Climbing the Credibility Ladder

Civil Society, Donor Support and the Accountability Challenge in Uganda

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1. Introduction

Funding for civil society strengthening in the last 2 decades has become a vital part of the aid industry. Virtually every donor agency[1] has had a civil society support programme or at least at minimum asserts that civil society is critical for their activities, in what has been described as a move to 'keep up with the Jones' (Van Rooy, 1998:54). This paper recognizes that there are a multitude of reasons why development agencies may be keen to support civil society, especially in the south, but one which takes centre stage in this essay, is the idea that civil society can be supported to 'hold government accountable' as part of the broader development project.

To be able to do this though, there is a big assumption that CSOs themselves are accountable. This paper engages with the accountability question amongst a dominant sub-group of civil society – NGOs. While inferences and reflections are made of civil society as a wider phenomenon, the underling focus, knowledge and experience is drawn from the author's work experience, knowledge and research amongst NGOs. I argue in the main that NGOs have a rather incomplete understanding of accountability and thus suffer deficits in practice. As such, only a few have the moral high-ground, as institutions to engage with the broader accountability struggle within the state. However, in the few who have the moral authority, we can draw some lessons.

2. Civil Society and its rise to 'prominence'

"Civil Society is an associational realm between the state and the family populated by organisations which are separate from the state, enjoy autonomy in relation to the state and are formed voluntarily by members of society to protect or extend interests or values".

Despite the growth of a cottage industry among political and other theorists about the idea of civil society and what it represents, its precise meaning remains elusive (White, 1994; Brock, 2002; Van Rooy, 1998, Oloka, 1998). The term means different things to different actors; making it conceptually and practically fluid (Oloka, 1998). While some attempt to distinguish civil from political society (White, 1994, 1996), others forcefully argue that political society and its actors like political parties must be part of it (Mujagu, in Oloka, ibid). Various definitions vaguely describe civil society as the whole of humanity left over once government and for-profit firms are excised, covering all those organisations that fill in the spaces between the family, the state and the market (White, Van Rooy, Oloka). Some analysts like Bradley maintain that the vagueness in the term is part of its appeal. Said he, '…having to define all

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1 In this paper, this largely refers to bi-lateral and multi-lateral aid donors or intermediary agencies, including co-financing agencies like International NGOs that provide funding to local civil society groups

things is actually part of our problem and over reliance on scientific categorization (Bradely, in Van Rooy, 1998: 56). Others however insist that if we allow civil society to be theoretically impoverished, to suit all political tastes, to exist as a residual category once all other slices of human life are drawn away, it deserves abandonment (Fierlbeck, in Van Rooy, 1998:29 and Van Rooy: 199). In other words, civil society ought to be an observable reality.

Most definitions of civil society are couched in an ideal and positive tone; portraying civil society from what it ought to be, rather than what it actually is. In this paper, civil society is used to refer to those organisations populating the associational realm between the state and family which are not primarily driven by the desire to make profit or the quest to capture power. Instead they claim, albeit through **civilized**[2] means, to represent the interests of their members or sections of the citizenry, who for various reasons are considered to be better articulated through them. They include Trade Unions, NGOs (and NGO Networks), Faith Based Organisations, Professional Associations, Community Based Organisations and some sections of the media. This definition attempts to de-link from civil society, the 'for-profit' private enterprise, political parties and groups that may be 'uncivil' but still populate the space described by White above.

Civil Society in Uganda in Historical Perspective

Civil society is a growing phenomenon in Uganda, with its growth often driven by external factors, including government initiatives, decentralization and donor funding (De Coninck, 2004:2). The nature, composition and prominence of groups populating the civil society space have also been changing over time. In the pre-independence period where a measured development of what today is referred to as civil society was encouraged by the colonial government, key players in the civil society scene included, producer and export cooperatives, trade unions and other social movements (ibid:52). After independence, the dominant group - cooperatives were co-opted by the state and some formed the nucleus of state enterprises in the late 60's. In the 70's during Idi Amin's dictatorship, independent civic and civil action was severely curtailed but the students' movement remained formidable. There was a reincarnation of civil society in the 80's mainly in the form of International NGOs to fill gaps created by government failure and abuse in the 70's and early 80's.

However, it was during the NRM rule that today's dominant form of civil society (NGOs) in Uganda proliferated. The growth of this sub-group was astronomical; from about 160 in 1986 to 3500 in 2000, to 4700 in 2003 and about 5,500 by end of 2005 (De Coninck; 2004; Oloka, 2006). The latest statistics from the NGO Registration Board puts the number in excess of 10,000. As in other parts of Africa, this NGO boom was and still is aided by donor funding (Nadia & Robrecht, 2002:28).

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2 The virtues of civility denote 'polite' and refined behavior and treating others with respect and tolerance; acting civilly toward one another, care about families and fellow citizens. The emphasis on the word civil is to distinguish hugely unpopular groups like Al Qaeda, LRA, etc who by the definition are a comfortable section occupying the civil society space.

3. Why foreign funding to civil society?

"Embedded within the explicit justifications that donors give for supporting civil society, are often broader reasons…frequently based on a variety of philosophical and ideological perspectives, from an understanding of civil society as a means to make 'demands on the state and hold state officials accountable'… to seeing civil society as the engine for increasing participation of the poor and promoting social change"

The reasons for increased donor interest in civil society strengthening are varied, in some cases even contradictory. This paper discerns at least three broad explanations; the neo-liberal rationale, the dissatisfaction with the performance of the state and finally the political liberalization and policy engagement rationale. The rationales, while inter-linked, each emphasize slightly different realities.

According to the **neo-liberal** school, donor interest and support to civil society is part of a bigger project to promote western capitalism driven by the neo-liberal agenda. Support to civil society is seen as necessary for the creation of pre-conditions for the success of market based economies. It is suggested[3] that in the quest to support models for liberalized economies, donors were aware of the necessary social pre-requisites required for the market to work, and this was absent in many countries. The questions were; who trains citizens in the values necessary for entrepreneurialism? How do you get people interested in opening up markets and curbing governments? The answer was to encourage associational life and civil society was seen as some form of social capital necessary for markets and their role as advocates for such reforms in pursuit of the capitalist dream was underlined (Van Rooy, 1998:36; Oloka, 1998:3).

The other rationale is one premised on perceived **state failure** to deliver development. Donor attention to the phenomenon of civil society in this case is seen as an offshoot of the concern with the state-centric notion of governance which emerged as a major pre-occupation of post war donor policies (Oloka, 1998:2; Amutabi, 2006:31-32). As criticisms of governments mounted, many turned to the concept of civil society in an attempt to identify possible sources of political, economic and social renewal. In Uganda, numerous large donor supported projects through NGOs in the late 80's and early 90's ranging from HIV/AIDS, education and health services in hard to reach areas, to military demobilization and poverty alleviation programmes could be viewed in this light. The regime was seen as corrupt, patrimonial and incapable of delivering services and so an alternative had to be found. This argument presupposes a strong link between good governance, accountability and development and propagates the idea that NGOs are more accountable than governments.

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3 For a more extended discussion of this theory, refer to a collection of several donor views including USAID, FES, Inter-American Foundation, etc in Van Rooy, 1998

The **third rationale** for donor support to civil society is closely linked to the changing role of the state and the discourse on governance that emerged in the 90's. The changing role of the state; from development leadership in the 70's to its downsizing in the 80's during the structural adjustment era, and its reincarnation in the 90's had implications on what donors support civil society for. In the 80's civil society, mainly International NGOs and their local partners were recipients of considerable amounts of aid money in the era of projects. NGOs were seen as gap fillers, for a state that had been conditioned to downsize and retreat. Government played an 'absentee' role in an era dominated by project support. However, when it became apparent that recipient governments did not own development projects and outcomes, a sudden shift to 'bring' the state back in, was made and policy based lending and budget support were next in vogue. For civil society and in particular NGOs, their hey-days were over or at least, it was time for another switch in roles. Discourses shifted from statements on the role and efficiency of NGO's in service delivery to claims that CSOs can hold government to account by creating a demand side to efficient service delivery (Lister & Nyamugasira). Governance programmes became the major (if not dominant) focus by donor agencies with emphasis on; human rights, democratization, capacity building, institutional strengthening, transparency, accountability, and policy engagement (Oloka, 1998).

But what exactly is this accountability animal?

Accountability: Meaning and Practice

It may be fashionable to talk about accountability or the need to hold agencies accountable. This talk underscores the continuing concern for checks and oversight, for surveillance and institutional constraints on the exercise of power. Schedler (1999) observes that accountability represents an under-explored concept whose precise meaning remains evasive; boundaries fuzzy and internal structures confusing. Two faces of accountability have been suggested nevertheless; on the one hand is **answerability,** which is the obligation by public officials to inform and explain what they are doing or have done, and on the other, **enforcement,** which relates to the capacity of accounting agencies to impose sanctions on power holders who have violated their public duties (Schedler, 1999:14). Accountability in this paper is used to mean a situation where a public agency or official is held responsible and bears consequences for actions or inaction with regard to a duty they are expected to perform in public interest. Accountability describes rights and responsibilities that exist between people and institutions that affect their lives (IDS4). In other words, accountability is a relationship of power.

When accountability works, citizens are able make demands on powerful institutions, state and non state and ensure that those demands are met. It presupposes at least 3 ways of redressing abusive power; a) subjecting power to the threats of sanctions, b) obliging it to be exercised in transparent ways, and c) forcing it to justify its acts. As Schedler (1999:15) emphasized, accounting persons whether in government or in civil society, should not only tell what they have done and why, but bear the consequences for it. The exercise of accountability that exposes misdeeds, but don't impose material consequences are seen as weak, toothless, diminished and or window dressing, rather than real restraints on power (Shedler ibid:16; Robinson, 2006:11).

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4 Making Accountability Count, IDS Briefing, Issue 33, November 2006

Uganda's Accountability Dilemmas

From the above conceptual discussion on accountability, what then are the accountability dilemmas in Uganda? Starting first with the bigger picture within the state -- it appears that a key dilemma is one in which citizens appear weaker than the state and thus unable to hold it accountable as an institution. The median age in Ugandan is said to be 15 years old, dependant (dependency ratio in Uganda is 12:1), poor and trying at best to survive. The blurring of boundaries between accountability institutions and the resurgence of an imperial president and presidency all account for a rather poor performance of key institutions of state. Most significant though, accountability is not just a relationship of power, but one of trust. The latter is in high deficit in Uganda and there is a near breakdown of trust in many government agencies and leaders alike. While Ugandans pay both direct and indirect taxes, there is little in return in terms of service delivery --- in fact the cost we pay for bad roads, poor public health facilities, poor quality education and agricultural extension, all tantamount to double taxation! When you see Ugandans resort to mob-justice (watch agataliko nfuufu on Bukede TV and you will figure out what I am talking about), it suggests we do not trust law and order institutions! Even when government appears to be taking some action against government, not many believes it --- we conclude it is selective justice, political witch-hunt and unsustainable! There is just little public value what citizens get from the state!

In the case of civil society, it would be important to question whether there is any difference in public perception of organisations in it. But given the discussion of accountability above, what exactly would accountability mean? What would an NGO that is accountable look like? Who are or should NGOs be accountable to and for what? These and many more teething questions about organisations in civil society become apparent in the next section and will be returned to in the conclusion! But first, let us weave through some of the gaps in NGO accountability.

4. Gaps in NGO Accountability

Credibility Gaps

In the theory of accountability, the agents of accountability like CSOs should be open and subject themselves for a second order accountability (Schedler, 1999). The question about who CSOs are accountable to in their work is a controversial one. Should CSOs be accountable to Government, to donors or to citizens? If it is to government as Hegel (1821, cited in Van Rooy, 1998:10) suggests, then a key logic of accountability is flattened. The tendency for CSOs to account upward to donors has been criticized and discredited, and government is usually wary of such an accountability orientation. While it is reasonable to argue that NGOs should be accountable to all the above actors, depending on the specific situation requiring accountability, it is important to lay emphasis on the need for CSO downward accountability to citizens.

However, NGOs in Uganda have been accused of being pre-occupied with accountability to donors and self perpetuation, rather than to, their-would be constituencies (De Coninck, 2002:63). In Uganda, as is elsewhere in the world, many NGOs have very weak linkages to the grassroots (Ottaway, 2000) and sometimes actually prey on their purported constituency - in 2006 for instance, several NGOs were implicated in a major corruption scandal involving the misuse of Global Funds meant for HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis in what greatly dented their image. NGOs themselves have acknowledged that there could be some 'wolves' among the sheep flock and are trying to address this through a recently developed NGO Quality Assurance Certification Mechanism (QuAM[5]). In some cases we are accused of reproducing the same injustices and ways of work as we accuse the state of! So apart from compliance to legal or administrative requirements which the state always complains of NGOs, can we say ordinary citizens really have a say over what NGOs do or how they do it? Like in the case of an imposing state and leadership, there is often very little that ordinary citizens can do about NGOs.

Blurring of boundaries between civil society and the state

The identity and disunity in the NGO sector in particular has been aggravated by the blurring of boundaries with the state, in the main because of external factors, key among which is the frequently changing donor aid architecture (Lister & Nyamugasira, 2003) which has conditioned some CSOs to become service delivery agents of the state and yet many functions ascribed to CSOs, particularly those of holding government accountable rests on the assumption that civil society has a separate identity from the state (Brock, 2002:98) and that CSOs naturally see this as their role. However as some studies have shown, this may not be the case in Uganda (De Coninck, 2004; Brock 2002:97). The common view of civil society as an autonomous space, standing in parallel to the state needs rethinking, recognizing the critical role the state plays in constituting civil society itself (IDS, CFS-2005:4) and as discussed elsewhere, civil society support and activism is largely an offshoot of a much broader donor–state affair. In Uganda, and especially within the decentralized system, the same individuals often wear different hats; sometimes as public officials and in others, as patrons of civil society organisations.

The key question here is whether civil society is any different from the generally discredited state. I will end this point with two important anecdotes. The first is an advert for office space in Kabalagala, one of Kampala's buzzing night spots that never 'sleeps'. In the middle of this centre is an advert for office space and the notice reads 'office space available suitable for NGOs, Banks or Government'. The second anecdote is from a field trip in Yumbe in West Nile where a close associate working for an NGO encountered. On a research trip, they happened to visit the same household that an earlier government research team had visited. In this household was an old woman who was very cynical! She asked, what have you come over to do again this week when you were here last week. My friend quickly retorted, 'no the group last week were from UBOS, a government agency...'. And the woman responded what is the difference? Apparently the NGO team was dressed like the government group, were driving similar cars and were asking the same questions! What does this tell us of the perception people have of NGOs?

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5 The QuAM is an internal self-regulation mechanism developed locally by NGOs in Uganda as a code of honor

The Leadership Challenge and Transition Failures

Perhaps the most significant of Uganda's governance and accountability challenges is that of leadership. Civil society in Uganda generally suffers this problem most acutely. Without a leadership that exudes a different culture from what we see on the public and private market place, it is foolhardy to expect that organisations in civil society can present hope for Uganda. Very critical in this sense is how civil society organisations themselves demonstrate their ability to handle the very social ills that undermine the state; leadership longevity and the supremacy of the 'big men' (and women) who want to stay in leadership in perpetuity. So while we join the chorus to campaign for the restoration of Executive Presidential Term Limits, we look around many NGOs and the founder syndrome are abound. In the same way our president believes he 'hunted and killed his animal' and therefore must feast to the end, we also have NGO leaders that just know not a life outside the organisations they help found or if they do transit, it is only in part and a cloud of their influence, often more detrimental than valuable remain.

The other challenges related to lack of transparency and accountability in the way they conduct business, corruption and discrimination along social constructions such as gender, tribe, region and religion, among others. Connected to this is the important point about our belief systems and convictions. Civil Society Organisations have been accused of being careerists, lacking conviction and just workers. An interesting analysis of the CSO DNA seems to suggest our leadership falls under three categories as illustrated in the figure to the right, in short they are:

a) **radical elite** who are leaders very strongly driven by the desire to change status quo for they believe that this is the primary structural problem and everything else is secondary. Estimated to be less than 10% of CSO leadership, this group have been accused of being 'too political'

b) **altruistic elite** are the 2nd category -- are driven by the desire to help citizens overcome several socioeconomic challenges they face, but focus largely on responding to citizen needs and work with them to overcome emerging challenges, including in human rights. This group estimated at less than 30% are less vocal about power issues and don't see the solution being in structural and political change; finally

c) **mainstream elite** are estimated to be the majority, in excess of 60%! They largely look at themselves as workers taking opportunity of available jobs in the sector and earning a living. Whether or not they serve the larger societal good is not their primary agenda. They are risk averse and generally partake of status quo.

TYPOLOGY OF NGO LEADERSHIP IN UGANDA

> 5% Radical Elite

> 30% Altruistic Elite

> 65% Mainstream Elite
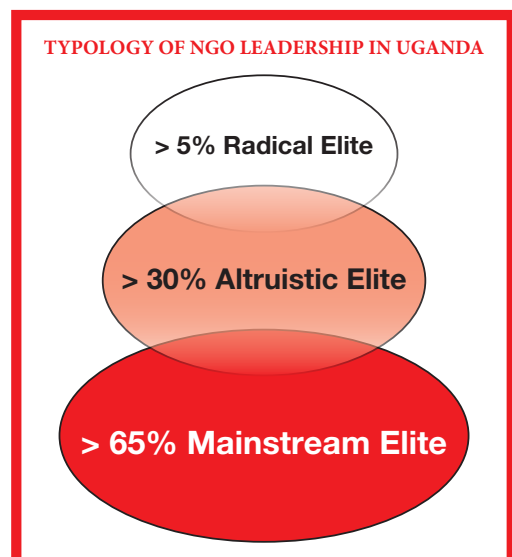
The challenge for us is to reconfigure this CSO Leadership DNA to see more than 95% shared between the altruistic and radical elite for the time appears to demand that type of leadership. Unless we demonstrate courage and imagination, it will be very difficult to be the change makers we ought to.

5. Best Practices

Despite the challenges above, there are certainly a number of best practices that are worthy of note, if not for anything else, at least for the hope that some impulses within civil society may present to the key accountability questions of the day. Below, I share five efforts we all can learn from, most may be well known and quite obvious but maybe I present them with a slightly different emphasis. They represent attempts by many civil society organisations to 'climb the credibility ladder'.

The QuAM and INGO Accountability Charter

The NGO Quality Assurance Certification Mechanism (QuAM) is a voluntary self governance initiative by and for NGOs. Initiated by the Uganda National NGO Forum and DENIVA, two of Uganda's largest NGO networks, the QuAM outline 59 standards and indicators of ethical conduct and responsible behaviour expected of publically accountable NGOs. The 59 indicators are grouped in three categories: a) start up; b) improvement; c) standards of excellence. Acquiring any of these standards attracts a reward and recommendations for further improvement. The idea of this categorization is to make NGOs grow in governance and voluntarily rather than assume 'a larger than life' posture simply to impress. Therefore the voluntary nature of the QuAM while a number have argued is its weakness, in fact is the most important attribute for if the QuAM was made compulsory and enforced by the state, it could easily become a 'policing instrument' for which we would see a huge backlash and in particular forgeries simply to be compliant.

One of the most critical aspects of the QuAM is its public vetting system that requires any NGO seeking accreditation to subject itself to its 'public' and questions are asked of the value a particular NGO is to its constituencies or 'communities' it services. This is particular process is very rewarding as important feedback is got about how the public and 'consumers' of services offered by an NGO, without which, the accreditation process is incomplete.

The other related instrument and best practice is one developed by some International NGOs in 2005 that defines certain principles to guide to guide their work including respect for universal principles, independence of politics, responsible advocacy, effective programmes and non discrimination among others. NGOs that subject themselves to such commitments certainly take a bold step to open up, stand up and be counted. In the case of the QuAM, I have personally appreciated its value as I saw the difference it created for the two organisations that I have been associated with that went through the process - the Uganda national NGO Forum in 2010 and ActionAid International Uganda in 2012.

Transparency Boards

A distinct but connected tool being used by a few governments especially at Local Government levels and a number of NGOs, ActionAid inclusive is Transparency Boards. These are open places while critical information about the organisation and its work in the case of Action aid Uganda, the information we place there include a s… of our work in the city in localities where the work, information about budgets and how allocation has been made and to whom, in our own case where we extend some resources to smaller organisations within civil society, it is important that we list for the public to know and assess the impact and hold them accountable. We also have our values and working principle as well as visions and missions so that ordinary people can ask questions about how we live these realities in practice. For NGOs, indicating the source of your grants also presents a good way to respond to claim that we are agents of foreign interests.

Many of you who have visited some local governments will find information on transparency Boards quarterly releases or in UPE schools of transfers. While there is much more that must be done beyond information, opening up is a best practice that opens windows of opportunity to build knowledge that can be basis for accountability. And if you give half-baked or wrong information you also can be held accountable.

Effective Boards

While this appears obvious, the key word here is **effective** and not just boards. For various reasons, many NGOs actually claim to have oversight boards but the key question is, 'are they effective'? What makes Boards Effective in NGOs? Boards in their ideal terms are supposed to act as organs that check on performance of the operational aim of NGOs. The secretariat where they work, Boards greatly add value. An effective board questions, challenges, advises and sometimes actually draws on the technical expertise of its members to offer solutions to organisational challenges. Effective Boards are also custodians of the mission of the organisation and finally, they are accountable to other organs such as general assemblies, depending on the nature of such organisations. Organisations would be less transparent, less innovative and certainly less accountable to different clients without effective boards.

In the literature of NGO Boards, questions have been asked of their value addition. In many cases Boards are seen as bodies that take out more than they give to NGOs. In terms of characterization NGO Boards are often seen either as 'projects of secretariats' when you have big men and women as heads of those secretariats or as superimposing organs tat interfere in almost everything Management does. An effective board, able to professionally hold Management accountable nevertheless remains an important organ for accountability and a best practice.

Transition and Succession Planning

Whenever the discussion on transition or term limits surface, especially in Uganda, the temptation is to quickly think about executive term limits for the position of president, infamously removed from our constitution in 2005 before it was even tested. However, the point being made in this paper is one of principle as it relates to how it may apply or has been

applied to organisations. It is about putting the institution before individuals and ensures that there mechanisms, at least to guard against perpetual life of individuals. We have already talked about the dangers of the 'founder syndrome' in the literature on NGOs and their management.

Term limits as practiced by a number of organisations are about managing succession and building capacity in public voluntary organisations. Organisations such as the Uganda National NGO Forum, the Uganda Joint Christian Council and others have the tenure of their Chief Executives clearly defined in their constitutions, but most importantly respected. Many other NGOs, especially international or those that are part of global entities such as ActionAid often have defined time periods for contracting Chief Executives and after each cycle there are changes in leaders. This practice encourages succession planning, saves the organisation from being held hostage by leaders and enables capacity to be built more systematically.

Conversely many organisations that suffer the founder syndrome fail to outline strong personalities that form them. Term limits are thus a best practise to learn from.

Confronting Governmental Corruption

Many NGOs have dared come out openly to stand up, speak out and put their heads on the 'chopping board' by questioning government commitment to deal with runaway corruption. By so doing many of these NGOs are opening themselves to public scrutiny in ways in which many others who don't engage with the anti-corruption (or theft as is branded by the Black Monday Movement) miss out. For instance by ActionAid participating so centrally in the anti-corruption campaign, we are conditioned to 'clean our own house'. As I speak at various platforms and criticize leaders who steal tax-payers money, I am careful to be sure about where I come from. In other words, engaging in the fight against corruption is a powerful incentive to start the fight from your backyard to give one the moral authority to quest the other. This to me is a best practice!! And it is supported by Article 17 (i) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda which makes it a duty of every citizen 'to combat corruption and misuse or wastage of public property'.

6. Concluding Thoughts

I have attempted in this foregone pages to engage with the question of accountability at a conceptual level and in practice especially as it relates to civil society organisations and in particular the NGO Sub Group. Building from a grounded understanding of accountability as relationship of power and trust and manifested in two dimensions of answerability and enforceability, I have raised some challenges to the accountability agenda in Uganda. A key point made is that the agents to demand accountability in the Ugandan context seem quite dependent for their survival or at best critical services from those they are supposed to hold accountable and thus the power relations are skewed in ways that undermine accountability whether by the state or civil society. Further there are very serious internal accountability challenges within institutions of state and civil society that have progressively led to a

breakdown in trust and therefore very calculative and transactional relationships between those to hold institutions accountable and the institutions or leaders themselves.

Not to leave a completely bitter taste to this debate, in the immediately preceding section, I outlined at least five best practices that represent some hope from civil society. Whether or not these practices can deliver beyond the impulses that they appear to be is a matter that demands all of us to act. As we reflect on our own role as individuals, institutions of civil society or funders, we need to ask and seek to answer a few questions:

- What social, economic and political constraints impeded accountability by NGOs and what role can NGOs themselves and donors do to overcome them?
- How can accountability be made more mutual (have a two way order between accountability agents and institutions or leaders expected to account)? In other words how can power imbalances be redressed in accountability relations?
- How can we make accountability less expensive than what it passes out to be at present? Should we pitch our efforts at process and procedural level or just focus on results and outcomes? Is there an obvious link between the two?

To be able to honestly engage with the aforementioned questions, there is need for moral leadership that will steer above the murky and muddy waters that we find ourselves in - leadership that will provide the moral high-ground to question convention and act in exemplary ways. Uganda yearns for a kind of leadership that is different from what we have dominant in the public, private and civic market place. That leadership must be built as it will not fall from 'heaven'. It is therefore our duty to nurture that leadership and that is the challenge I leave for us all.

(Endnotes)
1 This paper was originally written and presented at a meeting by the Norwegian Agency for Development (NORAD) for its NGO Partners in Uganda

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About ActionAid Uganda

ActionAid Uganda is a national organisation registered under the laws of Uganda. It is an Affiliate member of ActionAid International, a Global Federation working in over 40 countries with poor, excluded and vulnerable people, their organisations and other players to overcome poverty and injustice.

ActionAid believes that the indignity of poverty is an injustice and a violation of rights arising from unequal power relations right from the family, to global institutions. Further, we believe that an end to poverty and injustice is possible through purposeful individual and collective actions driven by the agency of people, including the poor and often excluded.

The organisation's interventions in its Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) is guided by a twin-logic and intent of seeking to transform the condition in which people live and their position in the decision making process and power structure.

Our Values:
**Mutual Respect; Equity and Justice; Honesty and Transparency
Solidarity with the Poor, Courage of Conviction; Independence; Humility**

More on ActionAid - www.actionaid.org

Acknowledgements

POWER IN PEOPLE

ActionAid is a global movement of people working to achieve greater human rights for all and defeat poverty. We believe people in poverty have the power within them to create change for themselves, their families and communities.

ActionAid is a catalyst for that change

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