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**The contribution of Civil Society Organizations in pro-poor  
budgeting processes: A review on Local Governments in Uganda**



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## **The contribution of Civil Society Organizations in pro-poor budgeting processes: A review on Local Governments in Uganda**

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### **Abstract**

**Purpose:** This study aimed to analyse the contribution of CSOs in pro-poor local government budget processes, with Dokolo District as a case study. The study addressed four questions, namely; (i) what is the extent to which CSOs contribute to local government revenue enhancement? (ii) What is the magnitude to which CSOs influence the enactment of pro-poor local government budget allocations/priorities? (iii) to what extent do CSOs promote pro-poor implementation of enacted local government budgets? And (iv) to what extent do CSOs prevent leakages to local government budget resources?

**Methodology:** The study adopted a review of secondary literature gotten from journals, documentaries, periodicals, annual reports and statistical analyses

**Findings of the study:** The findings suggest that CSOs contribute to local government revenue enhancement, building the capacity of local governments in revenue mobilization, providing off-budget and on-budget support to local governments; that CSOs promote pro-poor local government budget allocations through forums such as budget conferences and budget dialogues; that CSOs influence local governments to implement their budgets in ways that serve the best interests of the poor and/or the underprivileged and/or their priorities; by pressurizing local governments to implement pro-poor priorities that local governments would otherwise not implement and by speeding up or reducing delay in the implementation of pro-poor priorities or projects; and that CSOs promote pro-poor local government budgets by preventing leakages to pro-poor local government resources by among others checking shoddy work in pro-poor projects.

**Recommendations:** From the findings, it is encouraged that local governments should leverage CSOs as an important resource in enhancing their revenue; that local governments should involve CSOs in all phases of the budget circle; that local governments should embrace the use of social accountability forums and tools such as barazas, Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys (PETS) and social movements for checking local government budget resource leakages to enhance decentralized service delivery.

**Unique contribution to policy and/or practice:** The results of this study are relevant to practitioners of civil society organisations seeing that the level of corruption in governments as well as the magnitude to which vulnerable sections continue to be marginalised is growing hence the need for the civil society to offer checks and balances in budget processes.

**Keywords:** *Civil society organizations, pro-poor budget processes, local government, Dokolo*

## 1. Introduction

At a first glance, African Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) seem to possess few intermediary organizations that occupy the political space between household and state, yet on closer examination the several cultural and religious institutions that express collective identities such as clans, age-sets, and brotherhood that folks continue to grant allegiance are actually CSOs (Bratton, 1994). In Africa, CSOs have gained enormous importance since the 1980s (Dieter, 2011), where Civil Society is often based on religious or ethnic connections and include traditional and spiritual forms of social organizations and networks of indigenous institutions (O'Driscoll, 2018; Kleibi & Munck, 2017). Thus, in many rural regions of Africa, ethnic communities constitute another example of African Civil Society, as they enjoy a certain degree of independence from the state (Abdel & Hassan, 2008). However, in general African associational life took different forms in different countries – from Christian churches in Kenya and Burundi, to Islamic brotherhoods in Senegal and Sudan, to lawyers' and Journalists' Associations in Ghana and Nigeria, to Farmer Organizations in Zimbabwe and Kenya, and Mine workers' Unions in Zambia and South Africa (Bratton, 1994).

Governments, globally, have a duty to provide ample spaces for citizen participation in the budget processes – directly as well as through CSOs. Aside from participation being a right, it can also enhance the quality of governance and service delivery (Thindwa, 2004). According to UNDP (2007) civil society organizations, being vehicles for ordinary citizens' participation gives people from the margins of society a voice to influence budgeting and governance in general, making these more responsive to their needs; enhances good governance practices as it makes budgeting more transparent and accountable; and ultimately, improves the effectiveness of the delivery of services. It is frequently argued that CSOs is an important third sector whose strengths have positively influenced state and market as an agent for promoting transparency, responsibility, accountability and openness globally (Kansiime, 2019). This, among others, is by engaging of community and community-based organizations (CBOs), NGOs and ordinary local people in prioritization of public budget spending (UNDESA, 2005). This is an important role in a free and democratic society because the budget is the government's most important economic policy instrument and should therefore reflect the nation's priorities (Schick, 2001). Broadly and normatively, it is a representation of society's preferences and priorities (Cameroon, 2009). As such, scholars world over have argued that to ensure an effective use of public financial resources, different stakeholders come together to play different roles in the public finance management process (Andrews et al, 2014; Lawson, 2015).

Based on the foregoing point of view, since the 1990s, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have begun to play a larger role in the budget process in developing countries, including African countries. This growth has been particularly rapid in the past few years and corresponds with the political trend towards democratization (Krafchik, 2004). The engagement of civil society in the budget process is increasingly being viewed as important for strengthening people's empowerment (Mukokoma, 2010). This is called participatory budgeting (World Bank, 2013). Participatory budgeting programmes are implemented at the

behest of governments, citizens and CSOs to give citizens a direct role in deciding how and where public resources should be spent (UNDP, 2003). Participatory budgeting is defined as a form of democracy in which citizens and CSOs have the right to participate directly in determining fiscal policy (Marquetti et al., 2012). Thus, the involvement of civil society through CSOs and people's organizations in local development processes has led to a redefinition of the notion of "governance" (UNDESA, 2005). In Uganda this involvement of citizens, through NGOs, CSOs and other People's Organizations is grounded in Article 38(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995, which gives every citizen the right to participate in the affairs of government, individually or through his or her representatives in accordance with the law. Article 38(2) of the Constitution in particular provides that every Ugandan has the right to participate in peaceful activities to influence the policies of government through civic organizations (Mukokoma, 2010).

At the local government level, a local government budget is the detailed plan of how a local government plans to spend funds in line with its objectives, needs and priorities (Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, 2009). The three main tools that enable integrated planning and budgeting in local governments are the District Development Plan (DDP) which constitutes the overall, integrated, planning tool that incorporates the plans of lower local governments, and sectorial departments; Local Government Budget Framework Paper (BFP) which articulates a local government's 3 year development strategy, ensuring that budget decisions reflect a local government's long term objectives; and the budget which makes an integrated annual performance and financial plan for the coming year, sets out in detail the expected revenue available to the local governments, and the allocation of funds to the different parts of the local government for the achievement of the activities and outputs set out in the annual work plan in details (Mukokoma, 2005). Under section 78 of the Local Government Act, 1997, local governments have the right and obligation to formulate, approve and execute their budgets and plans that should reflect priorities and objectives set out in national policies, plans and budgets (Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, 2009). Other laws providing the legal basis for this are the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995; Local Government Financial and Accounting Regulations, 2007; the Budget Act, 2001; the Public Finance and Accountability Act, 2003 and Public Finance Management Act 2010 (Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, 2009).

CSOs serve as groups that represent citizens to make inputs into the strategic planning which reflects the expectations and needs of the people. CSOs interact with the people at the local level through research and when called to participate in the process, submit inputs which reflect the needs of the people (Antwi-Boasiako and Nkrumah, 2018). It therefore sounds logical to take on board CSOs when writing the budget as they may provide a useful input especially while assessing the external environment vis-a-vis the population needs, wants, characteristics etc. (Mukokoma, 2005). CSOs review budgets in order to assess whether allocations match the government's announced social commitments. This may involve analysing the impact and implications of budget allocations, demystifying the technical content of the budget, raising awareness about budget-related issues and undertaking public education campaigns to improve budget literacy (Malena, 2004).

Among others, CSOs use technical analysis to broaden and stimulate budget debates and to promote ex ante and ex post accountability for the use of public finances. Some CSOs scrutinize the government's overall fiscal framework, while others have assumed an approach oriented toward a particular sector or a beneficiary group (World Bank, 2013). For instance, a study by the World Bank (2002) in Uganda found out that public expenditure tracking by CSOs resulted in increase in capitation grants received by schools; indeed, the grants were so insignificant that they were increased to almost 100% from 1991 to 1999. In Ghana, public expenditure tracking was found to yield the same positive results (Antwi-Boasiako & Nkrumah, 2018).

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

Despite attempts by government to have effective and efficient budgeting process and subsequently its efficient and effective implementation, inefficiency and ineffectiveness in public budget allocation, implementation and monitoring processes still remain very serious issues in fiscal policy (Curristine et al, 2007) and despite visible Civil society organizations' involvement in public budget processes, their roles in advocating for and monitoring pro-poor budgets represents an under-researched area with great potential for future policy impact (de Renzio, 2006). There are equally unresolved arguments whether it is even relevant or legitimate for CSOs to involve themselves in public budget making, implementation and monitoring processes (Green, 2017). In the circumstances, there is the absence of sufficient literature on the role of CSOs in public budgeting processes (Antwi-Boasiako and Nkrumah, 2018) as such, Mukokoma, (2010) asserts that despite signs of success, the direct contributions of CSOs in influencing public budgeting is not yet well researched, nor recognized in the public finance sphere, and therefore the need for increasing research interest in that area. In the premise, this study undertakes to fill the said research gap by contributing to the literature on the influence of CSOs in local government budgeting processes, using examples from Uganda.

### **Objective of the Study**

To examine the extent to which CSOs promote pro-poor local government budget processes. Specifically, the study focused on three questions, namely; (i) To what extent do CSOs contribute to local government revenue enhancement? (ii) To what extent do CSOs influence the enactment of pro-poor local government budget allocations/priorities? (iii) To what extent do CSOs promote pro-poor implementation of enacted local government budgets? (iv) To what extent do CSOs prevent leakages to local government budget resources?

The study questions were perceived to be key in that CSOs promote pro-poor/pro-people local government budget processes. According to the conceptual framework, CSOs promote pro-poor local government budget processes through six different strategies or activities, namely, (i) off-budget support to local governments (ii) CSO participation in budget conferences (iii) pre-budget dialogues (iv) post-budget dialogues (v) social audits and (vi) Public Expenditure Tracking. The conceptual framework posits that through a number of off-budget support initiatives such as providing to local government constituents services such as primary health care, economic empowerment, education etc., CSOs enhance local government

revenue by freeing local government revenue for on-budget public investments which cannot be provided directly by Civil Society Organizations. Some CSOs also build capacity of local governments in revenue mobilization, which equally enhances local government revenues to finance their annual budgets.

Since CSOs interact with local community members and therefore know the needs and priorities of the locals, the conceptual framework posits that through their participation in budget conferences they influence local government budget priorities to be pro-poor/pro-people. This thereby leads to pro-poor Budget Framework Paper which derives its inputs from budget conferences. The conceptual framework goes on to posit that through pre-budget dialogues, CSOs bring together community members/right holders and local government leaders, to harmonize community priorities with the priorities of local leaders. Through these dialogues, the outputs of the pre-budget dialogues are draft budgets and enacted budgets that reflect the needs and priorities of the community – thereby pro-poor/pro-people draft budgets and subsequently pro-poor/people enacted budgets. The conceptual framework holds that through post-budget dialogues constituents challenge local government leaders for the delayed, poor or non-implementation of community priorities in the enacted budgets. This way post-budget dialogues also discourage or reduce or prevent leakages to budgeted resources and equally puts pressure on leaders to promptly and adequately implement community priorities in the enacted budget. Post-budget dialogues thereby promote pro-poor/pro-people implementation of the budget and reduced revenue leakages.

Through social audits CSOs expose corrupt and imprudent use of public resources, poor implementation of public projects etc. through this, CSOs reduce leakages to public resources and thereby promote pro-poor implementation of the budget including reduced leakages to budgeted resources. The conceptual framework also holds that through Public Expenditure Tracking, CSOs reduce leakages of local government budget revenue. This way CSOs also promote pro-poor implementation of the budget. Finally, the conceptual framework posits that the sum total of the intermediate results of CSOs initiatives, namely; (i) enhanced revenue (ii) pro-poor budget framework paper (iii) pro-poor draft budgets (iv) pro-poor enacted budgets and (v) pro-poor budget implementation /reduced revenue leakages, is pro-poor local government budget processes, which is the dependent variable herein.

## 2. **The Budgetary incrementalism theory**

Incrementalism is a leading theory in public budgeting. It acts not only as a descriptive theory but also performs as a normative one (Talukdar, 2020). According to Quinn (1978) logical incrementalism focuses on the power-behavioural approach to planning rather than formal system-planning approach. As a theory of public policymaking, ‘incrementalism’ was originally built in the late 1950s. It was postulated by an American Political Scientist, Charles E. Lindbloom to help policymakers comprehend a middle way between the ‘rational actor model’ and ‘bounded rationality’ to avoid the cost of large changes and to see the factual complication and emergent rationality of the issue as they get engaged and emerged into the process (Talukdar, 2020). Under incrementalism, public budgets develop from a process of interaction and mutual adaptation amongst several actors representing different interests,

having different information and advocating for different values (Hayes, 2013). As such the theory calls for citizenry inclusion and engagement, stakeholder involvement, national and local governments' partnership, cost-effectiveness, transparency and accountability to the public, and quality public service delivery (Talukdar, 2020). According to the theory, efficient and effective public budget making and implementation can be achieved by generating the quality budget information and data, and by publicizing and disseminating those to ensure improved citizenry access to such information and data (Rubin, 1990). Consequently, these are likely to enhance citizenry consciousness to demand accountability on the allocation, and spending on service delivery (Talukdar, 2013).

### **3.1 CSOs and Local Government revenue enhancement**

The greatest ambiguity in decentralization was the insistence by national leaders on transferring planning and administrative functions without providing localities with sufficient financial resources, and adequate legal powers to collect and allocate resources (Cheema and Rondinelli, 1983). Cheema and Rondinelli (1983) reference to this insufficient resources for local governments in the context of decentralization as an ambiguity is vindicated by UN-HABITAT's (2015) finding that many local governments in developing countries face the near-impossible task of funding infrastructure and service required to meet the basic needs of growing urban populations, while forward-looking capital investments are not possible for financial reasons. European Union (2019) concurs with the foregoing conclusion that local governments have local revenue shortfalls, which according to it has made Intergovernmental Fiscal Transfers to constitute the most significant part of the overall local government financing arrangements, currently financing approximately 95% of local government budgets.

This revenue challenge for government, including local governments, can be illustrated by the fact that despite the sustained growth of Uganda's economy, trends in tax revenue show a stagnation in performance. For instance, tax revenue as a percentage of GDP, oscillated between 11.7% and 13.1% between 2005/06 and 2014/15. This compares badly with other East African countries where Kenya's stood at 20%, Rwanda's at 14.7% and Tanzania's at 21% in FY 2013/2014 (URA, 2017). At only 13.8% of GDP, Uganda's tax revenue are inadequate to finance pro-poor development needs. The foregoing situation of local revenue yields bring into question the contribution of different actors, including Civil Society Organizations, in helping local governments enhance their revenue.

This is despite Hughes and Atampugre (2005) observation that CSOs work effectively to help local governments mitigate this challenge by delivering services and care to poor and vulnerable groups. For instance, as early as 1994 CSOs provided one third of hospital beds (Uganda Government, 1994). Concurring with Hughes and Atampugre (2005) foregoing observation, Rahman (2006) argues that the CSO sector as a whole has shifted away from its initial focus on promoting political mobilization and accountable government, to the political delivery of basic services. In my view the said direct service provision by CSOs contribute to revenue enhancement only in the sense that it frees local government tax and non-tax revenue to finance other services that cannot be provided directly by Civil society organizations, as posited in the Conceptual Framework in the previous chapter.

Similarly, in their mapping of South African social movements, Mitlin and Mogaladi (2009) also point out that social movements, which are Civil Society Organizations, deliver services to the poor, concurring with Hughes and Atampugre (2015) earlier. While according to Mitlin and Satterthwaite (2004) they often fulfill the role that government agencies should provide – for instance, provision of water, waste removal, healthcare or the support of Centres that assist particular groups (such as Centres for street children). Thus, both Mitlin and Mogaladi (2009) and Mitlin and Satterthwaite (2004) earlier validates the holding in the conceptual framework in the previous chapter that CSOs directly provide services to the poor, which free local government revenue for other priorities and in that way enhancing local government revenue.

Since most CSOs play an oversight role over government and are involved in service delivery, especially health, education and work closely with the poor, they equally play a vital role in defending these programs by engaging with tax issues and advocating for adequate government revenue (Oxfam et al, 2012). In that case Oxfam et al, (2012) is in concurrence with Moore and Schneider (2004) who averred that since CSOs advocate for programs that require substantial government funding they also strengthen their case by proposing to the government specific taxes or other revenue sources to pay for them. Thus, this way CSOs enhance local government revenue.

Oxfam et al, (2012) alludes to CSOs contribution to government, including local government revenue, by giving an example of where Capacity for Research and Advocacy for Fair Taxation (CRAFT) project is mobilizing civil societies in five countries of Nigeria, Uganda, Mali, Senegal, and Egypt on tax system, to make tax system pro-poor. According to Oxfam et al (2012) CRAFT promotes government revenue enhancement by motivating tax payers to pay their taxes and mobilize public pressure for tax justice. Oxfam et al (2012) adds that CSOs likewise increase government revenue by preventing or reducing tax evasion, corruption in tax collection and thereby help increase tax revenue.

### **3.2 CSOs and enactment of pro-poor Local Government budget allocations**

According to Van Lerberghe and Ferrinho (2002) because of lack of resources, ignorance, lack of political will or lack of awareness of the vulnerability of the problem, or disempowerment of the most afflicted social groups rational allocation of resources by government is an illusion but CSOs play a role in identifying priority issues and putting it on the decision makers' agenda. Wampler (2007) concurs with Van Lerberghe and Ferrinho (2002) on the influence of CSOs in pro-poor budget allocation, holding that they guarantee that poorer regions receive more resources than better-off neighborhoods. They corroborate their observation by explaining that CSOs translate to decision-makers what is of value to citizens and users of government services.

Furthermore, CSOs monitor government to ensure that its resource allocation is in favour of the marginalized, e.g. by calling for participatory and gender budgeting (Solava and Hulme, 2010). Solava and Hulme (2010) add that they also raise a public debate around poverty-related problems so as to influence policy/budget design, build new alliances, gain new



supporters and encourage policymakers to establish programs to address these problems. Mitlin and Satterthwaite (2004) corroborates this by asserting that many NGOs bring the problems of the poor to the attention of local authorities and seek policy changes that would directly enhance the livelihoods of the poor. According to Mitlin and Satterthwaite (2004), CSOs correspondingly promote pro-poor budget allocation by organizing dialogues between policy makers and communities. This observation is in tandem with the holding in the conceptual framework in the previous chapter which holds that CSOs promote allocation of public resources to pro-poor priorities, by organizing pre-budget dialogues between the rights holders and duty bearers (local government officials) for duty bearers to harmonize proposed budget allocation with the priorities of the poor.

Antwi-Boasiako and Nkrumah (2018) are equally in tandem with the holding in the conceptual framework by contending that CSOs serve as groups that represent citizens to make inputs into the strategic planning which reflects the expectations and needs of the people. CSOs interact with the people at the local level through research and when called to participate in the process submit inputs which reflect the needs of the people. In the same vein, Malena (2004) earlier maintained that CSOs review budgets in order to assess whether allocations match the government's announced social commitments. This may involve analysing the impact and implications of budget allocations, demystifying the technical content of the budget, raising awareness about budget-related issues and undertaking public education campaigns to improve budget literacy. In concurrence, Mukokoma (2005) held that it therefore sounds logical to take on board CSOs when writing the budget as they may provide a useful input especially while assessing the external environment especially the population needs, wants, characteristics, etc.

CSOs interact with the people at the local level through research and when called to participate in the process submit inputs which reflect the needs of the people (Antwi-Boasiako and Nkrumah, 2018). To bring the point home, and that in the case of Ghana at the budget formulation stage, CSOs participate in the formulation by proposing spending projects, setting priorities for spending, and helping to decide which projects should be funded. Coming from another angle, but in concurrence with all the above authors, the World Bank, (2002) posit that CSOs inform and train budget authorities on the budgeting, create awareness of pro-poor issues, demystify its technical content, among others to budget authorities. The European Commission, (2014) also adds its voice, alluding to the fact that CSOs can play a key role in aggregating and presenting demands on behalf of constituents contributing critical information on the public's needs and priorities; further adding that a Civil Society Organization or a coalition of Civil Society Organizations, may for example, decide to submit a shadow budget or policy proposal or conduct independent studies and research to have a proper evidence base for advocacy EC, 2014). However, according to Action Aid et al (2002) one challenge that CSOs face in this endeavour is that it is often difficult for Civil Society to gain entry into the pre-budget phase of the budget cycle.

### **3.3 CSOs and pro-poor implementation of enacted local government budgets**

Enacting a more pro-poor budget is only the first stage in making public expenditure pro-poor (Foster et al, 2002). In the circumstances, de Renzio and Krafchik (2006) is spot on

to assert that increasing budget allocations for pro-poor programs is no guarantee that money will be spent well and will actually improve the livelihoods of the poor. Discrepancies between the approved budget and the executed budget can come in the form of leakages (Mogues, 2012). Leakages result from capacity constraints, lack of accountability and non-transparent relationships between state and local governments on fiscal matters, unauthorized spending (Mogues et al, 2012; Cammack et al, 2008).

Although a civil society is a relatively new actor in public budgeting, evidence that they are having a positive impact on budget decision-making and implementation is beginning to emerge (Ramkumar and Krafchik, 2005). According to Van Lerberghe and Ferrinho (2002) there is usually underspending on priorities and overspending on non-priorities because of lack of resources, or merely because of ignorance, lack of political will or awareness of the vulnerability of the poor, or disempowerment of the most afflicted social groups. In the circumstances, CSOs through their monitoring leads to rationalization which means eliminating non-priority expenditure because it is ineffective or because more efficient alternatives exist. According to the conceptual framework herein the previous chapter, the said bad budget practices alluded to by Van Lerberghe and Ferrinho's (2002) and De Renzio and Krafchik (2006) are what CSOs desensitize local governments about, to make their budget implementation pro-poor. CSOs work against such bad practices because as, de Renzio and Krafchik (2006) observed, in many countries, obstacles such as underspending and inefficiency often prevent the poor from benefiting despite the investment of considerable public resources. As a result of the variance between budget-versus-actual expenditure on pro-poor priorities, according to de Renzio and Krafchik, (2006), budget work is increasingly shifting focus on developing tools to take on the challenge of implementation, moving from monitoring budget allocations to monitoring budget implementation and service delivery. As posited in the conceptual framework herein the previous chapter, the culmination of the Civil Society Organizations' monitoring process are post-budget dialogues during which CSOs convene community members (right holders) to hold duty bearers (local government elected and appointed leaders) accountable for the delayed and/or poor and /or non-implementation of pro-poor priorities in the enacted budget. Such accountability forums put pressure on local governments to implement pro-poor budget priorities, thereby reducing the variance between budgeted and actual expenditures on pro-poor priorities.

It is thus conceptualised that in concurrence with the World Bank (2013) which noted that CSOs use technical analyses to broaden and stimulate budget debates and to promote ex ante and ex post accountability for the use of public finances. The World Bank (2013) adds that CSOs scrutinize the government's overall fiscal framework, while others have assumed an approach oriented toward a particular sector or a beneficiary group. The World Bank's (2013) observation is in tandem with its earlier (2002) study in Uganda which found that post-budget Public Expenditure Tracking by CSOs resulted in increase in capitation grants received by schools; indeed, the grants were so insignificant that they were increased to almost 100% from 1991 to 1999. Similarly, in Ghana a study by Antwi-Boasiako and Nkrumah (2018) found that Public Expenditure Tracking yielded the same positive results. However, despite all the foregoing evidence which demonstrate the contribution of CSOs in promoting pro-poor budget

implementation, according to De Renzio and Krafchik (2006) many people are sceptical about the usefulness of civil society involvement in budget process. Foster et al (2012) debunks the scepticism when they held that the most persuasive evidence that transparency improves the accessibility and quality of services is derived from Uganda, which has placed significant stress on strengthening the civil society voice in holding officials accountable, and has recognized that this requires making more and better information available.

### **3.4 CSOs and Prevention of Leakages to Local Government Budget Resources**

In many countries, obstacles such as corruption often prevent the poor from benefiting despite the investment of considerable resources (De Renzio & Krafchik, 2006). Discrepancies between the approved budget and the executed budget can come in the form of leakages (Mogues, 2012). Leakages result from capacity constraints, lack of accountability and non-transparent relationship between state and local governments on fiscal matters, unauthorized spending (Mogues et al, 2012; Cammack et al, 2008). This is in concurrence with the conceptual framework herein the previous chapter which holds that leakages result from lack of accountability.

Involving CSOs in monitoring the probity of public expenditure management can be an effective, and often cost-efficient, complement to official institutional anti-corruption measures (Foster et al, 2002). Shah (2007) is in agreement with Foster et al (2007) when he asserted that when NGOs play a direct role in the budget process, they tend to promote citizen empowerment and transparency in government. Thus, Foster et al (2002) concurs with the conceptual framework, which holds that CSOs prevent, or at least reduce, leakages to local government through measures such as post-budget dialogues, public expenditure tracking and social audits. According to Wampler (2007) CSOs play the said role by monitoring spending and policy decision, acting as a watchdog. Alluding to how CSOs prevent resource leakages Hughes and Atampugre (2005) observed that CSOs create a sense of government accountability, which are all in concurrence with the conceptual framework herein the previous chapter.

For instance, De Renzio and Krafchik's (2006) study in Uganda found social audits to have the effect of preventing or at least reducing leakages when they observed that Uganda Debt Network has sought to tackle inefficient service in public resources by training community-based monitors to check the quality of local service delivery, with a focus on local infrastructure project. This is in tandem with an earlier World Bank's (2002) study in Uganda which found that Public Expenditure Tracking by CSOs reduced leakages in capitation grants received by schools in the period under review, namely; 1991 and 1999. In tandem, the World Bank's (2012) held that CSOs undertake Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys to 'follow the money' from central government budgets through to local governments to service providers or absenteeism surveys to monitor attendance of teachers, doctors etc. which helps identify anomalies in the fund flow (World Bank, 2012).

Thus, as a result, according to Akyel and Kose (2013) monitoring of public expenditure by CSOs has seen some tremendous growth in the past two decades. However, according to Carlitz (2012) the most prominent among these activities is the social audit scheme. In that

way, the growth of social audit schemes, instead of public Expenditure Tracking Surveys. To illustrate how civil society budget monitoring lead to pro-poor budget implementation the World Bank (2002) found that in Uganda, expenditure tracking by CSOs resulted in increase in capitation grants received by schools. According to the European Commission (2014) the ‘Black Monday’ movement in Uganda is another significant example of how CSOs can take action to monitor the use of public monies although no invited space exist. The European Commission (2014) therefore corroborates De Renzio and Krafchik (2006) earlier report that social audits by Uganda Debt Network and its culmination in annual district post-budget dialogues have helped to make budget implementation and service delivery more pro-poor. For instance, they, De Renzio and Krafchik (2006), assert that monitors’ report that as a result of post-budget dialogues patients in one community health Centre in the project catchment area reported improved quality of services in terms of availability of drugs, and health workers’ presence, among other things. A similar finding was made in Mexico, where it was reported that a local NGO, Funder, has worked with a coalition of CSOs to monitor and increase the government’s commitment to reducing maternal mortality (Ramkumar & Krafchik, 2005).

#### **4. Conclusion**

From the review, it can be stated that civil, society organisations are central actors in the pro-poor budgeting processes in Uganda and their contribution cannot be underestimated.

#### **5. Recommendations**

CSOs are encouraged to:

- i). With the finding that civil society on-budget and off-budget support enhance local government budgets to serve the poor and the underprivileged, civil society embrace it as part of their service to the poor.
- ii). Given the finding civil society use of social accountability tools like PETS and barazas promote pro-poor local government budget processes, CSOs should consolidate as one of the methods of fighting poverty.

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