

AMPLIFYING CITIZENS' FEEDBACK FOR A CHANGE

INTRODUCTION



Participants during the Citizens Feedback Platform (CFP) MEETING at Eureka Hotel Ntinda

Uganda Debt Network (UDN) in partnership with UNICEF organized a citizens' engagement meeting with the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) on strategies to popularize the Citizens Feedback Platform (CFP) to enable citizens to relay their concerns about the quality of service delivery in their communities.

This meeting was held in response to Uganda's low public participation scores in the Open Budget Survey (OBS) and the need to incorporate citizen's ideas into the budget-making process. It involved participants from UDN's Districts of operation that is; Kamwenge, Isingiro, Kiryandongo, Kapelabyong, Kamuli, Moroto, Napak, and Tororo.

CFP is a digital platform that was created by the OAG to incorporate citizens' service delivery concerns in the audit process to produce audits that address these problems and add value to the society. The application can be downloaded from Google Play Store or App Store. Citizens can register on this platform as reporters using their true identities or report anonymously on issues of health, agriculture, education, infrastructure, roads, water, lands, and electricity and also share images, videos or documents of the reported issues from across Uganda.

By reporting these issues, the OAG will collect data on service delivery, analyze it to inform the planning, execution and reporting of the respective audits and enhance access to audit products to enable citizens follow up on audit issues.

Article 17(1)(i) of the 1995 Constitution of Uganda as amended provides that it is the duty of every citizen of Uganda to combat corruption and misuse and wastage of public property. Therefore, CFP

will allow citizens to exercise their constitutional right as it is provided for under Article 17.

This is a good initiative to reduce corruption tendencies at local and national level ensuring that public resources are equitably managed. Dr. Maxwell Ogentho, the Director of the OAG says CFP will be a game changer in the public audit methodology. The information that the ordinary person will provide on this platform will be used as evidence in the audit process.

However, this comes with the challenge of accessibility by the people mostly affected by issues of service delivery. CFP is a digital platform which means only those with smartphones or connectivity to the internet can access and use it. With the smartphone penetration in Uganda currently standing at about 30%, this means majority of the population does not have access to smartphones. Whereas this is a platform that has been designed to bridge the gap between the government and the citizens, it is important to note that most of the people will be left out.

Dr. Maxwell Ogentho (In Picture) says alternative methods are going to be worked on to provide mechanisms for those who do not have smartphones to be able to provide feedback on issues affecting them. Although it might be impossible for everyone to have access to a



smartphone, cases can be reported to community facilitators who can thereafter use this platform to report to the OAG.

In conclusion, this was a significant step towards popularizing the CFP and enhancing citizen participation in the audit process. By adopting various citizen feedback collection methods, and promoting the use of the CFP, Uganda will continue to improve public accountability, transparency, oversight and good governance.

UDN appreciates support by: UDN Membership; [DCA](#); [Save the Children in Uganda](#); [OSIEA](#), [Inspectorate of Government](#); [IBP](#), [Trocaire](#); [UNICEF](#); [Bill and Gates Foundation](#) and [NDI](#).

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