organizations, ULS members and the state level to support the fight against corruption by providing legislative advice, resources, expert opinions, outreach,

targeted sensitization and capacity building efforts to the different stakeholders.

Actions Taken by ULS

On the national level, ULS monitored the proceedings of the Anti-Corruption Division of the High Court, tracked select anti-corruption cases and reported on a number of cases back to the public as well as to the LEC. Two observation reports were generated on the findings and recommendations shared with key stakeholders.

Furthermore,

- ULS provided the six Regional Anti-Corruption Coalitions (RACCs) with simplified anti-corruption act (ACA) booklets, accompanied by visits to address specific requests on case advice assistance. ULS also organized two training-of-trainers workshops. The RACCs should theoretically be able to pass on the advice received to the sub-county monitors (SCM). SCMs are in charge of monitoring service delivery, detecting and reporting corruption incidences to the relevant institutions for action. They serve as local resources and contacts for citizens to most easily engage with. Language barriers on the local level, however, still impede the best use of the booklets and the advice provided.
- ULS handled over 60 cases that required direct ULS intervention, offering free legal representation to victims of corruption.
- To sensitize the public at large, ULS organized nine radio talk shows, partly in collaboration with the RACCs, intended to keep citizens well-informed, alert and capable of reporting corruption. ULS also hosted large events at the National Corruption Week and generated and provided additional material for its anti-corruption library accessible to the public.

To make the project intervention successful, ULS crafted its project approach carefully and included all relevant stakeholders from the beginning on. Partners were the Directorate of Ethics and Integrity (DEI), the Inspectorate of Government (IG), the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs (MoJCA), the Anti-Corruption Division of the High Court (ACD), the Uganda Police Force, the Anti-Corruption Coalition of Uganda (ACCU), and the National NGO Forum.

As a result, ULS maintained access to key anti-corruption policy makers, the ACD, the IGG and the Head of the Constitutional Court and was able to bring to their attention challenges hampering the fight against corruption.



ULS President, Mr. James Sebugenyi (right) Mr. Arthur Larok (NGO Forum, centre) and the host of Spectrum Radio Talk speak to listeners during the PACT anti-corruption talk show during the eve of the first ever National Anti Corruption Conference in Uganda.

Impact and Results Achieved

The project was successful in carrying out its activities and achieving additional reach in the fight against corruption:



- ✓ The Government is continuing to listen to and to adopt proposals researched and tabled by ULS.
- ✓ ULS has directly contributed to the efficacy of the ACD in its service delivery and continues to influence its future course.
- ✓ ULS was successful in positively influencing the service delivery of the RACCs through legal assistance and guidance provided.
- ✓ ULS managed to raise the awareness on corruption related issues in the target communities and enhanced local capacity to deal with the corruption.
- ✓ Government officials followed up on efficacy advice provided by ULS and appointed additional Magistrates to the Anti-Corruption Division of the High Court.
- ✓ Government officials furthermore promised to improve the recruitment process at the courts.
- ✓ ULS was appointed by ACCU to sit on the Health Sector Anti-Corruption Working Group (HSAWG) to steer the implementation of a project titled “Preventing Leakages of Anti-Malarial Drugs in Uganda”.
- ✓ In recognition for its legal expertise, ACCU entered in a MoU with ULS to build the capacity of its regional coalitions and to jointly conduct some of the ACCU project activities.

Lessons learned

Whereas most project activities were achieved - most notably with a view to ULS positioning itself as a trusted and capable advisory body for both government as well as civil society – the scope of the objectives regarding individual outreach was conceptualized too broadly: A future consideration may be to narrow down the sensitization efforts and furthermore invest into a baseline study to track progress on the individual level as well as progress achieved on the level of advocacy.

Documentation

Project completion reports (PCRs) and Project completion assessments (PCAs) can be accessed at www.ptfund.org under the “Where-we-work” tab.

ULS’ website can be accessed at <http://www.uls.or.ug/>

For more information, please contact policy@uls.or.ug

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