



**THE CAPACITY OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS AT
DISTRICT LEVEL FOR EDUCATION ADVOCACY IN UGANDA:
A RESEARCH REPORT**

UWEZO UGANDA

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Abbreviations

CSO	Civil society organisation
ECD	Early childhood development
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OVC	Orphans and vulnerable children
PTA	Parent-teacher association
RELI	Regional Education Learning Initiative
SMC	School management committee
UNNGOF	Uganda National NGO Forum
VAC	Violence against children

Background

For the past decade Uwezo has worked with many civil society organisations (CSOs) at district level in Uganda to carry out independent, national assessments of children's literacy and numeracy and to raise public awareness about educational issues. The usual pattern has been for one CSO in each district selected for the assessment to recruit volunteers who, after a short period of training, visit selected households to test children and obtain survey data both from households and from primary schools. After each assessment exercise findings at district as well as national level are made available to the same CSOs as well as other stakeholders. The most recent national assessment exercise (in 2018) was supported by 32 CSOs (one for each district in the sample). These CSOs had a variety of developmental purposes, including children's issues, literacy issues and faith-based agendas.

Since January 2020 Uwezo Uganda¹ has been an independent, not-for-profit, national CSO, whereas previously Uwezo was an education unit within the regional organisation, Twaweza East Africa. But engaging with policy makers and raising public awareness continues to be one of its major goals (Uwezo Uganda 2020, 16-17). This goal requires efforts to strengthen civil society within the education sector, at local as well as national levels, promoting 'mutual accountability' between the providers of basic education and the families and communities that are intended to benefit from it. As major problems persist in the delivery of education – now complicated further by the school closures of 2020 – and as anecdotal evidence about the success of local advocacy is very mixed, this is an appropriate time for Uwezo to achieve a better understanding of the challenges that collaborating CSOs face, at district level and more locally. The intention is to strengthen Uwezo's own advocacy and communications and our role in coordinating advocacy on educational issues.

Conceptual Framework

'Capacity building' has become a buzzword among organisations of many kinds that are concerned with the delivery of services. As Cairns, Harris and Young (2005) point out, the contexts in which the concept of capacity building is used range from narrow organisational changes to attempts at wider social change (p. 875). The possible activities include analysis, planning, training, resource acquisition and alliance formation. It is important for Uwezo, however, to be aware of the difficulties that can occur in an asymmetrical relationship, in which one organisation seeks to build or promote capacity building in other organisations that have fewer resources or operate at a more local level.

The problems of asymmetry are well presented by Deborah Eade (2007) with reference to relations between international NGOs based in the Global North and partners in the South whom they are trying to support. But many of the same problems could occur between an apex national NGO, such as Uwezo, and local CSOs in the same country. For example, Eade mentions the problem that an energetic advocacy by a large NGO on behalf of smaller partners could unwittingly obscure their own voices. There are also issues relating to the policy agendas that lie behind funding from outside the country, on which a national NGO (as well as international ones) may depend. Donors with a focus on human rights may see the capacity building of CSOs as useful for the monitoring of public services, but others with a more neo-liberal outlook may see them as potential substitutes for public agencies (Eade 2007, 634). One of the implications of Eade's discussion is that the capacity building effort needs to be a process of mutual learning, in which the apex organisation is self-critical and seeks to improve its own skills as well as those of the local partners.

¹ Hereafter the name, 'Uwezo', in this text will refer to Uwezo Uganda.

Along with an awareness of these issues, an apex organisation also needs a systematic approach to assessing the capacity of the CSOs that it wishes to support. It seems practical and sensible to follow the example of Austin (1994) in treating both intangible features, such as missions and strategies, and tangible resources such as staff and equipment, as aspects of capacity. The ways in which these various aspects combine to produce outcomes are varied and difficult to predict. Evidence of outcomes is also important, but it needs to be understood in its social and political context.

In a well-known essay, Allan Kaplan (2000) argues that the intangible qualities of an organisation, which are the most difficult to observe and measure, are the most critical for its capacity. In his view, a clear orientation to the environment, a sense of purpose, a vision and a strategy are pre-requisites for appropriate organisational structure, training and material resources (pp. 518-9). The argument implies that it may be difficult or impossible for a survey (as opposed to qualitative research) to capture some of the most important aspects of capacity. Kaplan also underlines the importance of understanding the specific context in which any intervention is attempted. These considerations have influenced our choice of a mixed-method approach for this study.

Despite their varied characteristics, CSOs in Uganda face some common external problems in the national and international context. Over the past two decades many developing countries have experienced conflicting currents affecting civil society. On the one hand, civil society organisations (CSOs) have increased in number and become more formalised. On the other hand, political authoritarianism has increased in many countries, including Uganda, with restrictions of political choice, state violence against critics and both formal and informal constraints on the freedoms of expression and association (Lynch and Crawford 2011). The global financial crisis of 2008-9 may have contributed to this second trend indirectly, by reducing foreign aid and investment. But there are also risks that both international donors and national NGOs, in seeking to support development objectives, may in the process seem to endorse authoritarian practices (Cheesman and Fisher 2020, 78-9). Authoritarian and hybrid regimes may favour the service delivery role of CSOs while discouraging their advocacy role and may seek to re-define 'civility' in ways that discourage criticism (Hammett and Jackson, 2017).

In the case of Uganda, NGOs are registered and monitored by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, rather than a development ministry (Nkwabitswe 2019). As the Uganda National NGO Forum (UNNGOF) points out, they have faced intimidation by district administrators and security officials (UNNGOF 2018, 24-25). Most NGOs are not opposed in principle to regulation, which can help to prevent fraud, but there are questions about whether the NGO Act of 2016 and the NGO Regulations of 2017 have made registration too difficult in practice for small organisations (UNNGOF 2018, 12-13). Tensions between civil society and government bodies are common, partly because of constraints on parliamentary and electoral opposition to the ruling party (Kalinaki 2014, 155-312). These constraints may leave NGOs in the 'front line' as monitors and critics of governance and of public service provision, increasing the risks they encounter. On the other hand, the NGO Monitoring Committees at district level could be useful for diffusing tensions. The risks, too, may be fewer for NGOs or CSOs concerned with education and social welfare than for those concerned directly with governance and civil rights.

Research Questions

The major concerns of the research are with the ability of the CSOs to take action on educational issues and with the usefulness of collaboration, especially with Uwezo, for the CSOs. The questions guiding the research therefore fall into two clusters, as shown.

Questions about effectiveness:

1. How far do the CSOs have coherent missions, a broad base of support and stable funding?
2. How successful are they in raising concerns about education with the district education authorities and with schools?
3. What kind of concerns have they raised about education?
4. How far are they able to influence the policies and practices of the district education authorities and of schools?
5. What factors influence their ability to raise concerns and to influence policies and practices (as specified in Questions 2 and 4)?

Questions about collaboration:

6. How far do these CSOs collaborate with other organisations?
7. Do they find the UWEZO national assessments useful for advocacy at district level? How useful were (a) the 2018 findings and (b) the volunteers they provided in 2018?
8. How can Uwezo improve its collaboration with these CSOs?

Research Approach and Methods of Data Collection

The study uses a mixed-method approach to research, with both qualitative and quantitative elements. In the first phase of data collection, using semi-structured interviews, was conducted by telephone or Zoom with senior representatives of eight district-level CSOs. The second phase was a survey of all 32 CSOs, for which a questionnaire was distributed and returned by email. The interview findings were used to construct the questionnaire, in such a way as to obtain quantitative measures of key CSO characteristics and respondent opinion, as well as a few open-ended responses. Both the interview schedule and the questionnaire are attached in Annexes I and II.

The eight CSOs for the interview stage were selected in a purposive manner from the 32 which had taken part in the 2018 national assessment. They consist of two cases drawn from each of Uganda's statistical regions (Central, Eastern, Northern and Western). They are varied in their mission, services provided, membership structure and size. Five include coordination of other CSOs in their mission, but others are relatively small entities that manage a school or early childhood development (ECD) centre. Seven focus on children's issues or include them in their mission, but most of them focus on other issues as well.

A pilot interview was conducted with one CSO in a different district which had taken part in the 2015 assessment, but not that of 2018. This resulted in minor amendments to the interview schedule. In all cases the interviewers took notes and also obtained the agreement of the informant to make a sound recording. It was explained that the identities of the informants and of their organisations would not be used in the reporting. The interviews were completed by two members of the research team (Uwezo staff) in the period, 20th to 26th August 2020.

The questionnaire was constructed by the lead researcher, reviewed by the research team and then distributed by email in the week of 21st-25th September 2020. Before they were distributed, the CSO representatives (normally the senior executives) were contacted by telephone and asked to assist. The return of the questionnaire took about two weeks and the Uwezo staff followed up by telephone where necessary. These procedures resulted in a return of 30 questionnaires from the 32 CSOs contacted (a 94% response rate). Because the sample is relatively small, the eight CSOs that provided interviews were asked to take part in the survey as well.

The researchers used the interview data, where appropriate, to construct binary or multiple-choice questionnaire items that present common alternatives. For example, a checklist for possible areas of focus of the CSOs distinguishes between advocacy and provision of services. Another checklist identifies educational issues on which the CSOs often take action. Perceived success in advocacy at the district level is rated for six items on a Likert scale. The questionnaire also gives a few opportunities for additional comments.

The use of distance methods for the data collection enabled Uwezo to carry out this study in a period when restrictions on travel and face-to-face meetings were expected because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The distance methods also implied very modest expenses and some flexibility in the timing of the research.

Analytical Objectives

The analysis draws on the survey data and makes selective use of the data from the in-depth interviews to interpret and elaborate on the main findings. The main survey outputs are the following:

- a. An overview of the missions of the CSOs, distinguishing especially between service provision, advocacy and coordination.
- b. The variations among the CSOs in size, range of funding sources and membership structure.
- c. A ranking of the educational issues on which the CSOs tend to focus.
- d. A measure of the satisfaction of CSOs with the impact of their own advocacy on educational issues, within the district and factors that may account for differences on this measure.
- e. A summary of perceptions about collaboration with other CSOs.
- f. A summary of perceptions about the contributions of the Uwezo 2018 Assessment to advocacy in the district.
- g. Types of activity in which further collaboration with Uwezo is desired.

h. CSO priorities for the training of staff.

Findings

The sample consists of representatives of CSOs that have been collaborating with Uwezo in recent years and it is not necessarily representative of district-level CSOs in general. To some extent, Uwezo has chosen to work with these CSOs because of their apparent success and potential. This should be kept in mind as the findings are interpreted. The data also have the limitation that they involve an element of self-evaluation by the leaders of CSOs, without the benefit of external evaluation. Informants may have varied in the optimism or sober realism with which they described the achievements of the CSOs and the problems they face. An important merit of the research, however, is that we have obtained insiders' perceptions and priorities in their varied local situations.

Missions, size, funding and structure of the CSOs

CSOs vary in the emphasis they place on advocacy vis-à-vis the provision of services and there has been a historical shift towards advocacy. All but one of the 30 survey informants considered advocacy to be one of the main functions of their CSO and in 28 cases this advocacy was on a range of social issues, including educational ones. The questionnaire distinguishes between advocacy on social issues and advocacy on educational issues only, but these categories are merged in the analysis.

Most of the CSOs (24) provided welfare services to families and communities. Of the ten which managed a school or early childhood development (ECD) centre, all but one provided welfare services as well. An impression gained from the interviews, however, is that small CSOs managing a school or centre have less opportunity for advocacy, even if it is stated as part of their mission.

Another important function is coordination of other CSOs, reported in 13 cases. Some of these were relatively large CSOs with an explicit focus on a sub-region within Uganda (such as Lango or Teso) and working in many districts. They included faith-based organisations with support from national sources.

Table 1 provides a classification of the CSOs according to their combinations of the four functions of advocacy, welfare service, school management and coordination of CSOs. They fall into an 'advocacy only' group and seven different combinations.

Table 1. Numbers of CSOs by Major Functions

Functions	Number (percentage)
Advocacy only	4 (13%)
Advocacy and welfare service	8 (27%)
Advocacy and school management	1 (3%)
Welfare service and school management	1 (3%)
Advocacy and coordination of CSOs	1 (3%)
Advocacy, welfare service and school management	3 (10%)
Advocacy, welfare service and coordination of CSOs	6 (20%)
Advocacy, welfare service, school management & coordination of CSOs	5 (17%)
Total	30 (100%)

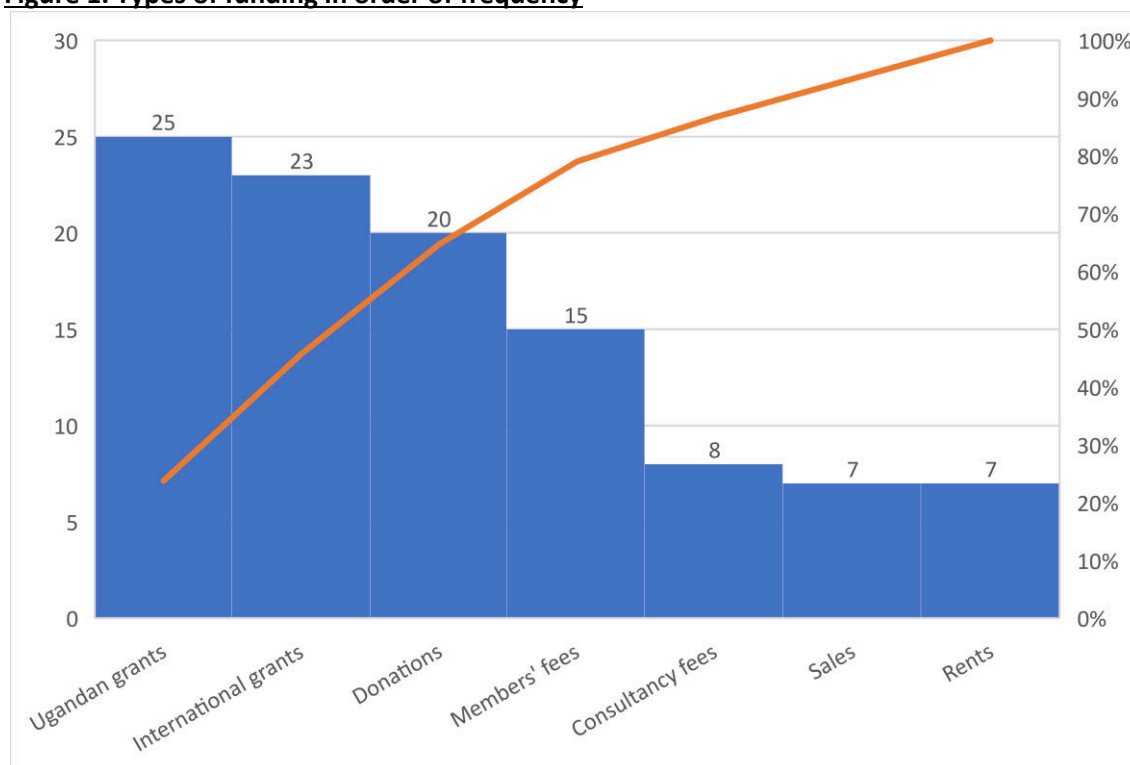
Two measures of the size of CSOs were obtained: the number of districts in which they worked and the number of full-time employees. In both cases the distributions are positively skewed, with a few relatively large organisations. Table 2 shows the numbers according to arbitrary categories of size, as well as the basic statistics.

Table 2. Numbers of CSOs by size categories

Number of districts covered:		Number of full-time employees:	
Category	No. CSOs	Category	No. CSOs
1 only	11	0-10	15
2-10	17	11-20	11
11 or more	2	21 or more	4
Total	30	Total	30
Basic statistics:		Basic statistics:	
Mean	4.17	Mean	12.33
Standard dev.	3.82	Standard dev.	9.40

Financially, the CSOs depended mainly on grants and donations. International grants were almost as frequent as grants from within Uganda. Some managed to supplement their income through income-generating activities such as consultancy, sales of goods and produce, or renting of property. The Pareto chart in Figure 1 shows types of source of funding according to frequency of occurrence in a total of 105 responses. On average, therefore, 3.5 types of source were recorded.

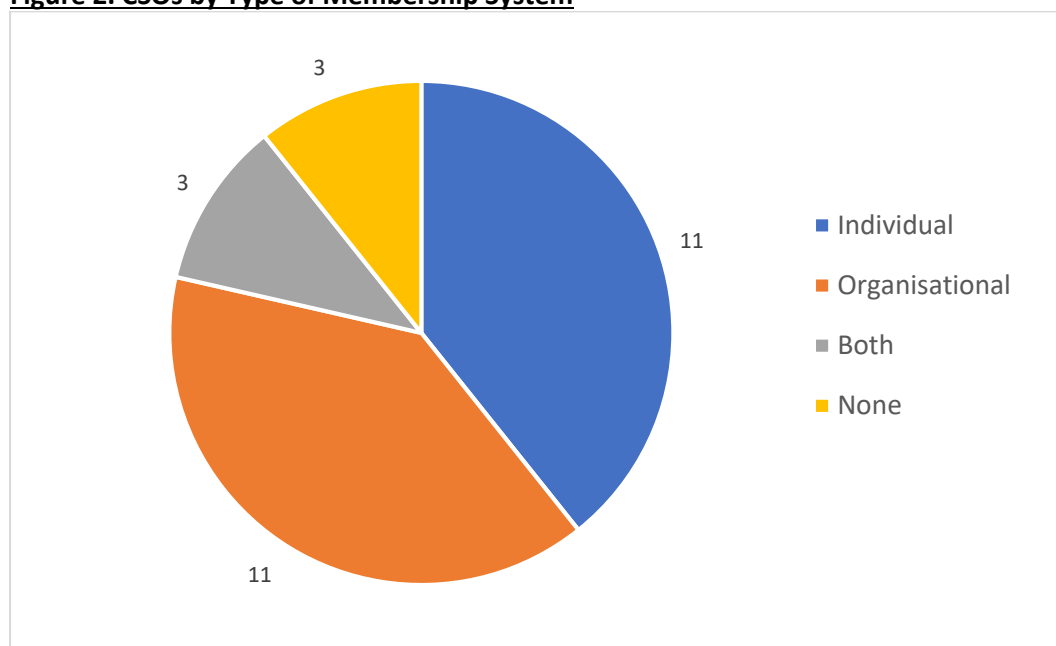
Figure 1. Types of funding in order of frequency



The governance structures of the CSOs were quite varied, but they tended to have a managing board or committee, as well as a secretariat with some full-time staff members. Some also had regular volunteer workers. Most of the CSOs had either an individual or an organisational membership

system. The chart in Figure 2 shows the distribution: a few had both types of membership or no membership.

Figure 2. CSOs by Type of Membership System



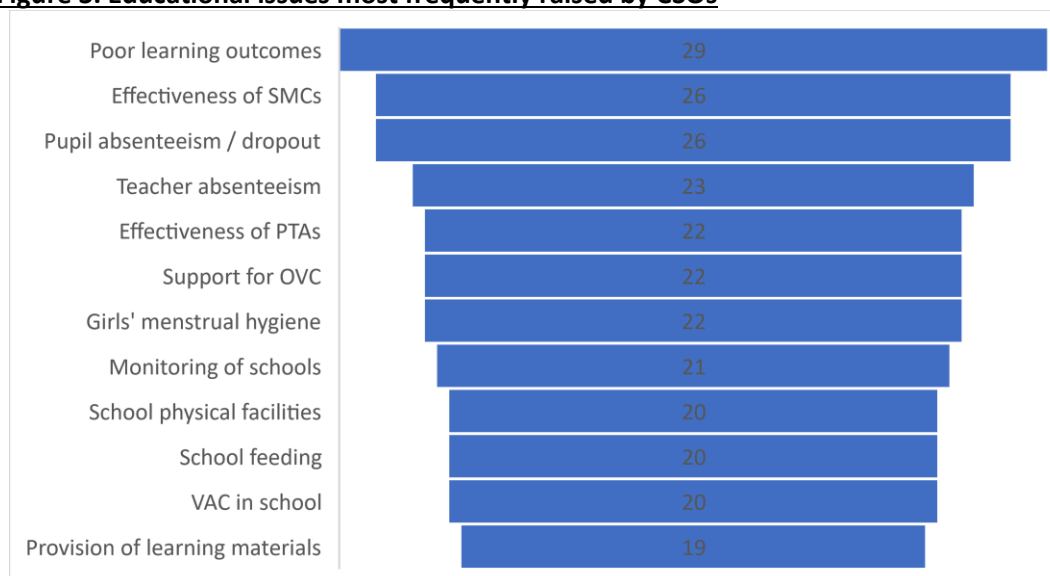
Educational issues raised by the CSOs

The in-depth interviews enabled us to assemble a list of 18 educational issues or concerns that were mentioned or are potentially of interest to the CSOs. In the questionnaire, informants were asked to record a tick against all those on which their CSO had taken action within the past three years. An opportunity was also given for any additional issues to be mentioned. This exercise helps to show how far Uwezo’s current priorities are shared by partner organisations. Figure 3 shows 12 issues that attracted 19 or more responses in the survey. These issues relate mainly to primary education, but some of them cut across the levels of education.

After ‘provision of learning materials’, there is a natural break in the data: other issues attracted 13 or fewer responses. These ‘lower priority’ issues include provision for disabilities and other special needs, ‘other teacher misconduct’ and molestation of female pupils.

Of the 12 ‘priority’ issues, we in Uwezo have obviously taken poor learning outcomes as our main focus but have also given attention in our reports and planning to pupil and teacher absenteeism, school physical facilities, provision of learning materials and the monitoring of schools in general. Through our membership of the Regional Education Learning Initiative (RELI), we have also given some attention to school management issues involving SMCs and PTAs. There is much consistency of focus between Uwezo and the CSOs studied. There are other areas, however, in which Uwezo may need to take a lead in raising consciousness, such as access to early childhood education, support for home-based learning, school hygiene and health issues, and the need for more remedial teaching and less grade repetition in primary schools.

Figure 3. Educational issues most frequently raised by CSOs



Abbreviations used: OVC = Orphans and vulnerable children; PTA = Parent-teacher association; SMC = School management committee; VAC = Violence against children.

Interaction with district authorities

In the survey, the statement, 'My CSO is able to interact with the District Education Officer on educational issues', received an average response of 'Strongly agree' on the five-point Likert scale, while the statement, 'The district education authorities have taken action as a result of advocacy and reports by my CSO, received an average response of 'Agree' (see Annex II, Items 7a and 7b). Comments in the interviews show that some CSOs had regular direct contact with the district authorities, while some of the smaller ones made their concerns known through intermediaries. In these interactions, the district's NGO Monitoring Committee, if it was operational, was not necessarily the most useful channel, as it tended to include only one NGO representative. On the matter of action being taken, informants tended to agree that (in some cases) the district authorities did not have the funds to make the desired improvements (Item 7c).

Interaction with schools

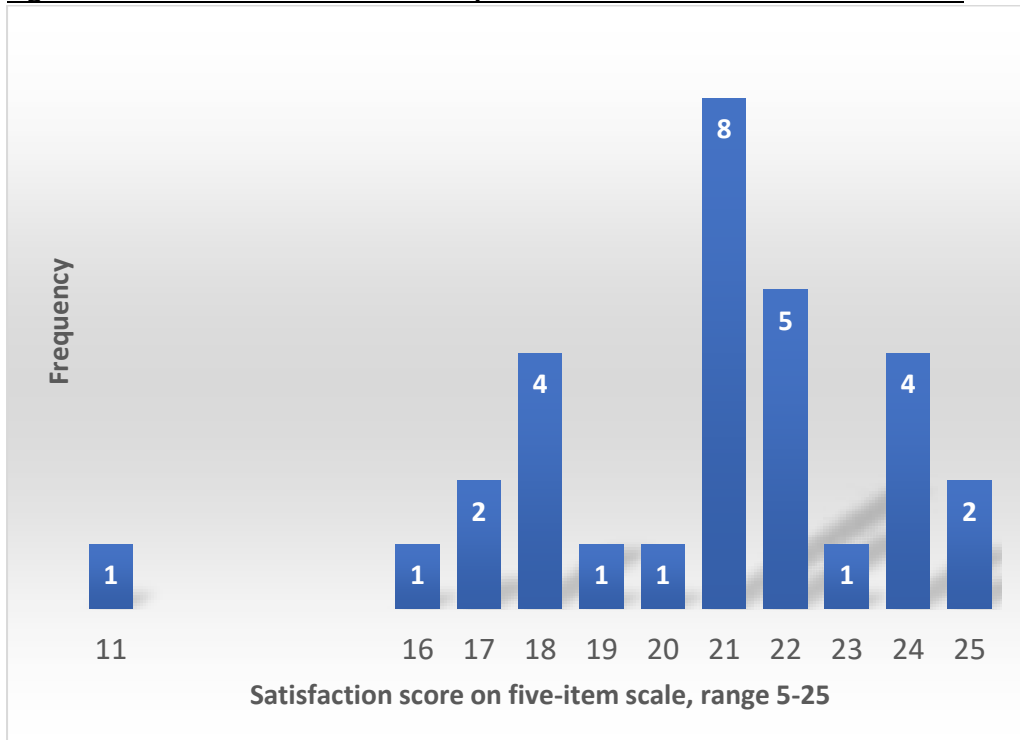
The survey findings show that CSOs in general were able to interact with head teachers, SMCs and PTAs: 'Agree' was the average response to Items 7d and 7e on this issue. The interviews showed that some of the larger CSOs had extensive systems of monitoring in place: one had 'Citizen Accessibility Platforms' and another had school-based monitors. We infer that these monitors were SMC members in schools that had been founded by the church to which the CSO was linked. CSOs that managed schools were primarily concerned with making these exemplary in their practices. On the question of whether their monitoring of schools had resulted in improvements (Item 7f), the survey informants were divided: 9 agreed, 12 disagreed and 9 gave a 'neutral' response.

The summary measure of impact satisfaction

From the Likert-scale data on interaction with the district authorities and schools, we constructed a summary score for the satisfaction of informants with their own CSO's impact on educational issues.

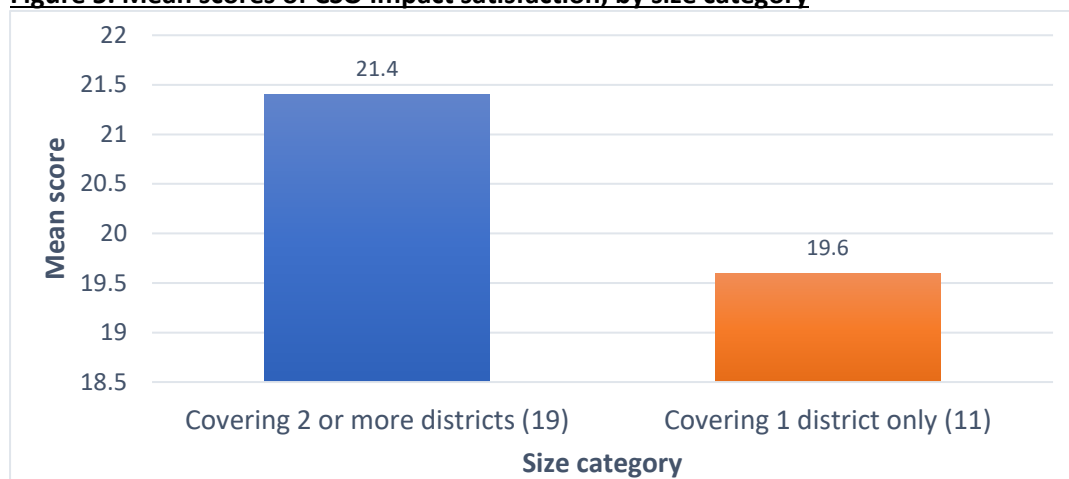
Item 7c, on the funding available to district authorities, had to be excluded, but the responses to the other five items in Question 7 of the questionnaire are sufficiently consistent. For Items 7a, 7b, 7d and 7e, scores of 5 to 1 are allocated (where 5 = Strongly agree) and for Item 7f, which had a negative meaning, reverse scoring is used (1 = Strongly agree). On this basis, the sum of each CSO's scores on the five items is used as a summary measure of impact satisfaction. The value of Cronbach's Alpha for the item scores is 0.73, a sufficient level of internal consistency. Figure 4 shows the distribution of the measure.

Figure 4. CSO satisfaction with own impact in the district on educational issues



The level of impact satisfaction was generally quite high, with a mean of 20.63 and a standard deviation of 3.06. We hypothesised that the variation might be related in part to the size of CSOs, on the assumption that smaller ones have fewer resources for advocacy. We therefore compared the mean scores on the measure for CSOs that worked in one district only and those that worked in multiple districts: see Figure 5. The difference is in the expected direction, but, for this small sample, not quite statistically significant ($t = 1.67$). We may infer that size is a minor factor.

Figure 5. Mean scores of CSO impact satisfaction, by size category



We also considered the possibility of regional differences in impact satisfaction. But the mean scores are not significantly different in Uganda’s four statistical regions, as Table 3 shows. When sub-regions are considered, the mean is relatively high for Bukedi at 23.0 (2 CSOs) and relatively low for Bunyoro at 18.0 (1 CSO).

Table 3. Basic statistics of CSO impact satisfaction scores, by region of Uganda

Region	Mean	Standard deviation	N
Central	20.5	2.95	6
Eastern	21.2	2.54	9
Northern	20.0	2.30	9
Western	20.6	5.06	6
Total	20.6	3.06	30

Patterns of collaboration

Attitudes to collaboration with other organisations were generally very positive. Twenty-eight of the 30 survey informants confirmed that their CSO collaborated with other CSOs in the district for advocacy purposes and 29 agreed that collaboration made their advocacy more effective. As we mentioned above, 13 of the CSOs had a coordinating role in regional advocacy networks. A further 11 informants confirmed that their CSO was a member of such a network. (The reference here is to regions within Uganda.)

From the perspective of Uwezo, these regional networks are potentially useful as vehicles both for the communication of ideas and findings and for obtaining local knowledge, in different parts of Uganda. In these processes, the collaboration of the coordinating CSOs could be an important asset.

Perceived effects of the 2018 Uwezo Assessment

Uwezo's national basic assessments are of particular importance for education advocacy: we therefore probed CSO opinion about the usefulness of the most recent (2018) assessment, which was generally within recent memory for informants. The responses have to be interpreted with care, as they reflect both on Uwezo's efforts at dissemination and on the capacity of the CSOs to absorb and use the findings and the volunteers.

In responding to Question 9 of the questionnaire, most informants (19) disagreed with the idea that the finding of the 2108 Assessment had taught them nothing new. All but one (29) agreed that the findings had been useful for advocacy within the district and most of these (16) strongly agreed. Most informants (25) indicated that they had made more use of the district findings than of the national ones: a result which suggests that in general district findings were effectively disseminated.

The survey findings about the use of volunteers (from Items 9c and 9d) are rather inconsistent. A total of 23 informants confirmed that the volunteers they provided to Uwezo in 2018 had been useful for their own work since then. Yet many of the same informants indicated that they had not had the funds to make further use of the volunteers (a total of 25). Possibly this implies that many CSOs had not been able to use the volunteers systematically because of an inability to pay their expenses, but that some volunteers had continued to be useful as individuals. The interviews showed that in a number of cases both the findings and the volunteers had helped to increase the visibility of the CSOs.

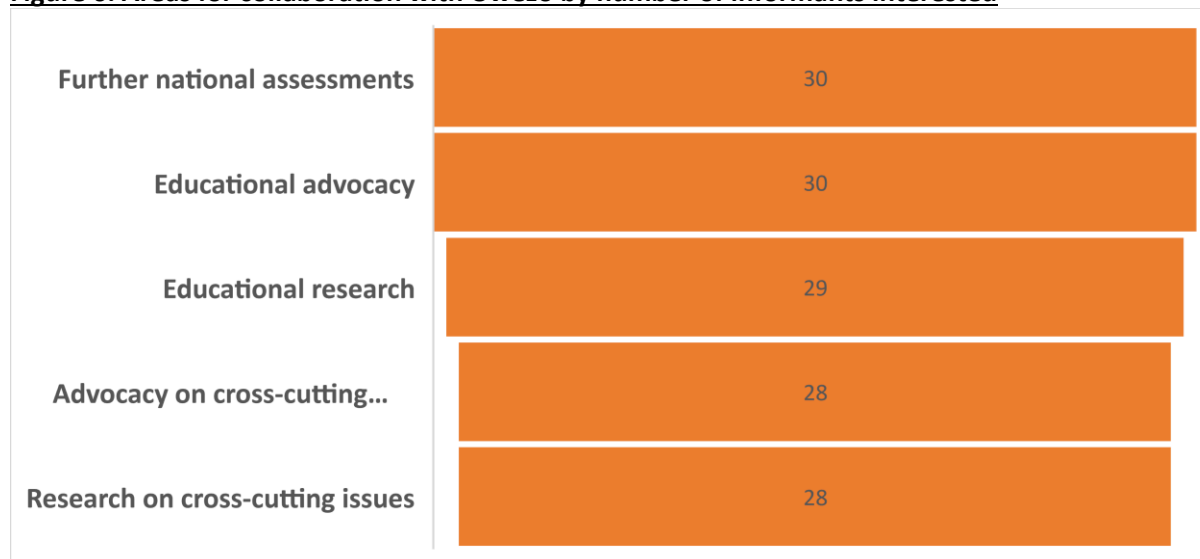
These findings are in general reassuring for Uwezo. But the question of how to keep volunteers active on educational issues and maximise their value deserves more attention.

Views about future collaboration with Uwezo

In the survey we invited informants to express interest in collaborating with Uwezo in future national assessments and in research and advocacy in the district. For research and advocacy, a distinction was made between education alone and social issues that are 'cross-cutting', with examples of the latter mentioned (child welfare, family poverty and so on).

As Figure 6 shows, most informants showed interest in all of the five areas suggested in the questionnaire (Question 10). They are shown in order of popularity.

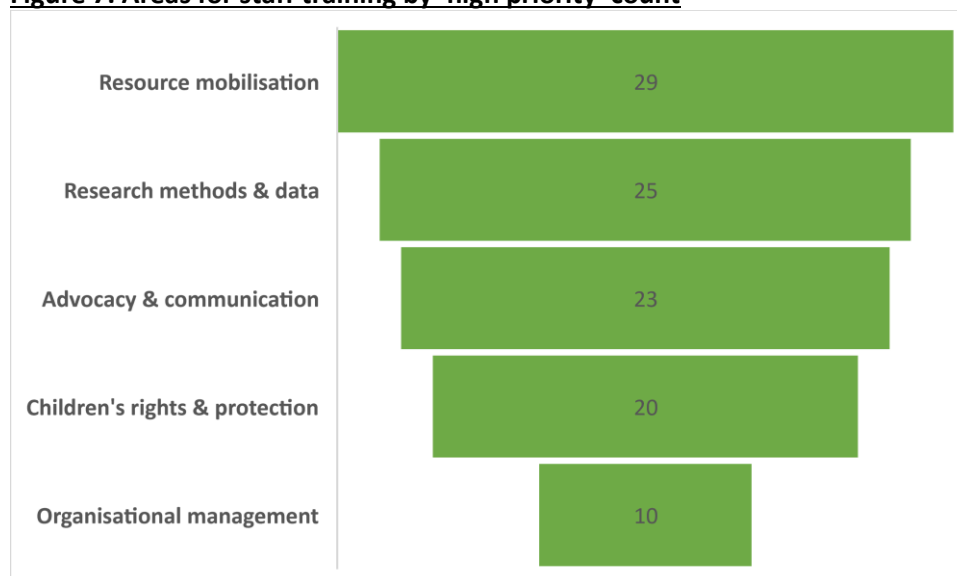
Figure 6. Areas for collaboration with Uwezo by number of informants interested



In the survey we also took the opportunity to ask for indications of the training needs of CSOP staff. Question 11 of the questionnaire mentions six possible areas for training and asks informants to designate each as 'high priority', 'low priority' or 'not needed'. Figure 7 lists the six areas in the order of frequency of 'high priority' responses.

The only area to attract many 'low priority' designations (18 cases) was organisational management and this was said not to be needed in two cases. The other areas were given 'low priority' in all cases where they were not high priority'. Uwezo will need to consider how far it can help with training needs and, as a practical follow-up, informants were asked whether their staff members would be able to attend training online. Twenty-seven of the 30 confirmed that this would be possible.

Figure 7. Areas for staff training by 'high priority' count



Conclusion

This study provides a brief but meaningful appraisal of the civil society role at the district level in Uganda's delivery of basic education. Although CSO representatives were likely to describe the CSO influence in a positive manner, the extent of this influence seems impressive. In some areas, CSOs seem to be providing a sort of 'citizen inspectorate' for primary schools, supplementing the work of official inspectors and advisers. Nevertheless, the influence of individual CSOs is likely to be constrained by their specific missions, religious denominations in some cases, and their direct management of certain schools and centres.

The CSOs' appraisal of their own impact shows an encouraging degree of access to the district education authorities and to schools. On the effectiveness of the interaction, the evidence is more mixed. Generally, they were able to advocate improvements in delivery of education or in the management of schools, but some of the desired changes proved elusive.

Collaboration among CSOs is seen as very important for effective advocacy and one of the reasons for this may be that the larger CSOs, especially those coordinating networks, have more regular access to the district authorities. The specific collaboration with Uwezo, as a national CSO that interacts with the central government and with international organisations, is useful for the CSOs in raising their profiles, as well as providing them with relevant findings from assessment and research and suggesting issues for campaigning. These factors seem to account for the very positive attitudes of informants to a continued and expanded collaboration with Uwezo

The study provides evidence of a consensus (largely shared by Uwezo itself) that various specific educational issues deserve attention. There are also a few issues on which Uwezo could raise consciousness among the CSO, as we have mentioned. Uwezo could also look for opportunities to assist partner CSOs in the types of staff training to which they attach priority.

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Annex I: Interview Schedule for Representatives of District Level CSOs

Name of CSO:

Name of interviewer:

District:

Date of interview:

Name of informant:

[The interview has been arranged in advance by telephone or email and it has been explained that the personal identities of informants will not be used in the reporting. Organisations would only be named with permission in the reporting.]

Introductory statement

Good Morning / Afternoon. Thank you for agreeing to take part in this interview. My name is and I am a member of staff of Uwezo Uganda, based in Kampala. We are conducting this small research project so as to be better informed about the civil society organisations that work with us at district level, especially in our assessments. By learning from you, we hope to improve the way we collaborate with you. This interview will probably take 30-40 minutes. May we begin?

Questions

1. Please tell me a little about [name of the organisation]. When was it established and for what purposes? [Prompt as necessary to find out whether the CSO provides any services as well as doing advocacy.]
2. How does the work of your organisation relate to education? [Prompt if necessary to see how it relates to primary education.]
3. What educational problems do you see as being important for the advocacy that you do and [if applicable] the services you provide? [Prompt if necessary on issues such as children's access to education, conditions in schools and the results of education.]
4. What kinds of advocacy do you engage in, within the district? [Specify the name of the district: the one in which they have helped with Uwezo assessments.]
5. How is your organisation managed? Please describe the structure.
6. Does the organisation have a formal membership? [If so] Are the members individuals or groups and how does one become a member?
7. How are your activities funded? How continuous is the funding?
8. Have you and other representatives been able to discuss educational problems with the district educational authorities? [If so] Have the discussions produced the results that you hoped for?

9. Has your organisation been able to influence the management and work of particular schools in the district? How do you interact with schools? [Prompt as necessary on whether they are represented on SMCs and/or work through PTAs.
10. Does your district have an NGO Monitoring Committee? [If so] Is your organisation represented in, and active in, the Committee?
11. Does your organisation collaborate with other NGOs or CSOs (other than Uwezo) on educational issues within the district? [If so] How effective is the collaboration?
12. Has the link with Uwezo been helpful for your advocacy and research? (Please refer especially to the past five years.)
13. Have you been able to use the results of the 2018 Assessment for your advocacy within the district? And those of previous assessments [if applicable]? [If necessary probe for more details on how they were used.]
14. Your organisation provided volunteers for Uwezo's national assessment in 2018. Has that experience of the assessment process been helpful for your work?
15. Are there any ways in which you would like the link with Uwezo to be improved or developed?
16. Do your staff have specific training needs that Uwezo may be able to help with? [If so] During the restrictions due to Covid-19, would they be able to take part in online training?
17. After we have completed these interviews, we plan to construct a questionnaire on the issues and send it to CSO representatives. Are you willing to receive and complete the questionnaire on behalf of your organisation? [If so] Please provide an alternative email address at which you can be contacted.

Annex II: Questionnaire for Representatives of District Level CSOs

CSO details (These will not be used in reporting.)

Name of your organisation:

District in which you assisted Uwezo in the 2018 Assessment:

Section A. Organisational Characteristics

1. What are the main functions of your CSO? Please put X in the boxes on the right to show ALL items that apply.

a. Provision of welfare services to families and communities.	
b. Managing schools and/or early childhood (ECD) centres.	
c. Advocacy on various social issues, some being educational.	
d. Advocacy on educational issues only.	
e. Coordination of a group of CSOs.	
f. Other (specify)	

2. In how many districts does your CSO work? (Put the number in the box.)

3. How many full-time employees does your CSO have? (Put the number in the box.)

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4. What types of source of funding does the CSO have? Please put X in the boxes to show ALL items that apply.

a. Grants from within Uganda.	
b. Grants from outside Uganda.	
c. Consultancy fees.	
d. Membership' fees.	
e. Donations.	
f. Sales of goods or produce.	
g. Provision of services	
h. Renting of property.	
i. Other (specify)	

5. What types of membership does the CSO have? Please put X in the boxes to show ALL that apply.

a. Individual membership.	
b. Organisational membership.	
c. No membership.	

Section B. Interaction on Educational Issues

6. The list below represents educational issues or concerns on which your CSO may have reported or intervened recently (within the past three years). Please put X in the boxes to show ALL items on which it has reported or intervened.

a. School physical facilities.	
b. School feeding.	
c. Effectiveness of school management committees (SMCs).	
d. Effectiveness of parent-teacher associations (PTAs).	
e. School inspections / monitoring of schools.	
f. Poor learning outcomes.	
g. Disparities between schools.	
h. Teacher appointments and transfers.	
i. Teacher absenteeism.	
j. Other teacher misconduct.	
k. Pupil absenteeism and / or dropout.	
l. Provision of learning materials.	
m. Provision for children with disabilities and other special needs.	
n. Support for the education of orphans and other vulnerable children.	
o. Violence against children in school.	
p. Molestation of female pupils.	
q. Girls' menstrual hygiene.	
r. Bursaries / costs of schooling to families.	
s. Other (specify)	

7. Please indicate how far you agree with each of the following statements by putting X in the box for ONE alternative in the columns on the right, where SA = Strongly agree, A = Agree, N = Neutral, D = Disagree and SD = Strongly disagree.

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
a. My CSO is able to interact with the District Education Officer on educational issues.					
b. The district education authorities have taken action as a result of advocacy or reports by our CSO.					
c. Insufficient funding has prevented the district authorities from making the educational improvements that we have requested.					
d. Our CSO has been able to interact with head teachers and school management committees (SMCs) on important issues.					
e. Our CSO has been able to interact with parent-teacher associations (PTAs) on important issues.					
f. Our attempts to influence head teachers, SMCs and/or PTAs have not resulted in the improvements we wanted.					

Section C. Collaboration with Other Organisations

8. Please put X in the boxes to show whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about collaboration by your CSO.

Statement	Agree	Disagree
a. Our CSO collaborates with other CSOs in the district for advocacy purposes.		
b. Collaboration with other CSOs makes our advocacy more effective.		
c. We are a member of a regional advocacy network.		
d. We coordinate a regional advocacy network.		
e. We are members of a district advocacy network		
f. We coordinate a district advocacy network		

9. We wish to ask about your experience with Uwezo. Please indicate how far you agree with each of the following statements by putting X in the box for ONE alternative in the columns on the right, where SA = Strongly agree, A = Agree, N = Neutral, D = Disagree and SD = Strongly disagree.

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
a. The findings of the Uwezo assessment of children's literacy and numeracy in 2018 and other years only told us things that we already knew.					
b. The findings of the Uwezo assessment of children's literacy and numeracy in 2018 and other years have been useful for our advocacy in the district.					
c. Our volunteers who assisted in the 2018 Uwezo assessment have continued to be useful for our work.					
d. For financial reasons we have not made further use of the volunteers that we provided for the 2018 Uwezo assessment.					
e. From the 2018 Uwezo assessment, we have made more use of the district findings than of the national findings.					

Section D. Views on Further Collaboration with Uwezo Uganda

10. Possible areas of collaboration are listed below. In each case, please put X in the box under 'Yes' or 'No' to show whether you think that collaboration between your CSO and Uwezo Uganda in that area would be useful in the future. (N.B. We cannot make any promise that such collaboration will be possible, but we would like to know your views.)

Area	Yes	No
a. Further national assessments of children's literacy and numeracy.		
b. Educational research in the district.		
c. Research on cross-cutting social issues* in the district.		
d. Educational advocacy in the district.		
e. Advocacy on cross-cutting social issues in the district.		

*Examples of cross-cutting social issues are child welfare, family poverty, disability, gender issues, livelihoods improvement and youth issues.

11. Please indicate the areas of further training for your staff to which you give priority by putting X in the box for 'high priority', 'low priority' or 'not needed' for each area listed. (Again, we cannot promise that Uwezo could assist.)

Area for training	High priority	Low priority	Not needed
a. Advocacy / communication methods			
b. Organisational management			
c. Research methods & data management			
d. Resource mobilisation			
e. Rights & protection of children			
f. Training on adopting online training			
g. Other (specify) ...			

12. Would your staff members be able to attend training online? (Put X in the box for 'yes' or 'no'.)

Yes	No

Thank you for your time. We wish you success in your work.

If you have any additional comments, please use the space below.