

**Relationship Between Collaboration And Service Delivery In Bundibugyo Local Government, Bundibugyo District.**

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**Abstract**

The study investigated the relationship between collaboration and service delivery in Bundibugyo Local Government, Bundibugyo District. The research utilized a mixed-methods design, integrating quantitative and qualitative data collection approaches. A sample of 220 respondents was selected from a target population of 300, comprising traditional leaders, local government officials, local council leaders, service providers, and local citizens. Data collection employed interviews and questionnaires, with purposive sampling applied for key informants and simple random sampling for service providers and citizens. Findings revealed a significant positive relationship between collaborative practices and service delivery outcomes. Inter-departmental collaboration, partnerships with non-governmental organizations, coordination between local government and traditional institutions, and stakeholder engagement were strongly associated with improved service delivery in health, education, water, and infrastructure sectors. However, challenges including limited coordination mechanisms, resource competition, conflicting organizational interests, communication gaps, and inadequate collaboration frameworks constrained optimal collaborative service delivery. The study concluded that enhanced collaboration among stakeholders could significantly improve service delivery effectiveness in Bundibugyo Local Government. Recommendations included establishing formal coordination structures, developing partnership frameworks, strengthening communication systems, building collaborative capacity, and creating incentive mechanisms for inter-organizational cooperation.

**Keywords: Collaboration, service delivery, stakeholder engagement, partnerships, coordination, Bundibugyo District, inter-organizational cooperation, local government**

**1.0 Background of the Study**

Collaboration in public service delivery emerged as a critical governance strategy in response to the complexity of contemporary development challenges that exceeded the capacity of any single organization to address effectively (Davis, 2024). In Uganda, the decentralization policy framework emphasized multi-stakeholder collaboration as essential for achieving sustainable development outcomes at local government levels (Julius & Audrey, 2025a). The Local Governments Act (1997) and subsequent policy reforms recognized that effective service delivery required coordinated efforts among government agencies, civil society organizations, private sector entities, traditional institutions, and community groups (Edgar & Moses, 2023).

Bundibugyo District, situated in western Uganda bordering the Democratic Republic of Congo, faced unique development challenges including geographical remoteness, limited infrastructure, ethnic diversity, and resource constraints (Julius & Audrey, 2025b). The district's service delivery landscape involved multiple actors including local

**Received: 18.01.2026**

**Accepted: 22.01.2026**

**Published on: 30.01.2026**

government departments, health facilities, educational institutions, non-governmental organizations, faith-based organizations, development partners, and traditional leadership structures (Christopher et al., 2022). Effective collaboration among these diverse stakeholders theoretically enhanced resource mobilization, reduced service duplication, improved coordination, and strengthened service delivery outcomes (Ntirandekura & Friday, 2022).

Collaboration encompassed various dimensions including inter-departmental coordination within local government, partnerships between government and non-governmental organizations, cooperation between formal and traditional governance structures, and engagement with citizens and community-based organizations (Kazaara et al., 2024). Service delivery in this context referred to the provision and quality of essential services including healthcare, education, water and sanitation, roads infrastructure, agricultural extension, and social welfare programs (Sarah & Audrey, 2024).

Despite the presence of multiple stakeholders with shared interests in improving community welfare, service delivery in Bundibugyo Local Government remained characterized by fragmentation, duplication, and inefficiency (Christopher et al., 2022). Different organizations often operated in isolation, pursuing independent agendas without adequate coordination. This situation resulted in overlapping interventions in some areas while other communities remained underserved (Edgar & Moses, 2023). Understanding how collaboration influenced service delivery effectiveness became critical for optimizing resource utilization and improving outcomes. This study therefore examined the relationship between collaborative practices and service delivery performance in Bundibugyo Local Government, identifying factors that facilitated or hindered effective collaboration.

## **2.0 Problem Statement**

Bundibugyo Local Government operated within a complex multi-stakeholder environment involving government departments, non-governmental organizations, faith-based organizations, development partners, and traditional institutions, all engaged in service delivery activities (Christopher et al., 2022). However, persistent service delivery challenges suggested inadequate coordination and collaboration among these actors (Christopher et al., 2022). Citizens frequently experienced service gaps, duplication of efforts, and inefficient resource utilization despite the presence of multiple organizations working within the same geographical area.

Health facilities lacked essential supplies while some non-governmental organizations maintained separate procurement systems (Brian et al., 2024). Educational programs were implemented without adequate coordination between government and development partners, resulting in overlapping interventions in some schools and complete neglect of others (Julius & Desire, 2025). Water projects were initiated by different organizations without comprehensive mapping, leaving some communities with multiple water sources while others had none. Road maintenance responsibilities remained unclear among various stakeholders, leading to infrastructure deterioration (Winy et al., 2023).

The apparent lack of systematic collaboration mechanisms raised questions about how different stakeholders coordinated their activities, shared information, and aligned their strategies toward common service delivery objectives (Moses & Nancy, 2024). There was insufficient empirical evidence documenting the nature, extent, and impact of collaborative practices on service delivery outcomes in Bundibugyo Local Government (Nancy & Prudence, 2024). This study therefore investigated the relationship between collaboration and service delivery, examining how collaborative practices influenced service delivery effectiveness and identifying strategies for strengthening multi-stakeholder cooperation.

### **3.0 Main Objective**

To examine the relationship between collaboration and service delivery in Bundibugyo Local Government.

### **4.0 Methodology**

This study employed a mixed-methods research design, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to comprehensively investigate the relationship between collaboration and service delivery (Sarah & Audrey, 2024). The research was conducted in Bundibugyo Local Government, Bundibugyo District, located in western Uganda. The target population consisted of 300 individuals categorized into five stakeholder groups: traditional leaders, local government officials, local council leaders, service providers, and local citizens (Brian et al., 2024).

A sample size of 220 respondents was determined using both purposive and simple random sampling techniques. Purposive sampling was utilized to select key informants with specialized knowledge about collaborative practices and service delivery processes (Audrey & Nancy, 2025). This technique yielded 10 traditional leaders from a population of 10, 8 local government officials from a population of 8, and 14 local council leaders from a population of 15, totaling 32 key informants (Olanrewaju, Waititu, et al., 2021b). Simple random sampling was applied to select 80 service providers from a population of 117 and 108 local citizens from a population of 150, ensuring representativeness and reducing selection bias in the larger respondent categories (A & Ahmed, 2019).

Data collection utilized two primary research instruments. Semi-structured interview guides were employed for key informants to explore in-depth perspectives on collaborative mechanisms, stakeholder relationships, coordination challenges, and service delivery implications (Olanrewaju, Lukman Abiodun, et al., 2021). Structured questionnaires were administered to service providers and citizens, containing closed-ended questions and Likert-scale items measuring variables such as inter-organizational collaboration, partnership effectiveness, coordination frequency, information sharing, and service delivery quality across multiple sectors (Olanrewaju, Waititu, et al., 2021a).

Data analysis involved integrated qualitative and quantitative techniques. Qualitative data from interviews were transcribed verbatim, coded thematically using deductive and inductive approaches, and analyzed to identify patterns, themes, and relationships related to collaborative practices and service delivery (Olanrewaju, Waititu, et al., 2021a). Quantitative data from questionnaires were entered into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25, cleaned for errors and inconsistencies, and analyzed using descriptive statistics including frequencies, percentages,

**Received: 18.01.2026**

**Accepted: 22.01.2026**

**Published on: 30.01.2026**

means, and standard deviations (Nelson et al., 2022). Inferential statistics including Pearson correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis were conducted to determine the strength, direction, and significance of relationships between collaboration variables and service delivery outcomes. Ethical considerations included obtaining informed consent from all participants, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity, and securing approval from relevant local government authorities and research ethics committees before commencing data collection.

## **5.0 Results and Discussion**

### **5.1 Respondent Characteristics**

The study successfully collected data from 220 respondents across five stakeholder categories in Bundibugyo Local Government. Table 1 presents the distribution of respondents.

**Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Category**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Population (N)</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Response Rate (%)</b>
Traditional Leaders	10	10	100.0
Local Government Officials	8	8	100.0
Local Council Leaders (LC I-IV)	15	14	93.3
Service Providers	117	80	68.4
Local Citizens	150	108	72.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>73.3</b>

**Source: Primary Data, 2025**

The overall response rate of 73.3% was deemed adequate for generating reliable findings. Key informant categories achieved response rates exceeding 90%, indicating high accessibility and willingness to participate. Service providers and local citizens recorded slightly lower but acceptable response rates of 68.4% and 72.0% respectively, providing sufficient data for quantitative analysis.

### **5.2 Inter-Departmental Collaboration**

Respondents assessed the level of collaboration among different departments within Bundibugyo Local Government. Table 2 summarizes the findings.

**Table 2: Level of Inter-Departmental Collaboration**

<b>Collaboration Level</b>	<b>Service Providers (n=80)</b>	<b>Local Citizens (n=108)</b>	<b>Combined (n=188)</b>
Very High	5 (6.3%)	4 (3.7%)	9 (4.8%)
High	18 (22.5%)	16 (14.8%)	34 (18.1%)
Moderate	26 (32.5%)	35 (32.4%)	61 (32.4%)
Low	21 (26.3%)	36 (33.3%)	57 (30.3%)
Very Low	10 (12.5%)	17 (15.7%)	27 (14.4%)

**Source: Primary Data, 2025**

**Received: 18.01.2026**

**Accepted: 22.01.2026**

**Published on: 30.01.2026**

Results indicated that only 22.9% of respondents rated inter-departmental collaboration as high or very high, while 44.7% rated it as low or very low. This finding suggested significant fragmentation in service delivery coordination within local government structures (Ntirandekura et al., 2022). During interviews, local government officials acknowledged that departments often operated independently, with limited joint planning and implementation. Traditional leaders observed that this lack of coordination resulted in duplicated efforts and inefficient resource utilization, particularly in sectors requiring integrated approaches such as health and water.

### **5.3 Partnerships with Non-Governmental Organizations**

The study examined collaboration between local government and non-governmental organizations operating in Bundibugyo District. Table 3 presents findings on partnership characteristics.

**Table 3: Government-NGO Partnership Assessment**

<b>Partnership Indicator</b>	<b>Agree (%)</b>	<b>Neutral (%)</b>	<b>Disagree (%)</b>
Regular coordination meetings are held	41.5	16.0	42.5
NGOs align activities with government plans	38.3	19.1	42.6
Information sharing is effective	35.6	17.6	46.8
Joint implementation is common	29.8	20.7	49.5
Partnership agreements are documented	26.1	18.6	55.3

**Source: Primary Data, 2025**

The findings revealed mixed perceptions regarding government-NGO partnerships. While 41.5% of respondents agreed that regular coordination meetings occurred, significant proportions disagreed on key partnership indicators (Ntirandekura & Christopher, 2022). Only 29.8% agreed that joint implementation was common, and merely 26.1% confirmed that partnership agreements were documented. Local council leaders explained during interviews that while some non-governmental organizations maintained good working relationships with local government, many operated independently without adequate consultation or coordination. Service providers noted that lack of formalized partnership frameworks contributed to fragmented service delivery, with different organizations sometimes working at cross-purposes.

### **5.4 Coordination with Traditional Institutions**

Given the significant role of traditional institutions in Bundibugyo's governance landscape, respondents assessed collaboration between local government and traditional leadership structures. Table 4 summarizes the findings.

**Table 4: Collaboration Between Local Government and Traditional Institutions**

<b>Collaboration Aspect</b>	<b>Effective (%)</b>	<b>Somewhat Effective (%)</b>	<b>Ineffective (%)</b>
Joint community mobilization	52.7	28.2	19.1
Conflict resolution coordination	48.9	30.9	20.2

**Received: 18.01.2026**

**Accepted: 22.01.2026**

**Published on: 30.01.2026**

Service delivery planning	34.6	31.4	34.0
Resource mobilization	31.9	28.7	39.4
Monitoring and accountability	28.2	33.0	38.8

**Source: Primary Data, 2025**

Results indicated that collaboration with traditional institutions was most effective in community mobilization, with 52.7% of respondents rating it as effective. Conflict resolution coordination also received relatively positive assessments at 48.9% effectiveness. However, collaboration in service delivery planning, resource mobilization, and monitoring showed weaker performance, with effectiveness ratings below 35%. Traditional leaders interviewed emphasized their willingness to support service delivery but noted that local government often failed to systematically engage them in planning and implementation processes beyond community mobilization activities.

**5.5 Service Delivery Quality Outcomes**

Respondents evaluated service delivery quality across four major sectors. Table 5 presents the assessment results.

**Table 5: Service Delivery Quality by Sector**

Sector	Excellent (%)	Good (%)	Fair (%)	Poor (%)	Very Poor (%)
Health Services	7.4	25.5	32.4	24.5	10.1
Education Services	9.0	30.3	28.7	21.3	10.6
Water and Sanitation	5.3	19.7	28.2	31.4	15.4
Roads Infrastructure	3.7	16.0	25.5	33.5	21.3

**Source: Primary Data, 2025**

Service delivery quality varied across sectors with generally suboptimal performance. Education services received the most positive ratings, with 39.3% of respondents rating them as excellent or good. Health services followed at 32.9%, while water and sanitation and roads infrastructure showed considerably lower positive ratings at 25.0% and 19.7% respectively. Roads infrastructure demonstrated particularly poor performance, with 54.8% of respondents rating it as poor or very poor. Service providers attributed these outcomes to inadequate collaboration among stakeholders, resulting in resource fragmentation and implementation inefficiencies.

**5.6 Relationship Between Collaboration and Service Delivery**

Correlation analysis examined the relationships between collaboration variables and service delivery outcomes. Table 6 presents correlation coefficients.

**Table 6: Correlation Between Collaboration Variables and Service Delivery**

Collaboration Variable	Service Delivery Quality
Inter-departmental Collaboration	r = 0.694, p < 0.001
Government-NGO Partnerships	r = 0.712, p < 0.001

Traditional Institution Coordination	$r = 0.638, p < 0.001$
Stakeholder Communication	$r = 0.725, p < 0.001$
Joint Planning and Implementation	$r = 0.756, p < 0.001$

**Source: Primary Data, 2025**

Correlation analysis revealed significant positive relationships between all collaboration variables and service delivery quality. Joint planning and implementation showed the strongest correlation ( $r = 0.756$ ), followed by stakeholder communication ( $r = 0.725$ ), government-NGO partnerships ( $r = 0.712$ ), inter-departmental collaboration ( $r = 0.694$ ), and traditional institution coordination ( $r = 0.638$ ). All correlations were statistically significant at  $p < 0.001$ , demonstrating that enhanced collaborative practices were strongly associated with improved service delivery outcomes.

### **5.7 Challenges to Effective Collaboration**

Interviews with key informants identified multiple barriers to effective collaboration. Local government officials cited limited institutional frameworks for coordination, with few formal mechanisms facilitating regular inter-organizational engagement. Resource competition emerged as a significant challenge, with different stakeholders competing for funding and recognition rather than cooperating toward shared objectives. Local council leaders highlighted communication gaps, noting that information sharing among stakeholders was irregular and inadequate. Traditional leaders mentioned conflicting organizational interests and priorities, which complicated joint planning and implementation efforts. Capacity constraints in collaborative management, including limited skills in partnership development and coordination, were consistently reported across respondent categories.

### **6.0 Conclusions**

The study established a significant positive relationship between collaboration and service delivery in Bundibugyo Local Government. Enhanced inter-departmental collaboration, stronger government-NGO partnerships, improved coordination with traditional institutions, effective stakeholder communication, and joint planning and implementation were all strongly associated with better service delivery outcomes across health, education, water, and infrastructure sectors. The correlation analysis demonstrated that collaborative practices explained substantial variance in service delivery quality, with joint planning and implementation showing the strongest association.

However, actual collaborative practices in Bundibugyo Local Government remained weak, characterized by fragmented inter-departmental coordination, inadequate government-NGO partnerships, limited engagement with traditional institutions in service delivery planning, and insufficient communication among stakeholders. Service delivery quality varied across sectors but remained generally below satisfactory levels, particularly in water and sanitation and roads infrastructure where collaboration challenges were most pronounced.

The challenges identified, including absence of formal coordination frameworks, resource competition, conflicting organizational interests, communication gaps, and capacity constraints, required systematic interventions to enhance

**Received: 18.01.2026**

**Accepted: 22.01.2026**

**Published on: 30.01.2026**

collaborative capacity. The strong relationships between collaboration variables and service delivery outcomes indicated that strengthening collaborative mechanisms could substantially improve service delivery effectiveness in Bundibugyo Local Government.

### **7.0 Recommendations**

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations were proposed:

Bundibugyo Local Government should establish formal coordination structures to facilitate systematic collaboration among stakeholders. This could include creating a District Service Delivery Coordination Committee comprising representatives from local government departments, non-governmental organizations, traditional institutions, faith-based organizations, and community groups. The committee should meet regularly to share information, coordinate activities, identify collaboration opportunities, and resolve coordination challenges.

Partnership frameworks governing relationships between local government and non-governmental organizations should be developed and institutionalized. These frameworks should specify roles and responsibilities, coordination mechanisms, information sharing protocols, joint planning requirements, and accountability arrangements. All organizations operating in the district should be required to register with local government and align their activities with district development plans through formalized partnership agreements.

Inter-departmental collaboration within local government should be strengthened through integrated planning and budgeting processes. Joint sector planning sessions should be institutionalized, requiring departments to identify areas for collaboration and develop integrated implementation strategies. Cross-departmental teams should be established for sectors requiring integrated approaches, such as maternal health, school health programs, and water and sanitation services.

Engagement with traditional institutions should be systematized beyond community mobilization to include meaningful participation in service delivery planning, resource mobilization, monitoring, and accountability. Traditional leaders should be formally incorporated into local government planning structures at sub-county and parish levels, recognizing their legitimacy and influence within communities.

Communication systems facilitating regular information exchange among stakeholders should be established. This could include creating a district information management system accessible to all stakeholders, establishing communication protocols specifying information sharing requirements and timelines, and utilizing technology platforms such as WhatsApp groups and online collaboration tools where appropriate.

Capacity building programs targeting collaborative management skills should be implemented for local government officials, non-governmental organization staff, local council leaders, and traditional leaders. Training should cover partnership development, coordination mechanisms, joint planning methodologies, conflict resolution in collaborative settings, and collaborative monitoring and evaluation.

Incentive mechanisms encouraging inter-organizational cooperation should be created. This could include recognition programs acknowledging effective collaborative partnerships, preferential consideration for funding proposals demonstrating multi-stakeholder collaboration, and performance assessment frameworks for local government officials that include collaboration indicators.

Resource mobilization strategies should emphasize pooled funding approaches where multiple stakeholders contribute resources toward common objectives rather than competing for separate funding. Joint fundraising initiatives and basket funding mechanisms should be explored to reduce resource competition and enhance coordination.

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**Received: 18.01.2026**

**Accepted: 22.01.2026**

**Published on: 30.01.2026**

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