

ORISA JOSEPH (2010-MO83-10043)

Effects of Poor Communication on Development in Local Governments: A Case Study of Kotido District Local Government.

Applying the single case study method to investigate the effects of poor communication to development in Local Governments will help improve the performance of Local Government Communications. The purpose of this case study was to gain a deeper understanding of how poor communication impacts on development in the local government context.

The results revealed the lack of adequate political and administrative support for communication posing a number of constraints to strategic and effective communication leading to underdevelopment. There was also inadequacy of communication staff as the district has only one staff to man communication in the district headquarters and in all the six sub-counties. He quadruples as the Information Officer, Public Relations Officer, Cameraman, and Reporter for the Local Government, Civil Society and Private Sector as the entire district has no single Journalist resident in the area due to its remoteness and underdevelopment. The study also found out that Kotido district Local Government lacks an official Telephone Number and E-mail address to receive communication and feedback from communities and other stakeholders within and outside Uganda. The district's website, www.Kotido.go.ug is inactive and has never been updated for the last five years. Shockingly it still bears names of staff that either left the service long ago or even died as active staff. The study further revealed that the main medium of communication was through writing of letters because the district has no single Radio Station and yet 88% of the people there are illiterate. The study found that effects of poor communication led to delay in service delivery, mistrust amongst Local Government staff, corruption, suspicions and confusion. Negative media reports depicting Karamoja and Kotido as barbaric and backward has made the district fail to attract staff especially those in the health sector. The study found out that Kotido has only One Medical Doctor qualified as a gynaecologist who doubles as the District Director of Health services to cater for over 200,000 people. There is urgent need to address the above communication issues if development is to be realised in Kotido. This study also revealed interesting implications for further study, including exploring public relations theory related to the need to develop a communication strategy for Local Governments.

Key Words: Poor Communication, Development, Local Governments, Kotido District