

# Unlocking Potential Initiatives for Retracing the Public Service Delivery in a Uganda's Case Amongst the African Countries

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**Abstract:** In spite of the fact that the public sector does not choose its customers, it is still necessary that the publics and their diverse needs should remain a priority factor, driving the need for new service and improved delivery models. The common belief amongst the beneficiaries of public services is that the traditional mandate of executing social policy and legislation enforcement remains a passive achievement without attempts to deliver on the customer promise. Amidst all the traditional and emerging governance and administrative challenges, the publics relentlessly remain hopeful for an improved customer experience and performance outcomes that respond to their needs through enhanced service levels within the current budgetary constraints. This paper therefore sets to assess perceived reasons for the current minimal levels of public service delivery as a foundation for identifying suitable the mechanisms for improved service delivery in Uganda. For a manageable study scope considering the fact that the public sector is too wide a subject area public opinions on the performance of different sectors are initially established and follow-up findings on the selected least performance rated sectors are explored. Suggestions for improvement are derived from the views of the service delivery assessments made.

**Keywords:** Customer promise, Public sector reforms, Public service delivery, Post-New Public Management, Whole-of-Government

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## 1. Introduction

Service delivery in relation between government bodies and citizens is considered as one essential function why governments exist. Provision of services is a complex phenomenon bridging the government, the society and the citizens. Good and quality service delivery gives not only the citizens their needs but also is a requisite for a valuable the government of good image (Eigeman, 2007). Motivations to raise the debates within this research paper partly stems from a view of one Shri R Chandrasekhar, who argues that: "*the reality of the public sector today is assessed by the efficiency of its service delivery*", adding that the effectiveness of the public sector is no longer measured by the revenue it generates or the employment it provides...' (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2007:7). This view suggests that public sector function is beyond the means it employs or the immediate output of the executed mandates to the ultimate ends or outcomes. The ultimate end in this sense is the service delivery.

Frost & Sullivan (2012) recognise that public services have overtime proven to be one of the instruments

available to the government's implementation of developmental goals and objectives, and a pivot for growth of the economies, aiming at creating an appropriate environment conducive to all sectors of the economy performing optimally. Delivered at both national and local levels, a wide range of public services may include investment in social service and infrastructure, protection of underprivileged groups, general public services, defence, public order and safety, economic affairs, environmental protection, housing and community amenities, health, recreation, education, and social protection (Humphreys, 1998). These classifications give us a feeling that thinking about public service delivery is the reason why governments exist. Therefore, whenever there is a deficiency in service delivery, citizens will direct their "guns" to those holding positions of responsibility in government institutions like ministries, departments or agencies. The citizens' reactions will always be in line with their felt needs and societal problems.

In improving service delivery, customer-centricity and customer-centric strategies as emphasized in public sector reforms (Hood, 1991; Pollitt, 1993) remain key drivers. For over half a century

improvements on public service delivery have been targeted through a various reform paradigms that include: 1) Post-Independence "Weberian" approach; 2) New Public Management 3) the "New Public Service", 4) the "New Public Governance" and 5) the "post-New Public Management" (Dunleavy & Hood, 1994; Denhardt & Denhardt, 2000; Osborne, 2006; McCourt, 2013). Yet in a more unfolding recent past, the "whole-of-government" approach that largely comprise of formal and informal networks has emerged as a response complex societal problems. The Whole-of-Government (WoG) advocates collaborative responses and citizen's demands for personalised accessible public services and an effective seamless government working through a medium of technology (Colgan, Kennedy, & Doherty, 2014). With view, attainment of efficiency and effective services, these post-NPM era innovations adopt an inter-organizationally approach seeking to improve horizontal coordination of public sector agencies linking them to other actors (Lodge & Gill, 2011; Christensen, 2012).

Consistent concerns are that despite the tremendous efforts and resources invested into these reforms, many countries have not achieved their initial goal of developing and transforming their societies to the desired standards. Both external and internal challenges remain visible in service delivery internally evidenced by lack of efficiency, lack of accountability, ineffective policy/program management practices, lack of institutional capacity, declining public service ethics and social values and civil service morale, and corruption continue to be evident in public service operations. Externally experiential gap between citizens' increasing demands for public services compared to shortage of and sub-quality public services rendered, as well as the service disparities across different areas are decried (Frost & Sullivan, 2012). Through this paper, veracities of service delivery from the point of the beneficiaries are explored.

## 2. The "Publics" and Public Service Delivery

A relatively wide literature search suggests some difficulty in obtaining a common understanding on the term "publics". In many instances is noted that *publics* is a word rarely used in common language and confined mainly to academic use. Whereas it occurs as a more frequently used terminology as in public relations and communication science, the publics are

conceived as groups of people and at times referred to as the general public which is the totality of such groupings. In some literature, the word *publics* is comparable to other words like the public or citizens but with slight distinctions (Nerlich, 2013). Due to the complexity of this terminology Janet Newman and John Clarke (2009), attempt to explain *publics* by relating it with other words like the public, publicness, the public sphere and public services. They emerge with framework of understanding, valuing, and engaging the publics by drawing three distinct discursive chains on the meaning of the term *public* appearing in the political discourses. They classify the *public* as: a) = citizens=the people=the nation; b) = the public sector = the state; and c) = the legal and democratic values= the public sphere. They relate it to an act of publicness – signifying a chain of connections where public services serve the members of the public; are funded by public resources; are organised in public sector; are accountable to public bodies, and are staffed by public employees who embody ethos of public service. This paper borrows first classification taking publics as citizens or the people within a nation. The issue of the publicness in Nerlich's (2013) context of benefiting from public services influences my subsequent inquiry into this research. I further find validity in Le Grand's (2007) claim, that a good public service is one that is responsive to the needs and wants of its users.

## 3. The Critical Success Factors in Service Delivery

Different researchers enumerate factors influencing service delivery in the public sector. One of such influential studies is in the research report of PricewaterhouseCoopers (2007) which present key global challenges that have transformed the environment in which Public sector operates calling for a strategic drift to new ways of doing things. The report recognises new global trends of customer expectations, budgetary constraints, global completion for investments, public sectors reform programs and the changing demographics as emerging challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century creating turnaround of old constraints and creating new opportunities. The emphasis of the report relates to the new trends in form of heightened expectations of citizens requiring the public sector to redefine its role, strengthening the customer focus and building integrated service delivery models. The analytical framework of meeting customer needs and wants in public sector by "delivering on

customer promise" is advanced with five strategic enablers by PricewaterhouseCoopers (2007:4-6). The first Strategic enabler is *the need to understand your customer – 'Customer-centricity'* – in terms of their diversity (customer demographic, behavioural, needs and attitudinal), individual preferences and attributes as a foundation for multiple service delivery channels aligned with customer needs. Secondly, there is a need to "Pull down the walls" and ensure 'Connected government'. There is a need to remove vertical structures and creating connected government through the alignment of a common customer-centric vision with objectives, outcomes, information and process flows. The third strategic enabler is *empowering your institution by building capacity*. This will enable multi-level transformation by changing the way public sector organisations think, act, and relate to other agencies, businesses and their customers. This may be achieved through five key elements that include strategy, leadership Organisational design, and People/Capacity/ Training Culture change management. Strategic enabler *four is to realise benefits through appropriate models by delivering the promise*. This necessitate to clearly define the role of the public sector organisations as either a policy-maker, regulator or service provider. It requires drawing distinction between the public sector policy implementation core function and its 'non-core' function of undertaking activities which could be handled by other parties. The final strategic enabler is the efforts for continuously improvement through innovation which necessitate benchmarking other public and private organisations on aspects of their service delivery, documentation and new approaches.

In a related typology from Frost & Sullivan (2012) two major categories of factors are identified: the *ground level factors* such as the speed of delivery, the amount of information provided, and the professionalism and attitude of staff providing such services. At the macro level, the factors are clustered into six principles. *First is a Co-creation of service principle*, in which the need for stakeholder consultation in setting objectives and defining the nature of services to be delivered is proposed. They argue that the level and quality of services should be dependent on the choices of the citizens – "the customers" – through mechanisms like citizens charters; that citizens should be provided with necessary information and also be enabled equal access to the services they are entitled. The *second principle of clearly measurable outcomes* is

about having effective performance management measures to enable the constant improvement of public service quality and reliability with a desirable focus so as to impact on the targeted communities. It entails the mind-set change from output to outcome, increasing flexibility of response to customer requirements, and having a meaningful public reporting. Efficiency in service delivery is obtained through waste elimination, the removal of duplication of effort, and curtailing overlaps of roles and responsibilities. On the *third principle of transparent monitoring and evaluation*, there is a need to build confidence that targeted key result areas are on course in relation to budget outlay, rather than being merely in conformity with bureaucratic rules and regulations. The *fourth principle of accountability of programs* suggests the necessity to be reflective on managerial answerability in the implementation of agreed tasks and the criteria of performance so as to realise the quantity and quality as well as outcomes of the services delivered. *Fifth is a principle of proper policy/program management* involving a systematic process of initiation, analysis, formulation, approval, and implementation and monitoring and evaluation of such policy/program. This requires a thorough policy analysis skill and a culture of inclusiveness of the private sector and civil society stakeholder participation at all levels. It also necessitates complementing technical skills for the bureaucrats involved in the policy/program management through capacity building and training. Finally, is the *sixth principle of Rapid and Lean Transformation* requiring having deliberate strategies to minimise process red-tape in the policy and program management aimed at reaping big and fast results. Gradual and transformation processes such as clear and streamlined reporting frameworks, a collaborative culture amongst public servants and other partners outside the public service, may provide a quick, effective and efficient way of making services reach the beneficiaries than administrative structural adjustments. These processes require consistently aligned and compatible with knowledge and skills of the managers, and should embrace the values of the beneficiaries to ease the adoption process (Frost & Sullivan, 2012:8). Importantly, in all the six principles, the centrality of the public as customers in the service delivery is implied.

#### 4. Research Methodology

This study adopted an interpretive approach and as such it was primarily qualitative in nature. Aiming

at understanding service delivery – an event, or a case being examined in this study – from a wider perspective, unstructured interviews were used in the study in order to solicit opinions of the respondents. Since service delivery affects each and every citizen, the structuring of respondent's selection was predicted as a method likely to bias the study findings. As such, the study adopted a convenience sampling strategy in which majority of the respondents were obtained from the Uganda Management Institute (UMI), while taking care to disregard individual profession, rank, department, and programs being pursued. My choice of UMI geographical area was influenced by a conviction that this is a population with wide range category of persons from public and private divides with various professions, jobs and ranks. About 10% of the respondents were obtained from outside UMI comprising of some public servants and other *wanainchi*. Data was obtained over a period of a month during which 60 of a wide range respondents were interviewed. The spreading of data collection process for such a period was meant to avoid possible biases of the topical issues in media and incidents in the political arena including a spat of women murders and kidnaps, lifting of the presidential race age limit and MPS terms limit evidenced during the first quarter of 2018 in Uganda. The obtained data was properly themed, analysed, presented and discussed to make a logical conclusion.

## 5. Findings and Discussions

This paper aimed at assessing perceived reasons for the current minimal levels of public service delivery in Uganda in search of plausible solutions for improved service delivery. Specifically, the paper seeks to examine the role of the "publics" in service delivery by soliciting citizens' views on their perceptions about the service provision by the government departments and agencies. The respondents' views on questions about which department perform well or poorly, which areas of service delivery should the government prioritise, why is government not performing as expected in specific areas, and their own recommendations for improved service delivery, a conclusion on the role of publics in service delivery is crafted.

The findings for this study were based on the data collected in a geographical and time scope. These findings presentation was guided by the research questions for the study that covered issues like:

Which government department perform well and in which specific areas? Which government services are performing poorly and why? Which areas of service delivery should the government prioritise? Which government agency/department was considered very important in service delivery? Why is government not performing as expected in specific areas? What are recommendations for improved service delivery? Since this study was qualitative in nature, the focus was directed to understanding opinions and views of the subject of service delivery than personal characteristics of the respondents unless such characteristics emerged as precursors of the responses made.

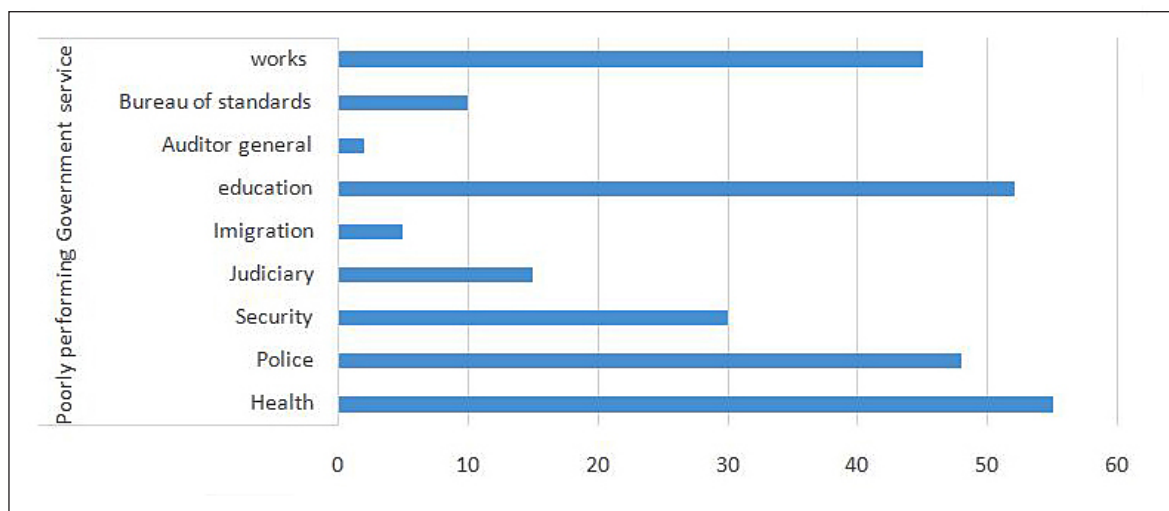
### 5.1 Establishing Individual Opinions on the Performance of Government Departments

Individual respondents were asked identify and if possible rank at most 3 government departments, ministries or agencies that they considered to be performing well and also to mention any department that they consider to be performing poorly. The reason for using departments, ministries or agencies at a go was that since the respondents were not purposively selected from public sector bureaucrats, the public understanding of the three terminologies might not clearly be distinguished. It, therefore, remained my own responsibility as a researcher to appropriately cluster the mentioned agency, department into existing ministerial categories. The ratings on the government departments/agencies' performance are presented comparatively in Figure 1 and 2 on the following page.

On individual assessment of the poorly performing government departments/ministries, it was established that health was the worst rated followed by education, police and works respectively. Auditor General's office and immigration had a lower rating in this case suggesting that their performance is relatively good compared to the other mentioned 4 ministries. Asked further which specific areas of service are poorly performed, it was established that in health the order of ranking indicated sanitation, medical access, and epidemics. The worst rated area in education was primary education department, and infrastructure in works with emphasis on road maintenance roads especially in urban areas.

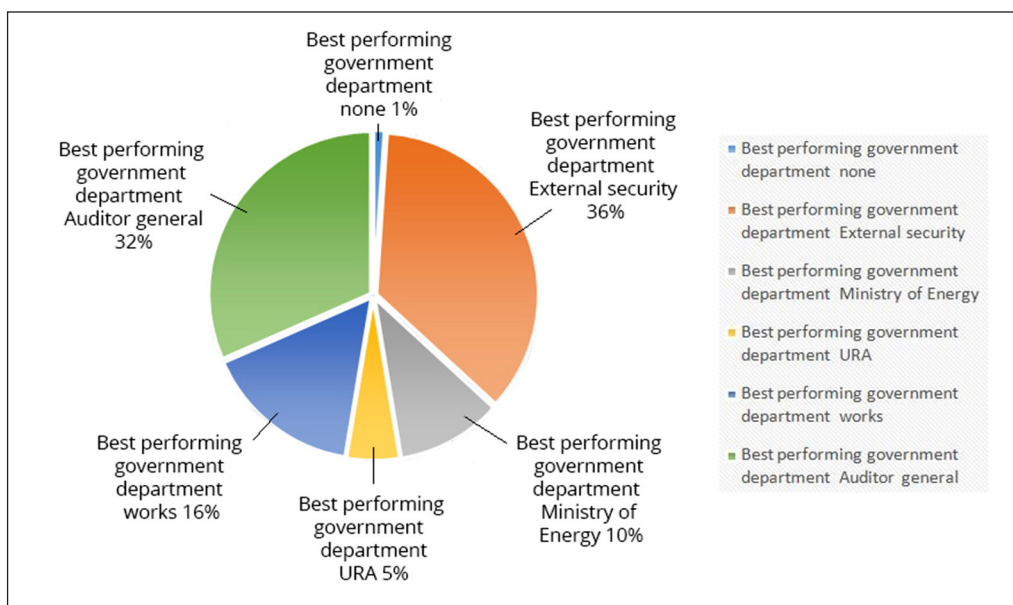
One respondent's view on health was that: "*There is a disconnection between National Medical Stores*

**Figure 1: Ratings on Performance of Government Departments**



Source: Author

**Figure 2: Ratings for the Best Performing Departments**

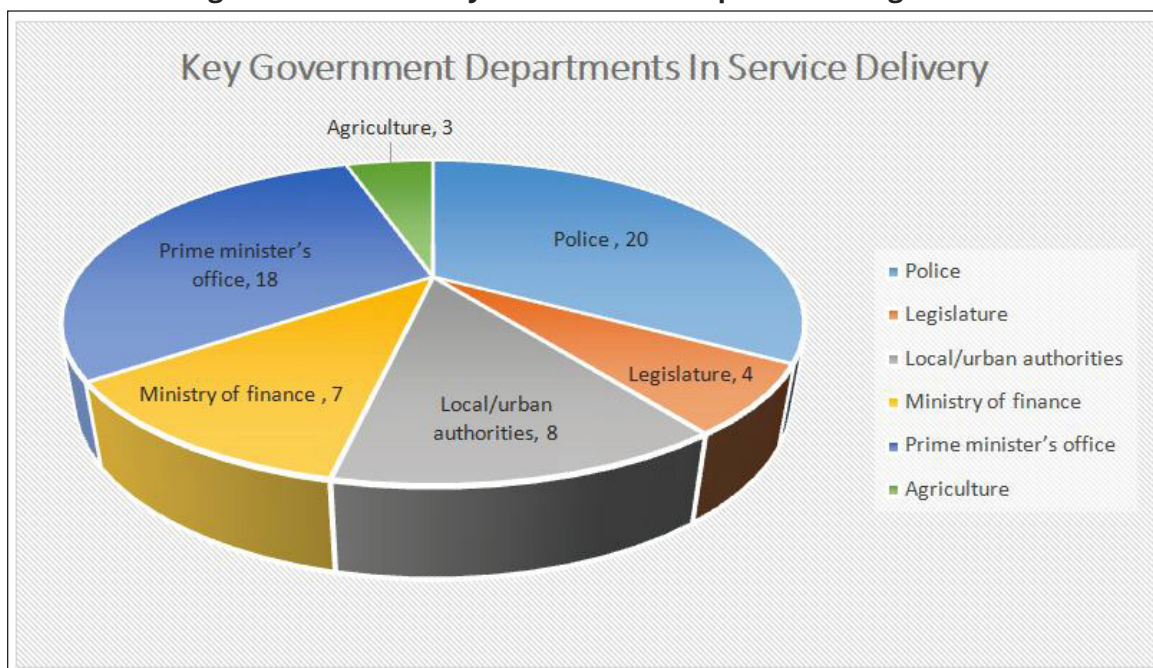


Source: Author

(NMS) and health centres which are supplied the drugs. Many times the health centres run out of stock when in NMS there is excess ...how do you explain disposal of drugs when people are not getting services at the grassroots?". Other respondent's opinions on why their ratings on health are so low stressed issues of no clear performance measures, supervision with limited facilitation, and also alluded to the problem of inadequate supplies from the centre or local governments to the health facilities. The commonality on the views of poor performance in primary education related to the quality of Universal Primary Education (UPE) learners as one the respondents claim...

"Kids cannot write a sentence, their name, etc. ...What kind of quality of education?"

A comparative question on which government departments were considered to be best performers put external security (36%) at the top score closely followed by Auditor General's office (32%). The department of works and energy sector under the Ministry of Energy and Minerals appeared amongst the fairly performing government departments with some respondents crediting trunk roads infrastructure, power dams and electricity supply. Critical to note under this question was that 1% of the respondents did not consider that there is any

**Figure 3: The Most Key Governments' Departments/Agencies**

Source: Author

government department or ministry with a credible service delivery.

My own observation in this research question was that comparing the ratings on best performing government departments compared to the ratings on poor performing departments emerged clearly to suggest that the public has a relatively low opinion on the performance of government departments. This is clearly evident when you compare the scores (percentages) of the department highly rated as performers and the frequencies of the low performing departments. Also to comparatively assess is the long list (eight in number) of non-performing departments in relation to the list of five highly rated performing departments. Another remarkable finding is that 1% of the total respondent that did not consider any government department as being a good performer suggesting that ideally all government departments are typically poor at service delivery.

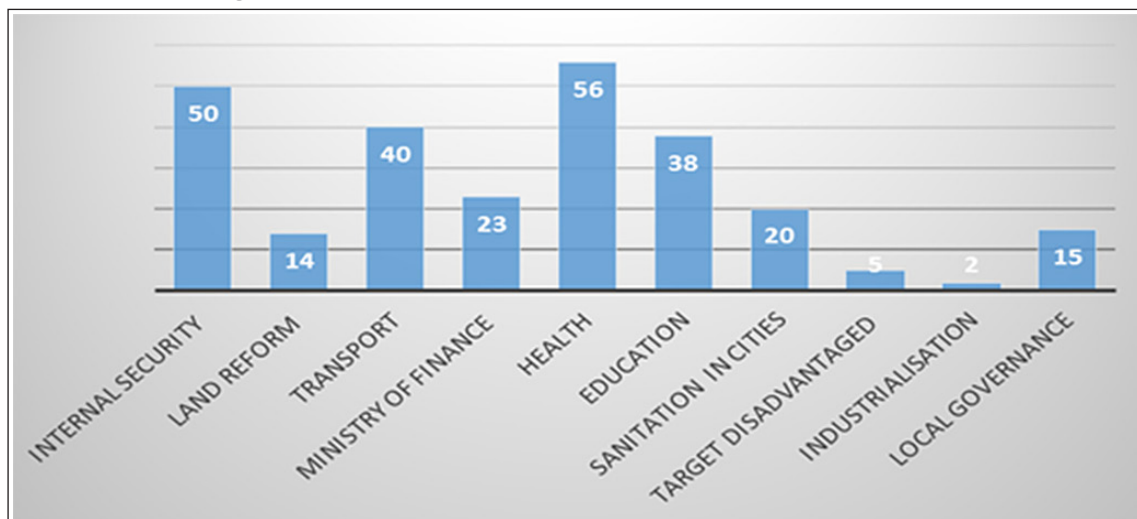
### 5.2 On the Question of Government Agency/ Department Considered Very Important in Service Delivery

After identification of poorly performing and highly performing government departments, the respondents were requested to give their further opinions on which of the government departments was

considered as being very important in service delivery (Figure 3). This question was meant to solicit individual views that related the service given by the government to their needs and wishes.

The responses obtained indicated that 20 (33%) respondents regarded police as being the most essential government department followed by 18 (30%) respondents rating the Prime Minister's office in the second position. Local authorities and Ministry of Finance followed in a descending sequence scoring almost the same and least was Agriculture after Legislature. Those in support of police as the most important argued that being a law enforcing body this department is essential for policy implementation and for ensuring that there is order that favours implementation of government programs. While it is clear that police normally work with the judiciary, the level value rating between the two departments is of great contrast. By common sense police works closely with the public. In this study however, the role of judiciary was undervalued to the second last position. The major defence of the opinion as to why the Prime Minister's office is considered among the important government departments was that it "*is the overall in service delivery*" but the same respondent with this view was also quick to add that, "*However, are the people employed there capable of carrying out effective service delivery?*" He made a brief reference to corruption scandals that

**Figure 4: Areas Which the Government Should Prioritise**



Source: Author

have in the previous year's been associated with this office. Overall, the poor performance of the government departments/agencies was conceived by most of the respondents as being threefold: i) Extravagance on foreign travels, ii) Unnecessary government celebrations/public functions that waste time and incur insurmountable expenditures, and iii) Unreasonable Rewards/payments to some government workers & politicians

### 5.3 Which Areas Should Government Prioritise?

On the question about areas that government should prioritise, the respondents identified ten (10) key areas as in Figure 4.

In order of their value, the most suggested to be prioritised among all was health with a frequency of 56, followed by internal security (50). Transport and education were almost considered to be of equal priority value. Finance ministry, and sanitation in cities were ranked moderately while targeted disadvantaged population and industrialisation were the least suggested (nearly of low priority). By highly suggesting prioritisation of internal security, respondents confirm the finding in the previous section that police are in the most key department for service delivery.

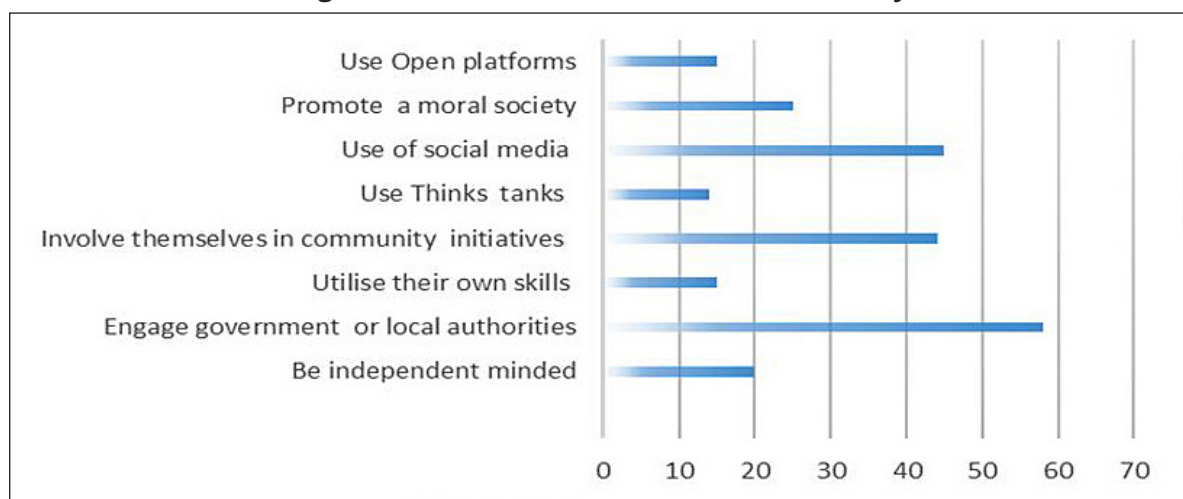
Asked why education should be considered the most ranked area of service delivery, one respondent noted that it education is essential for skilling the population. He noted that the problem of the society is that there is a reasonable number of educated

citizens without necessary skills to improve service delivery. In prioritisation he suggested the need for a new curriculum for technical skilling – vocational. He compared Uganda systems with other countries amongst which cases of America and German were his point of reference. For instance, he noted that: "For example in country like America, you have to do another course in between and then continue with professional courses. In Germany, showcase is on vocational courses". In defence of why one of the respondents considered health and education as key priority areas, she reasoned that: "*the two are essential because when we are looking at human development index... these are key areas measuring development performance*". Arguments in support of land reform were on the basis of production with a view that government should have control on land for purposes of development and zoning and land consolidation for mechanisation.

### 5.4 What Should Citizens do to Have Improved Service Delivery?

To assess the role of the publics in service delivery, the respondents were asked to identify ways which they could use to influence the services for the benefit of their communities. A wide range of responses obtained are in Figure 5 on the following page.

As noted in Figure 5, the key suggestions for the ways of the publics may influence in service delivery was the engagement of the central government or local authorities. As one respondent put it "*the problem is that we do not take time to engage councils or government - ... for instance sitting in councils'*

**Figure 5: Citizens' Influence in Service Delivery**

Source: Author

sessions. This would help us to understand the government priorities so as to enable us to hold our leaders accountable". Issues of consultation and lobbying government politicians and key bureaucrats by the citizens on government policy, party and individual legislators manifesto matters were some of the approaches identified for improved service delivery.

Two other key suggestions for citizens' influence included use of social media and involvement in community initiatives. On social media, one respondent suggested that the public can put government on *bunkenke* (tenterhooks) to make it always alert and mindful about the community happenings for a responsive action. He gave an example of print and electronic media pictures government vehicles carrying private goods like charcoal, gifts for the weddings, or even those captured driving on pavements. Often, the media also captures incidents of service delivery like excessive road potholes, primary pupils' studying under poor classroom environment, poor health facilities and cases of embezzlement. The responses suggested that if the public is highly involved in giving such information to the media for publicising, then the government may feel the pressure and respond to the raised issues. A similar suggestion of publicity of government service delivery may also be by use Question *and answer* on talk shows, and one respondent gave an example of the *prime minister time* on radio or Television to explain the ongoing government programs and for responding to call-in for the public issues' concerns to which he responds. It makes use of open platforms and think

tanks to relay performance achievements, gaps, opportunities and performance challenges.

One other view was that the publics should "get out of their comfort zone" and learn to become more independent minded so as to work for themselves where government cannot reach in service delivery. Using a common local jargon, one respondent stressed this view by saying that there should be no more "*Government etuyambe*" meaning that the publics should desist from all the time calling for assistance from the government which creates a dependence syndrome. Another respondent's emphasis on this point was that "*we should involve ourselves in community based- initiatives*". She made a reference to one of the Buganda kingdom's Prime Minister (*the Katikilo*) who in the recent past mobilised a lot of funds in the campaign he coined *etofali* a local word meaning a block for construction for Buganda Kingdoms' projects from the local and international communities. In their view, some respondents held that individuals in the communities should utilise their own skills and exploit their potentials for self-help projects. They also put more emphasis on the need for the publics to pay attention to nurturing a moral society on work values and integrity so as to have future generation of responsible citizens.

### 5.5 Consistent Uncertainties Threatening Effective Service Delivery

Having explored the views of the respondents on the performance of different government departments the role of the public in service delivery, it

**Table 1: Bottlenecks for Effective Service Delivery**

<b>Individual</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>People are reluctant, they lack self-drive. Need to be coerced</b></li> <li>• <b>Bad attitude towards self-help and community improvement – possibly due to hopelessness</b></li> <li>• <b>Negative attitude towards government</b></li> <li>• <b>Self-denial /deceit of some key political actors</b></li> </ul>
<b>Institutional</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of trust in the government system</li> <li>• Laxity in use of <i>name and shame</i> method</li> <li>• Unserious law enforcement</li> <li>• Slackness in tackling corruption</li> <li>• Indiscipline of some public servants</li> <li>• Increased emoluments for public servants/rewards</li> <li>• Un clear channels for grievance handling</li> <li>• Poor education curriculum</li> <li>• The state and the government are fused</li> </ul>
<b>Others</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of change of political leadership</li> <li>• Too much privatisation and limited regulation</li> <li>• Absence of Planned &amp; coordinated development</li> <li>• Mismatch between public demands and government provisions priorities</li> </ul>

Source: Author

was felt that this research could only be concrete if the views on the looming uncertainties that might consistently hinder service delivery could be established. The respondents therefore were asked to identify challenges they envisage as bottlenecks of the future services to the public. The responses obtained were classified in the following three categories that included individual, Institutional, and others as per Table 1.

As may be seen from Table 1, most of the bottlenecks for present and future service delivery were institutional in nature than individual factors or any other category. Some views to elaborate failures of individual threats for instance were that they are not empowered and that some of the leaders especially at local level are semi-illiterate meaning that they lack capacity to implement necessary programs. Attitudinal issues, pretence and reluctance of individual actors in the public service or amongst the publics were noted as persistent critical issues of concern in service delivery.

There were also views that some decision makers including ministers are in "their own world" living in denial, and detached from realities, and so were some technical officers. Due to this political and technical denial they tend to shield issues or work through deceit for political reasons and not responding to the public problems. Some examples such as situations where a health official cover-up the extent of epidemics to avoid blame

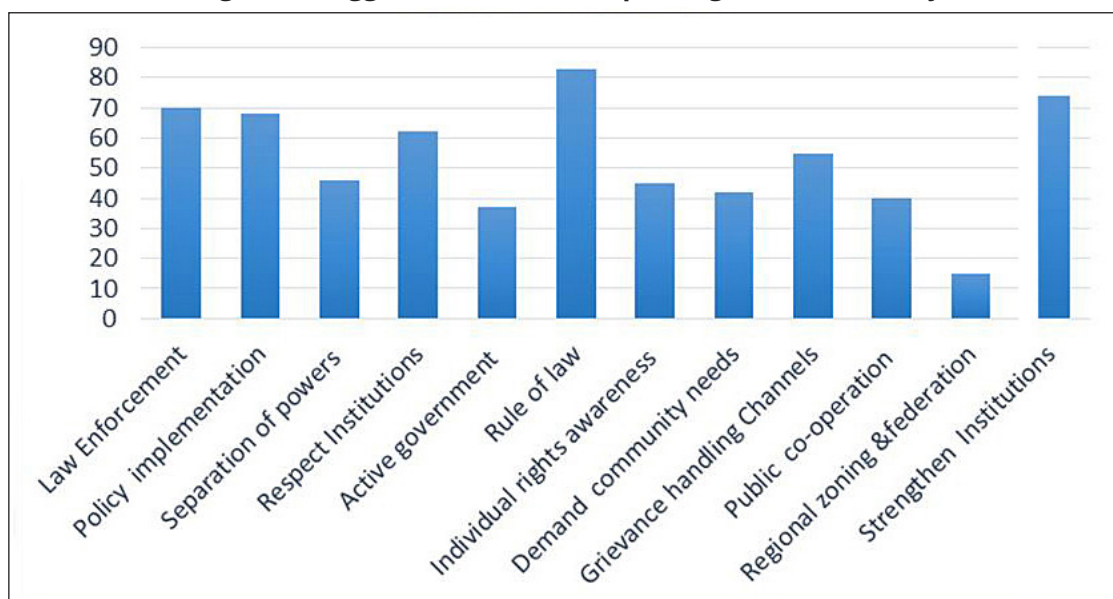
as non-performers were mentioned. Other areas where technical guidelines on implementation of a program are approved/signed by the minister but the guidelines for community mobilisation are not when the technocrats are fully aware that one cannot work without the other were additional illustrations of the false pretence of the public officials. Arguments like moral influence of individual perceptions & decisions by higher level politicians or fellow technocrats, fear for the civil society by some technocrats, lack of trust in the government institutions, segmented and uncoordinated developmental activities and strategies were some of the key threats that were noted by the respondents. It was stressed that unless that are strategic measure to minimise or eliminated such threats at national level, the situation may remain appalling for a long while. As such, a number of suggestions for improvement were made as presented next.

## **6. Recommendations on Improved Service Delivery**

In their final assessment, the respondents were asked to suggest ways in which service delivery can be improved. Whereas there were slight diverging statements, the convergence on the classification of these views are as per Figure 6 on the next page.

From the response given, it is evident that issues of rule of law, law enforcement, and effective policy implementation, respecting and strengthening

Figure 6: Suggested Areas for Improving Service Delivery



Source: Author

institutions stood out prominently. A critical lens of nearly all suggested remedies – even those with low frequencies like regional zoning and federation – are institutional in nature these suggestions clearly relate to the finding that the major bottleneck of service delivery was an issue of institutional effectiveness as shown in the previous section. Even some suggestions like individual rights awareness and demand for community needs to some extent suggest the inadequacy on the side of institutions because it is the responsibility of government's institutions to empower and edify the citizens.

The respondents meticulously made suggestions for service delivery improvement. On rule of law, they observed that this practice stems from some leaders having absolute powers. They for instance mentioned – without specifics – existence of "cadre judges" and other cadre bureaucrats. This, they argued, is an issue that requires a critical attention through trimming the powers of the "untouchables".

On active government, the respondents noted that there is a need for solemn regulation, supervision and monitoring of government departments. It was argued that too much privatisation and de-regulation have failed the efficient service delivery. One of the respondent observed, *"There is a loose nut somewhere. There should be proper checks and people handling. People should know the repercussion of their actions"*. The outstanding view on this point was that government should regain her mandate on service provision.

Another recommended action point was on separation of powers to guarantee objective decision making processes for these holding positions of responsibility. The respondents for instance expressed a concern on the nature of our unicameral system of parliament where members of cabinets/ministers have dual roles as legislators. Considering that ministerial positions lean more to the executive arm of government, it becomes evident that that traces of role overlap for a Minister who doubles as a Member of Parliament are inevitable. Also, it was observed that the current practises of appointment of Chief Justice, Deputy Chief Justice, the Principle Judge, and other justices in the courts of law as well as the Judicial Service Commission members (collaborated with the relevant provisions of the Constitution of Uganda Article 142 and 146) were other controversies that may compromise the independence of the judiciary.

The public demand for community needs was envisaged to be meaningful if civil society and other public actors use of facts/evidence for advocacy. Otherwise the policy makers remain adamant to accept the claims, and requests from the public. The evidence-based approach should be attained through empowering the publics through capacity building, free participation and community engagement. Further, there should be clear channels of grievances handling through such strategies like provision of contacts and hotlines for key actors like police and office of Inspectorate of government.

In addition, stringent measures to deal with those actors not responding to the public's call for action should be put in place to increase a level of government responsiveness to the public demand and needs

## 7. Conclusion

This paper discussed reasons for the current minimal levels of public service delivery in Uganda. This was aiming at finding plausible ways for improved service delivery. Through a convenience sampling, a total of 60 respondents were selected and interviewed about government departments' performance, priorities for service delivery, and the role of public in service provision, the bottlenecks in service provision, and the suggested solutions. Realising from the exiting literature the continued global challenges of customer expectations, budgetary constraints, global competition for investments, public sectors reform programs and the changing demographics, it became that paradigms shift of public sector reforms have been apparent though with minimal outcomes on service delivery. A strategic drift to redefine public sector role, strengthening the customer focus and building integrated service delivery models has been the latest option of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Rethinking of the post-new Public management approaches including the "whole-of-government", has become inevitable.

Holding in mind the PricewaterhouseCoopers' (2007) five key enablers of delivering on customer promise in line with six principles a successful service delivery by Frost & Sullivan (2012), this study engaged a wide range of conveniently selected citizens as participants on conviction that the public who are customers of the public services are at best in appraising these services. The study consequently established that health, education, works and police are the worst performing departments in Uganda and that External Security and Auditor General's office are the best performing departments. Works department was again moderately rated as best performing on the basis of trunk roads and power dams. Police and Prime Minister's office were considered as the most important departments whereas internal security and health were the most valued as key areas of service delivery. The best way to influence service delivery by the public was said to be engaging central government and local authorities, participation in community initiatives

and use of social media. This analysis indicates symptoms of high performance in non-perceived high priority areas in service delivery. Resilient bottlenecks are largely institutional inefficiencies but also substantially indicate strong weaknesses on the public as drivers of desired service delivery. This validates the key recommendations made on need for rule of law, effective policy implementation and strengthened institutions.

The apt conclusion in here suggests that improved service delivery in the 21<sup>st</sup> century requires engaging the public - "customers"/stakeholders - in appraisal of the systems that serve them for workable solutions. This necessitate approaches like public empowerment on rights and awareness, enabling them to demand community needs and offering them channels of grievance handling. The findings are consistent with PricewaterhouseCoopers' (2007) first three strategic enablers of understanding your customer, creating a "connected government", and empowering your institution by building capacity. The study also affirms Frost & Sullivan (2012) principle of co-creation of service linking level and quality of services to choices of the citizens. The new global trends render earlier approaches of physical presence, public participation, inclusion, partnerships and the like nearly obsolete.

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