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RECOGNIZING LOCAL LEADERS AS AN ANTI-CORRUPTION STRATEGY: EXPERIMENTAL AND ETHNOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE FROM UGANDA

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ABSTRACT

We investigate whether positive recognition of elected community leaders improves the administration of public projects and fosters expectations for good governance. This approach contrasts with most anti-corruption interventions that focus on detecting or punishing the misuse of public funds. In a first field experiment, we test whether prospectively offering eligibility for positive recognition increases local leaders' effort and effectiveness at administering public projects according to legal guidelines designed to deter corruption. In a second field experiment, we test whether retrospectively learning about leaders who received awards for the effective administration of projects increases leaders' and residents' expectations for good governance and norms against corruption. Prospective eligibility for recognition did not improve the management of public projects or change norms about corruption. Retrospectively learning about local leaders who earned recognition likewise did not change behaviors or attitudes about corruption. An ethnographic study embedded in all stages of both field experiments shows that the possibility for recognition generated excitement among local leaders, but was not able to overcome structural constraints that limited local leaders' ability to shape the outcomes of public projects.

Introduction

Most anti-corruption strategies involve new forms of monitoring or punishment that attempt to change the cost-benefit calculations of officials tempted to engage in corrupt acts (Batory, 2012; Bobonis et al., 2016). Yet, strategies to combat corruption through detection and sanctioning have produced limited results (Persson et al., 2013). Many settings lack the the social norms that support reporting on or punishing corruption, which we define as the use of public office for private gain. The long-term experience of corruption creates social expectations and understandings that corrupt acts are normal (Garrett et al., 2016), which can demobilize the public (Chong et al., 2015) and increase corrupt behavior by officials (Fisman and Miguel, 2007). When tolerance for corrupt acts is normalized, even people who experience the negative consequences of corruption fail to report it because of apathy, powerlessness, and resignation (Fleming et al., 2022).

We investigate whether positive recognition of elected officials who manage public funds with integrity strengthens anti-corruption norms and realigns expectations about the administration of public projects. Our study is inspired by results from laboratory experiments that show changing descriptive norms about the prevalence of corruption can decrease the frequency of choices that are framed as corrupt (Köbis et al., 2015; Abbink et al., 2018). Related research has also found that shifting public expectations by training citizens about the responsibilities of officials can have important consequences for citizens' choices at the ballot box (Gottlieb, 2016). We test whether positive recognition can drive accountability by creating expectations for integrity in the management of public funds and changing norms related to corruption.

We designed and implemented two randomized field experiments. In the first field experiment, we offer eligibility for symbolic, positive recognition to elected community leaders who manage public projects in accordance with legal guidelines. Treated committees were told initially and regularly reminded of the chance to earn radio announcements and public signs touting their excellence for completing project management guidelines designed to deter corruption, such as documenting their justification for selecting contractors and regularly overseeing the implementation of projects. In the second field experiment, we test whether the public dissemination of

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information about officials who received recognition for their efforts to adhere to guidelines builds anti-corruption norms among both officials and the public. In this experiment, a random set of committee members and residents received a series of voice calls describing the actions of committees that earned recognition and naming awardees. We are interested in whether either of these treatments altered norms related to governance and behaviors related to acceptance of corruption.

We find no evidence that the prospective offer of recognition improved adherence to legal guidelines designed to deter corruption. It also did not change leaders' attitudes about corruption and governance. Unsurprisingly then, we also find no evidence that residents perceived projects to be delivered more successfully when their elected leaders were offered recognition. We also find no evidence that learning about the local leaders and committees that achieved recognition for adhering to guidelines changed residents' or leaders' attitudes and behaviors related to corruption. The lack of an anti-corruption response across all of the main outcomes occurred despite strong evidence showing the interventions were successfully delivered in both experiments: in the first experiment, treated leaders reported knowing they would be recognized if they completed management guidelines at much higher rates than the control group; in the second experiment, both leaders and residents assigned to treatment reported learning about the committee members that earned recognition much more often than the control group.

We embedded an ethnographic study in all phases of both the prospective and retrospective recognition experiments. We carried out 57 focus group discussions, direct observation, and 48 key informant interviews of both residents and members of project committees in control and treatment villages. Because of safety considerations related to the COVID-19 pandemic, we completed many of the interviews by telephone. The goal of the linked ethnographic study was to interpret the results of the field experiments and to explore the conditions under which positive recognition might successfully shift norms and outcomes related to corruption. The ethnographic study reveals that committee members did not always feel motivated by positive recognition because they felt that project outcomes were beyond their control. The results also reveal that overcoming norms that support corruption and the mismanagement of public projects is likely to be a slow process

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that will require persistent, multi-year efforts. Many committee members reported that they would have been motivated by more tangible, monetary awards.

Our study makes several contributions to the study of non-financial incentives in the public sector. While research demonstrates the potential for symbolic awards or other non-financial incentives to change effort by workers in the context of labor markets (Kosfeld and Neckermann, 2011; Bradler et al., 2016) or volunteer activities (Islam et al., 2019), it is unclear whether these results extend to elected officials who have already achieved high status. Some studies have demonstrated the potential for non-financial awards to increase effort among community health workers (Ashraf et al., 2014). Recognition may be less valuable for high-status individuals who cannot further boost their prestige and social standing (Besley and Ghatak, 2008). Our study confirms that positive recognition may be less effective at incentivizing action among officials who already have high social status. It is possible that recognition of such individuals, even if it is symbolic, needs to be more instrumental in nature, by drawing more explicit connection to employment, promotion, personnel rotations, or reputation.

As opposed to existing studies, our study also provides evidence across the full life-cycle of recognition by separately testing the effects of prospective eligibility for recognition and retrospective knowledge of recognition on attitudes, behaviors, and public outcomes. Whereas past studies have addressed prospective offers of recognition (Kosfeld and Neckermann, 2011; Ashraf et al., 2014), we know less about the consequences of positive recognition on audiences that observe it. There is evidence that hearing about co-workers who receive unexpected recognition in the context of short-term work assignments boosts effort by the workers who are not recognized (Bradler et al., 2016), but broader, longer-term effects of symbolic recognition on norm and behaviors related to public sector performance are largely unavailable. Yet there is promising evidence that being exposed to ethical leadership can promote integrity in public service (Downe et al., 2016), and recognition schemes may offer an attractive way to make that type of exposure salient. Since shifts in outcomes like corruption in the public sector are slow moving (Roland, 2004), evidence about the broader consequences of recognition schemes on a variety of audiences needed. Our

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study suggests that learning about several examples of officials from the nearby area who engage in good governance is not enough to shift the norms that support the acceptance of corruption.

In terms of policy, symbolic recognition is very attractive given its low cost compared to other anti-corruption strategies, if it could curb corruption. Scholars and practitioners are paying increasing attention to how normative approaches can promote integrity in the public sector (Van Montfort et al., 2013). This study shows that these types of efforts, while attractive in terms of their cost, are unlikely to change more fundamental norms that operate within public life over short periods. More promising directions may be the competitive selection of public agents who are predisposed to act with integrity (Meyer-Sahling et al., 2021) or the creation of work environments that foster supportive managerial practices (Honig, 2021). Positive recognition may need to be linked with more instrumental concerns of the officials who are being recognized, such as access to promotion, salary increases, election, or favorable staffing rotations. Alternatively, it may be necessary to run such schemes for longer time periods and more consistently to detect their effects.

Our research also extends a broader literature about the role of awards in the public sector (Hartley and Downe, 2007; Frey and Gallus, 2017). While there is a growing body of research that investigates how public rankings and awards motivate governmental units (Anderson et al., 2019; Plaček et al., 2020), less research has been conducted about individual-level interventions that might improve public service motivation, norms of good governance, and integrity in public office. Most existing research deals with pre-existing levels of motivation and/or normative attitudes and their correlation with effort and accomplishment in public service (Alonso and Lewis, 2001; Miao et al., 2018; Van Loon et al., 2018). Our study break new ground by experimentally testing interventions that might be used to raise motivation for public service and integrity among elected officials, providing a model for new efforts to improve public administration through intervention at the individual level.

Research Expectations

This misuse and mismanagement of public resources has large, negative consequences around the world. The effects are especially important for people in low-income countries, where corruption has been linked to poor public services (Nguyen et al., 2017), lower productivity (Faruq et al., 2013), decreased health outcomes (Azfar and Gurgur, 2008), and lower environmental quality (Zhou et al., 2020). Yet, the normal strategies to reduce corruption through monitoring and detection have made limited headway (Batory, 2012).

In contexts where corruption and public mismanagement are endemic, it can be very hard to build expectations, norms, and anti-corruption pressures, since there are few "principled principals" willing to stamp out corruption when they are alerted to it (Persson et al., 2013). In settings where everyone expects corruption and mismanagement, people lack of incentives to report corrupt acts or enforce anti-corruption rules, particularly when responsibility for governance outcomes is diffused across many levels of government (Buntaine and Daniels, 2020). Corruption can even emerge as a cooperative behavior within social networks and groups, tapping into deep-seated psychological tendencies for collaboration and norms of reciprocity (Weisel and Shalvi, 2015). Yet, most research in the field of anti-corruption continues to pursue better ways of detecting and punishing corruption, despite a growing body of research that questions the efficacy of these approaches (Batory, 2012).

Finding ways to shift underlying norms about corruption could be a strategy to increase official and public demand for good governance. Yet, in contexts where people are accustomed to corrupt practices, it can be difficult to generate public and official pressure. For example, Peiffer and Alvarez (2016) show that public willingness to engage in anti-corruption action is higher in contexts where the performance of the government is already better and expectations for corruption are lower. The question of how to progress toward that high-functioning state where corrupt acts are not accepted is vexing.

A number of programs have attempted to shift underlying public and official norms about the use of public office through positive recognition. For example, the Accountability Lab and their

Integrity Icon program runs campaigns in many countries where members of the public nominate officials who have demonstrated integrity in their official capacity for national recognition (`https://integrityicon.org/`). These campaigns aim to change public expectations and empower public sector workers who act with integrity. To our knowledge, however, evidence is lacking about the immediate and long-term consequences of such programs and approaches.

Prospective recognition in threshold award schemes – those that offer awards to any person who achieves certain performance criteria (Hartley and Downe, 2007) – may have positive effects on public sector performance for a number of reasons. First, local officials are often embedded in local social networks that offer reward and punishment for official actions through social mechanisms. In a recent experiment, Wagner et al. (2020) find that allowing community health workers to keep profits from offering health treatments reduces effort, since the social rewards of providing free treatment are more valuable in contexts where officials are members of their communities. Second, salient recognition may bring more instrumental benefits to public officials, such as promotion and electoral success. Finally, awards may support intrinsic motivations by providing goals, benchmarks, and standards within communities of practice, such as public officials tasked with managing certain types of projects.

However, prospective recognition might also backfire by causing those who do not expect to be recognized to decrease their effort. In volunteer settings, the offer of threshold recognition has caused attrition among volunteers who do not expect to earn recognition, perhaps as a strategy to protect self-image (Islam et al., 2019). Likewise, an experiment that involved announcing that the rankings of top students in a professional training program would be published resulted in reduced effort by low-performing students, perhaps as a psychological defense mechanism to decrease the informativeness of the resulting ranking (Ashraf et al., 2014). These results suggest that the opportunity to earn recognition might be demobilizing among people who do not expect to be recognized.

For retrospective recognition, we derive expectations the potential importance of changing citizens' reference point about what government should do and how public officials should behave.

Evidence from a vignette experiment shows that receiving a prime that describes how often similarly situated people engage in corrupt practices has a significant effects on choosing actions framed as corrupt in a real-stakes game (Köbis et al., 2015). Related evidence about tax compliance among the public comes to similar conclusions (Hallsworth et al., 2017), demonstrating how descriptive norms shape behavior. More broadly, there is evidence that changing the public's expectations of elected leaders can affect voting behavior (Gottlieb, 2016), suggesting that hearing about positive examples of official who act with integrity could have similar effects.

Our research stands in contrast to related work that considers how the structure of remuneration affects the potential for bribery and extortion (Polinsky and Shavell, 2001). For example, it is possible that performance-based pay in the civil service can be an effective tool for recognizing good performance and thus decreasing incentives for corruption. Sundström (2019) finds, however, that when corruption is rampant such schemes can actually worsen corruption by creating incentives for collusion between civil servants and the higher-level managers that evaluate performance. Skladany (2009) argues that performance-based incentives would have to be directed at high-level bureaucrats and politicians at the level of 10 to 20 times annual salaries to be effective at limiting corruption. It may be more effective to shift underlying norms and expectations.

Research Design

Setting

Our study is set in Uganda, a low-income country with high levels of corruption (Transparency International, 2020). Social norms against corruption are relatively low and expectations for officials to engage in corrupt acts are relatively high. Bukuluki et al. (2013) describes how corruption is often expected and not perceived as problematic if it benefits the family, clan, or community of the official who engaged in corrupt acts.

Our study specifically takes place in the context of a publicly-funded program where villages choose and oversee an annual development project. In particular, at Bwindi National Park in western Uganda, the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) shares 20 percent of collected gate fees from

tourists' visits with the 94 villages that border the park. The goal of the program is to promote local development and increase support for the conservation of park resources by residents of frontline villages. During the revenue sharing cycle studied in this paper, UWA shared a total of UGX 4.2 billion (USD$1.14 million) across 91 villages and 58 projects (some villages pursued joint projects). While the revenue-sharing program is often touted as a model for people-centered conservation, previous research has noted the many problems of accountability, corruption, and inequitable access to participation in the program (Archabald and Naughton-Treves, 2001; Buntaine et al., 2018; Tumusiime and Vedeld, 2012; Adams et al., 2004; Laudati, 2010).

Management of the revenue-sharing funds is multi-layered, which contributes to these accountability problems (Buntaine and Daniels, 2020). UWA first transfers funds to the district government, which transfers funds to the sub-county government, which works with elected village-level procurement and management committees to implement the projects that are chosen by the residents of each village. In practice, a large percentage of revenue-sharing funds have been lost to corruption and mismanagement, largely because the funds pass through several layers of local government before the projects are implemented. UWA staff have informally reported that up to 80 percent of projects are not delivered as planned, often owing to corruption. Our local polling by mobile phone echoes these assessments, with a majority of residents indicating that corruption is a major problem in revenue-sharing. These types of problems are common with many community-led development schemes (Platteau and Gaspart, 2003).

We completed an extensive set of baseline interviews and focus group discussions with residents and local leaders to explore the perceived roots of corruption in revenue-sharing (see SI Section 5.1 lists the interviews and SI Section 5.2 for extended list of direct quotations). Baseline discussions revealed that corruption was perceived to be driven by greed and selfish desires of local leaders, weak and selective enforcement of laws on corrupt officials, and community acceptance of corruption if it benefits them or the social networks of people in positions of authority. For instance, public officials holding offices are sometimes subject to strong pressures to respond to the demands and expectations of family members, friends, and village members by offering

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preferential access to jobs or contracts from revenue sharing or by distributing the benefits from revenue-sharing projects inequitably.

Seeking to ensure the appropriate administration of the revenue-sharing scheme and overcome some of these lingering challenges, UWA created a set of national guidelines for the administration of projects in 2013. According to the revenue sharing guidelines, villages hold elections to select members of procurement and management committees. The procurement committee is formally responsible for evaluating contractor bids, selecting a contractor, and approving payments to contractors who implement projects. The management committee is responsible for overseeing the work, regularly reporting on progress, and confirming completion of the agreed project deliverables.

We condensed these guidelines into checklists that committee members could reference for the specific tasks that they should complete. We provided a half-day, in-person training to all elected committee members on these tasks, in cooperation with UWA management. We left copies of the checklists with each of the committees after the training. All committees were asked to complete the checklist items during the upcoming revenue-sharing procurement and implementation cycle and were reminded of the items with outgoing voice calls at least every two weeks. SI Section 1.5 shows that we completed full length, outgoing voice calls with approximately 55% of committee members in both the treatment and control conditions for each call on average, with no appreciable decline in contact rates over time.

It is important to note that all checklist items could in principle be completed by committees regardless of management problems at other levels of government. For example, one of the checklist items charged the procurement committees with evaluating at least three contractor bids prior to selecting a contractor. Since the subcounty government often advertises and collects bids and sometimes only presents the procurement committee with a single bid, the checklist could instead be fulfilled by formally submitting a request for additional bids. SI Section 1.2 contains a complete list of the procurement and management items in the checklist.

To develop the treatments in the field experiments, we used baseline interviews to investigate

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the how recognition could be carried out effectively in a locally-appropriate manner (see SI Section 5.1 lists the interviews and SI Section 5.2 for extended list of direct quotations). Social recognition of elected committee members was widely perceived as a potential motivator to adhere to financial, procurement, and management procedures. Interviews revealed that social recognition of these local leaders for performance and integrity through public events, radio announcements, and certificates of excellence could be a source of social prestige and might enhance opportunities for leaders to be elected or promoted to higher-level office.

Residents also reported that social recognition of key leaders would create a positive collective reputation for the entire community, thereby increasing the vigilance of community members in holding their leaders accountable. Both residents and leader perceived recognition as a potential way to change description norms about corruption and provide positive examples of governance that could be used to pressure local leaders to achieve excellence in managing revenue-sharing funds, particularly if disseminated in more permanent ways like public signs placed in frequently trafficked areas like the main roadway entrance to villages. Positive public recognition also was expected to contribute to a sense of a healthy competition between villages. Based on these baseline findings, we developed both prospective and retrospective recognition treatments.

Prospective Recognition Treatment

We offered each set of procurement and management committees the opportunity to earn recognition if they completed a checklist of items during the implementation phase of revenue sharing. The opportunity to earn recognition was presented in person when training each set of committees on the responsibilities that they should carry out under the program and then also on a bi-weekly basis by recorded voice calls to all committee members explaining each of the checklist items and reminding members of the opportunity to earn recognition. All training and outgoing voice calls were completed in the local language. Committee members could call a project line for help at any time or revisit past messages sent to them during outgoing voice calls. In all outgoing calls, committee members were reminded that recognition would consist of a large sign placed at the en-

trance of their village with the names of individual committee members and radio announcements in the region (see SI 1.3 for details). The treatment is a kind of "threshhold" scheme would result in recognition to any committee that completed procurement and management requirements, rather than a competitive scheme that recognized only the best performers (Hartley and Downe, 2007).

Retrospective Recognition Treatment

Following the completion of projects, we evaluated every committee based on whether they completed the checklist items and regularly reported on the progress of their projects to the voice-response system. After evaluating the committees and selecting those that earned recognition, but prior to disseminating the recognition publicly through signs and radio announcement, we randomly assigned half of the members of committees and residents who subscribed to the Bwindi Information Network platform to hear a series of four two-minute messages over two weeks about the excellent work of the four recognized committees (see SI 1.4 for details). Several days after these messages, we conducted a survey with committee members and residents to test whether hearing messages about excellence had changed public norms or expectations about corruption and changed behaviors related to corruption measured by real-stakes games.

Outcomes

We measured a number of pre-registered outcomes about the behavioral and attitudinal effects of the recognition program, both among committee members and among a sample of the public residing in each of the villages that participate in revenue-sharing. Many measures were adjusted to address safety concerns with the COVID-19 pandemic. SI Section 1.6 describes the safety measures for research participants and staff in detail.

For the effects of prospective recognition, we measured the extend to which committees filled out the project management checklists and made unprompted calls reporting on the status of the projects as instructed. Additionally, we completed a phone-based survey with committee members and gathered self-reported measures of effort on tasks and attitudes about corruption and governance. We also invited committee members to play behavioral games for monetary compensation

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to measure honesty and propensity to prioritize private gain over public benefits. We completed phone-based surveys with members of the public to measure attitudes about corruption and governance and their perceptions of how successfully their revenue-sharing project was implemented. We also invited these respondents to play behavioral games to measure honesty and willingness to make costly punishments of officials who used their positions for private gain. We remeasured these outcomes for both committee members and residents following the dissemination of messages about recognized committees to test for the differential effects of prospective versus retrospective recognition.

We also collected in-depth qualitative data at three points during the implementation of the experiment using focus group discussions and key informant interviews with both residents and local leaders (SI Appendix 5.1 has a full list of interviews). First, we conducted a series of focus groups and interviews prior to the launch of the recognition treatments. Transcripts from these activities provide data about the expectations of committee members and local residents about the prospect for symbolic recognition to change outcomes. Second, we conducted a series of focus groups and interviews during the implementation phase of the experiment, when committees were actively tasked with oversight and, if part of the treatment group, were receiving regular reminders about the opportunity to earn recognition for completing management and oversight tasks. We use these data to analyze reactions of the public and leaders to the opportunity for recognition. Third, we conducted a final series of interviews following the public recognition of four committees for achieving excellence in revenue sharing to understand how people reacted to recognition and how the expectation of possible recognition shaped committee members' efforts.

A timeline of the treatments and data collection phases of the study is displayed in Figure S1.

Analysis

For quantitative data analysis, we estimated treatment effects and standard errors using pre-specified regression models with pre-specified covariates. We estimated the following regression for each individual-level outcome:

$$Y_i = \alpha_i + \tau D_j + \beta \mathbf{X_{ij}} + \epsilon_{ij}$$

Where Y_i is the outcome of interest, τ is the sample average treatment effect, D_j is an indicator of the treatment assigned at the committee level, β is a vector of parameter estimates for covariates aggregated to the village level used to improve precision, $\mathbf{X_{ij}}$ is a pre-specified list of covariates, and ϵ_{ij} is an error term clustered that the unit of assignment (the highest level of collective project to which a village belongs). We use the same estimation procedure for committee-level outcomes. Some committees formed joint projects after the initial random assignment. In these cases, the joint committee was treated if any of the villages that made up the joint effort was assigned to treatment initially. All analyses of committee-level outcomes are weighted by the inverse probability of assignment to treatment under this procedure.

For qualitative data analysis, all transcripts from focus groups and interviews were transcribed and then analyzed thematically. In particular, we posed three broad thematic queries related to the interpretation of the experiment as follows:

1. What were local expectations for the role that symbolic recognition might play in shaping project outcomes?

2. How did community members and leaders react to the opportunity to earn recognition while implementing projects?

3. Why did the recognition produce limited results both during implementation and after the roll-out of the recognition?

Our research team searched through the transcripts and coded any quotes that spoke to these thematic questions. We then drew our primary conclusions by synthesizing the totality of responses relevant to each of these thematic questions. The main text contains our synthesis and an extended appendix of direct quotations that led to our conclusions is available in SI Section 5.2.

Results

Prospective Recognition

Field Experimental Evidence

There is no evidence that committees treated with the *prospective* offer of public recognition completed required management tasks more often than control committees not informed of the possibility for recognition. This result holds for both the number of completed items in the project checklists and the number of oversight reports submitted during implementation (Figure 1). This result also holds for self-reported numbers of tasks completed (Figure 2). We also asked the two high-level UWA managers and the responsible community conservation ranger assigned to each village to rate the performance of each of the committees in fulfilling their financial and project management tasks, to address the possibility that our primary measures did not capture the level of effort by the committee. We formed the three ratings into a weighted sum for each set of committees based on the confidence each rater had in their score, as pre-specified. Treated committees did worse on these more holistic ratings.
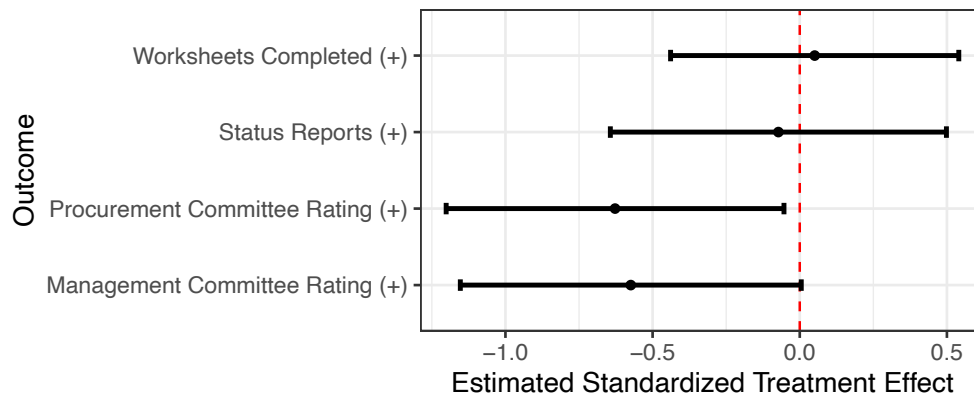

Figure 1: **Effects of prospective recognition treatment on oversight records or externally-rated committee performance.** *Notes:* 95% confidence intervals derived from robust standard errors.

While the results about project outcomes are somewhat difficult to interpret because of limited statistical power, given modified measures required by COVID-19 safety considerations, we conducted a survey and played experimental games with committee members designed to reveal

underlying norms after the completion of the revenue-sharing cycle, but prior to the evaluation and recognition of committees. We completed these surveys and choice games over the phone (see SI Section 4 for description of outcomes).

Validating the successful delivery of treatment, committee members assigned to treatment were much more likely to state that they expected to be recognized publicly if they performed their committee roles according to guidelines. Yet, they did not report higher rates of management checklist tasks completed, hours of effort spent on committee work, or that the projects they managed were delivered as planned more often, as compared to members of committees assigned to the control condition (Figure 2).

We played two behavioral games with committee members for monetary rewards to elicit honesty and prosocial preferences. In the honesty game, we asked each player to think of a number between 1 and 10 in each of five rounds, but not reveal the number to the enumerator. We then presented the player with a random number between 1 and 10 in each round and asked whether they had guessed correctly. In each round, the player won 1000 shillings (USD 0.30) if they stated they had guessed correctly. Respondents who reported many correct guesses would on average be reporting dishonestly. Counter to expectations, we do not observe evidence that committee members who were treated with the prospect of earning recognition reported fewer correct guesses.

In a second embezzlement game, we asked each committee member to choose how much of a 5000 shilling fund to keep for themselves. The remaining amount would be tripled and sent randomly to three members of their village. Counter to expectations, we do not observe evidence that committee members who were treated with the prospect of earning recognition kept less of the fund for themselves.

Finally, we asked a series of direct questions to probe anti-corruption and good governance norms among committee and formed those questions into a pre-registered index (see SI Section 4). There is no evidence that treated committee members held systematically higher anti-corruption norms after the offer of recognition. We also estimated complier average causal effects using treatment as an instrument for expecting recognition, and found no evidence that there is a positive
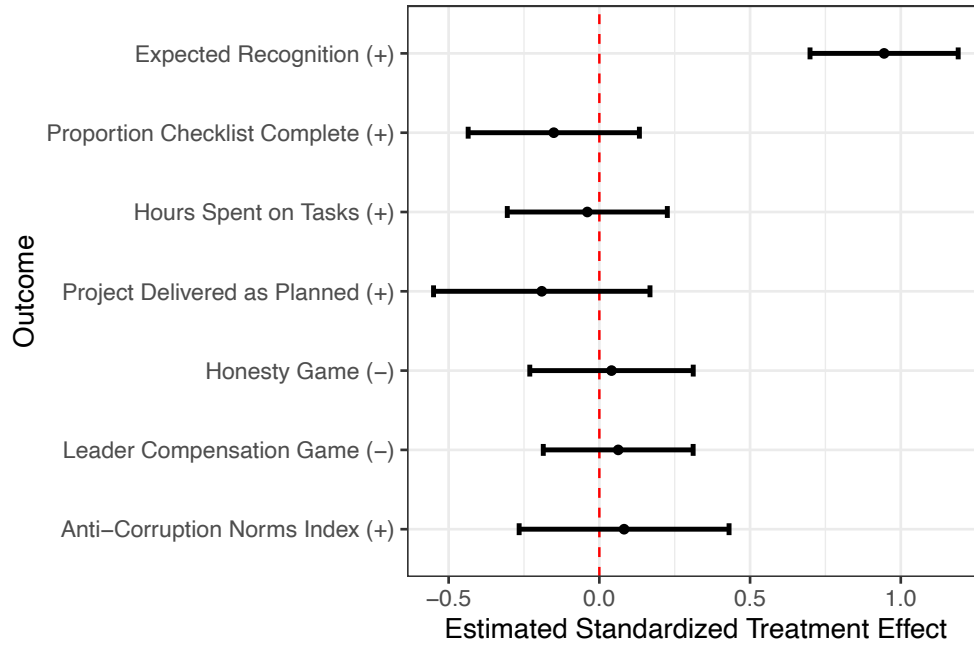
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Figure 2: **Effects of prospective recognition treatment on effort, project delivery, play in be-havioral games, and anti-corruption norms of committee members.** *Notes:* 95% confidence intervals derived from robust standard errors.

effect of prospective recognition on any outcomes for committee members who complied with their committee's treatment assignment (Figure S4).

We conducted a similar survey with residents of all the villages that benefited from revenue sharing. During the course of the project, residents received phone calls informing them about the responsibilities of their elected committees. Residents in treated villages also received notices that their committees were eligible for awards if they performed their procurement and management duties with excellence. We hypothesized that the treatment would indirectly cause residents to perceive better project outcomes (through greater committee effort) and that it would thereby also increase anti-corruption norms. We do not observe evidence that residents perceived projects assigned to treatment to be delivered more effectively (Figure 3).

Therefore, we also do not find detectable evidence that residents in treated communities displayed greater honesty or held stronger anti-corruption norms, which we expected would come about as downstream outcomes to better project performance. We also played a behavioral game with residents, where they were presented with a chance to keep an unexpected 5000 shilling (USD
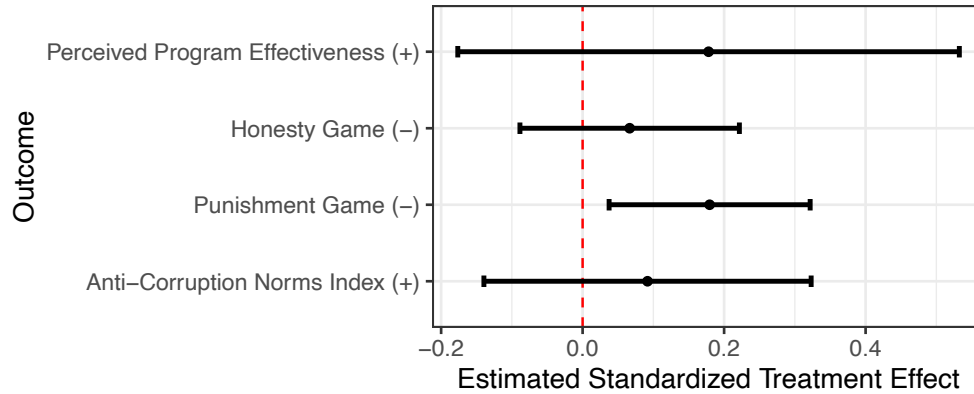
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Figure 3: **Effects of prospective recognition treatment on resident perceptions.** *Notes:* 95% confidence intervals derived from robust standard errors.

1.50) bonus, with the same amount that they kept sent to a random local leader who had not shared any their own windfall with members of their community in the embezzlement game described above. We do not observe higher rates of costly punishment of selfish leaders among residents in treated villages.

Ethnographic Evidence

We collected ethnographic evidence at baseline, during implementation of the treatments, and at the endline once public recognition of select committees had been completed. We collated responses from across these phases to understand why the offer of prospective recognition might not have caused the changes in behaviors and norms that the public and leaders expected at the baseline. The main impediments to changing norms and behavior included a lack of tangible incentives, poor understanding of the type of recognition that was available, and feelings of resignation and an inability to affect project outcomes among the treated committees members. Although there is no evidence of an overall average effect of the prospective recognition treatment from the field experiment, it is important to note that some of the communities assigned to treatment observed improvements to the implementation revenue sharing projects through increased community participation and vigilance, which they attributed to the possibility of earning recognition.

"This time there was limited theft like when compared to the previous projects. We were more vigilant. This time people were not getting goats as they did in previous revenue-sharing projects. Most people in the previous projects did not get goats and even those who got very poor quality of breeds i.e. very young or not worth the money that was budgeted for but this time everyone got. We followed all steps of the guidelines from identifying the contractors to participate in the whole revenue sharing process." [R3.I21]

"We worked very hard in order to get this recognition and indeed we were happy when we got it. A schedule was drawn with a member designated to look after the project on a daily basis. The community members would participate but mostly remind us to do our roles properly so that we get the reward. The community members were active, at some point they organized to work with the contractor when he got challenges on the route [for the road] that had been identified, they cleared the bushes and helped to remove some of the rocks as well." [R3.I19]

Although the idea of community recognition was welcomed within the communities, there was a general feeling during and after implementation that the recognition approach did not focus on tangible benefits to the committee members. Since the experiment was implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic when economic conditions deteriorated significantly, it may be the case that symbolic, social benefits became less salient and less important. COVID-19 restrictions during implementation of the experiment included curfews, stay home orders, and the closure of key sectors of the economy, which increased the value attached to material wealth and cash income compared to symbolism.

"The committee members who led projects to this level would have been rewarded with something else like if they were given some money as a reward, it would have been good. I think it's the best form of recognition for committee members." [R3.I3]

"I think that in addition to all of that [symbolic recognition], the individuals should be given a tangible token such as money or goats or just a hamper of household products like soap." [R3.I12]

"Giving certificates and an envelope. And according to what the person has done and the profit made, we may give cows or envelopes" [R2.FGD22]

> "I don't think there is any problem with it [symbolic recognition] but maybe there would be a need to reward people a bit differently other than putting their names on the sign-post. A tangible gift for remembrance would be good." [R3.14]

Discussions with community leaders and community members also showed that the concept of recognition was not always well understood. This could be because it was not properly explained to the committee members or because the messages sent by voice message were misunderstood by some committee members. Similarly, there was limited engagement of community members during the implementation phase of the project. The focus of reinforcing the possibility for an award during implementation was mainly directed to committee members. Although there were engagements with the community members through SMS messages and occasional phone calls, these methods may not have generated much community engagement during the implementation of projects. It may have been more effective to work directly with members of communities that had social influence to roll out and reinforce the opportunity for recognition. In the future, prospective recognition might be more widely publicized to a broader audience to better mobilize collective action around the awards.

Discussions revealed how low education levels among community and committee members were also a key challenge in fulfilling the standards for management and oversight. For instance, discussion with committee leaders shows that although the project materials and checklists of management actions were translated into the local language and were available verbally by training and voice calls, many committee members were illiterate or semi-illiterate. They relied on the understanding of a few committee members to determine how to carry out their oversight roles.

> "because we are not educated and when we get someone from outside and knows that we are not educated, they will exploit us" [R1.FGD11]

> "... You know the level of education also matters, most of our women are illiterates and they are very few who are educated and those who completed at least primary seven... When they [women] are seated with men, they normally listen to what men say and they are very few who can put up a hand and say something, so it is their natural habit" [R1.IDI12]

This could have limited how well committees were able to use the guidance documents and checklists to carry out the management and oversight envisioned in revenue sharing standards. Similarly, participants observed that community members did not always understand what they were entitled to under revenue sharing and that they had low standards for the delivery of revenue sharing projects because of repeated exposure to corrupt officials and failed projects in previous years. Under these conditions, it may have been difficult for community leaders and the public to envision alternate ways of managing revenue sharing projects prior to the public recognition of a few committees for excellence.

> "The project here was not very successful because there was a bit of conflict and disorganization. We were organized at the beginning because we had agreed on what we wanted until some officials came and imposed on us the idea of cattle. Because of this disorganization, the project was bound to fail." [R3.I16]

> "The contractor never provided us with any form of accountability. There was a lot of government leaders' interference for the district, this made us become suspicious that there was corruption happening. As a member of the community, I am not sure about how much was spent and cannot gauge how much of the funds that were supposed to be used were actually used." [R3.I7]

Besides these main factors, another common explanation about the lack of impact of the offers of recognition was the voluntary nature of committee service and the significant economic stresses faced by committee members in daily life. These stresses were more severe during the COVID-19 pandemic. Most of the committee members expressed concerns that they have responsibility for multiple tasks in their villages. Some are part of village health teams or are elected onto their village council, while others reported having to attend to their own business for their survival. Without compensation for their service on the project committees, attention to oversight of the revenue sharing projects was low at times. Discussions also revealed that an unequal division of labor and power relations within households affects women who serve on committees negatively. Female committee members indicated that they were heavily absorbed into domestic chores and care work, including working in gardens and caring for children and the sick. This sometimes affected their participation in committee meetings and project monitoring tasks.

Other challenges in carrying out management and oversight tasks include limited monitoring and support from local government, a lack of opportunities to engage meaningfully in the management of the nearby Bwindi National Park, weak and selective enforcement of laws on corrupt officials, and community acceptance of corruption when it benefits them.

Retrospective Recognition: Leader and Public Norms

Field Experimental Evidence

We conducted a second field experiment that involved making for voice calls to random set of committee members and residents about the four committees that earned recognition for their adherence to procurement and oversight standards. Each of the calls was repeated up to three times for each resident and committee member. At the endline survey, we first collected evidence about whether each committee member had heard which of the committees had earned recognition and what they did to earn it. As displayed in the first row of Figure 4, treated committee members were much more likely to have heard which committees had been awarded recognition and what they did to earn the award (54% more likely in non-standardized terms), confirming the successful delivery of the treatment. Treated committee members who heard about the committees that had been awarded recognition were slightly more likely to report that residents recognized their efforts in the revenue-sharing program, indicating perhaps that committee members thought the recognition program made their tasks more salient to the public.

However, beyond successfully receiving notice of the awards, treated committee members did not exhibit changes in underlying behaviors and norms as compared to control. In particular, they were no more likely to play the honesty or embezzlement game (described in the previous section) differently than members of committees assigned to control, nor were they more likely to report stronger anti-corruption norms. Overall, learning about the committees being recognized and their specific actions to earn recognition did not cause detectable changes that might have come about through a desire for emulation or changed perceptions of descriptive norms.

Residents were also no more likely to have stronger anti-corruption norms or behaviors if
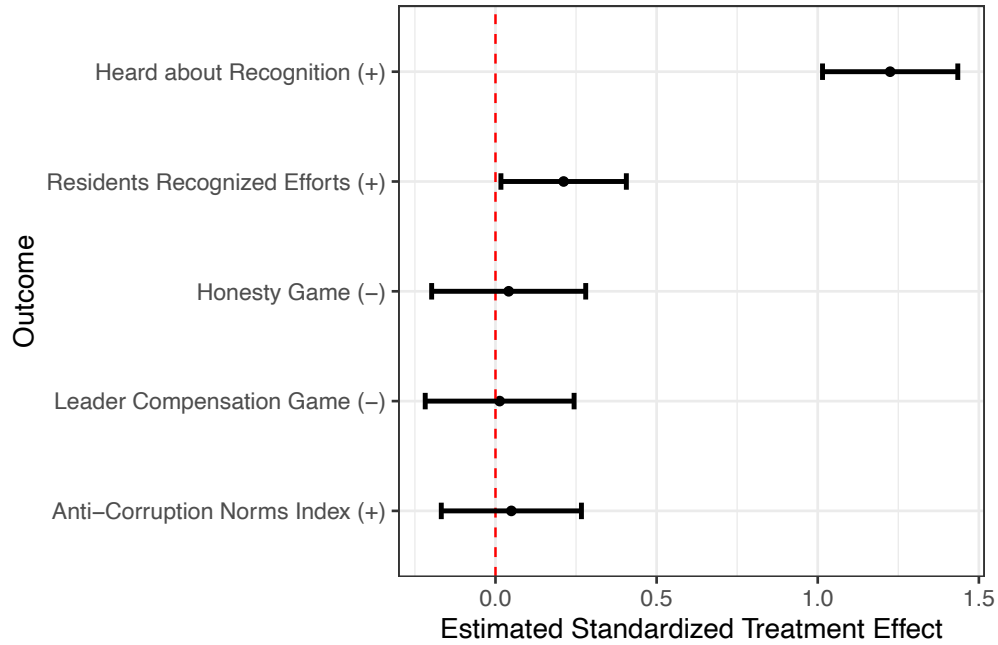
Figure 4: **Effects of learning about recognized committees on committee members' behaviors and attitudes.** *Notes:* 95% confidence intervals derived from robust standard errors.

they were treated with voice messages about the committees that had earned recognition. This is despite highly successful delivery of the retrospective recognition treatment (Figure 5), with residents assigned to treatment being 33% more likely to have heard of the committees that earned recognition and what they did to earn recognition than residents assigned to control.

For both committee members and residents, we estimate complier average causal effects using individual-level treatment assignment as an instrumental variable for having heard about the committees being recognized (see SI Section 2.1). We do not find any evidence that non-compliance with the treatment attenuates the main results of the retrospective treatment.

Ethnographic Evidence

At endline, key informant interviews revealed that in communities where social recognition was made with signs and radio announcements, communities members felt happy for the successful implementation of their project. They attributed their success to active community participation in the implementation of the project, vigilance of the community, and transparency exhibited during the implementation of the project.
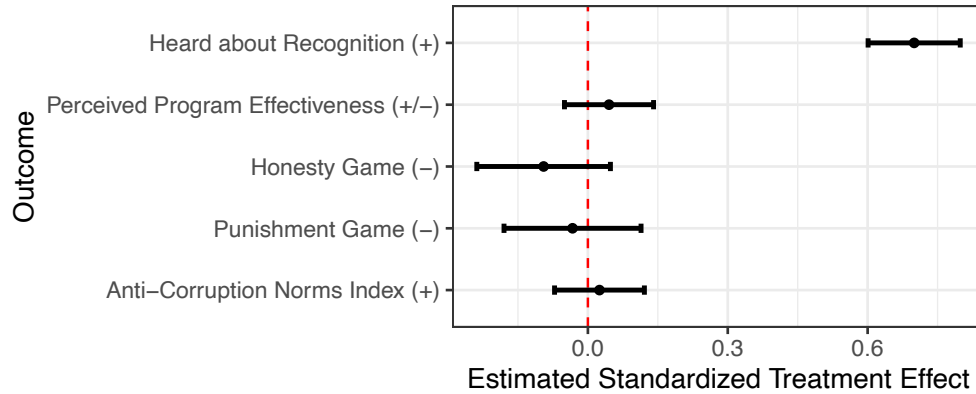
Figure 5: **Effects of learning about recognized committees on residents' behaviors and attitudes.** *Notes:* 95% confidence intervals derived from robust standard errors.

For instance, participants noted that community leaders who have worked well for their communities could be rewarded by being appointed to other leadership positions and while those who could not perform well could be dropped from their positions. During the endline, in some villages community leaders were dropped because of the perception from the community that they did not serve them to their expectations in the management of revenue sharing projects, which may yield better management of future revenue-sharing projects.

> "... when the councilors interfered, they [community members] were very vocal and these councilors have been removed from leadership positions within our community. The community members want to work hard and they want to make sure that this road is worked to the best that it can be because we know the importance of this road." [R3.I2]

At endline, participants revealed that social recognition may have a positive impact on the execution of future revenue projects and the potential to reduce corruption in the future. The current social recognition has set benchmarks in terms of reputation and transparency for community leaders. Many were hopeful that those benchmarks would inspire diligence and integrity during the next cycle.

In addition, social recognition created an environment of positive competition between communities. Residents in villages where social recognition was not earned showed eagerness to learn from villages that excelled well in their revenue sharing projects. This desire to learn from positive examples could increase community participation in future revenue sharing projects.

"As the saying goes, a good name is better than many riches. So, indeed, this recognition will have an impact... I would choose a good name among my people because that is also capital. It is more valuable than having money and being alienated from the people." [R3.I13]

"I would rather be poor and with a good name instead of being distrustful in order to accumulate fame and wealth. This sets a good record across the generations. For example, my children will know that I worked on this road even when I am gone. I am 60 years old now and a good name is very important to me. When my name is read on the radio, I get more respect in the community." [R3.I2]

"I think it will encourage people to work hard to not only perform extraordinarily but also to leave tangible results that anybody can see." [R3.I16]

While participants were optimistic about the potential for the impacts of recognition in changing expectations for future rounds of revenue sharing, a single year of experience with this kind of recognition may have been too short to change underlying norms and behaviors. Social norms change is a gradual process and requires continuous social engagement and active social mobilization (de la Sablonnière, 2017), which was not possible to measure in the context of this study.

Discussion

This experiment demonstrates that it is hard to change the behaviors of community leaders by offering the prospect of future recognition, particularly if those leaders are operating within a system of public management that often makes them feel powerless. The lack of response to the *prospective* recognition treatment is especially meaningful in light of evidence that the treatment was received successfully and that committee members strongly *expected* to receive positive recognition if they completed financial and project management tasks (Figure 2). This main result is consistent with related work showing that attempts to improve public management through procedural nudges like measuring and rating performance are often ineffective if they do not address root causes of dysfunction in the public sector (Muralidharan and Singh, 2020).

The results of the *retrospective* recognition field experiment underscores how difficult it is to shift norms without reforming the structures that deliver public programs. Learning about posi-

tive examples of committee that undertook their responsibilities with diligence and integrity did not change underlying norms that support corruption or their behavioral expressions. While many members of committee and the public were optimistic at the endline interviews that the recognized committees had set new benchmarks for future rounds of revenue sharing, it remains to be seen whether these new benchmarks will inspire community engagement, promote diligence in the implementation of public projects, and support a growing expectation of integrity among elected community leaders. Recent research has highlight how raising civic expectations among the public might offer a pathway to better governance (Gottlieb, 2016). Yet, the pathways to creating "greater expectations" in scalable ways that will affect official behavior are not always clear.

The results of our study are consistent with emerging evidence about awards in other contexts. For example, Robinson et al. (2021) find that pre-announced awards for student attendance at school had no effect on increasing attendance and that earning an award for attendance has a negative effect on subsequent attendance, perhaps by highlighting that such behavior is different than descriptive norms. This real-world study contrasts with efforts to investigate the consequences of awards in short-term labor markets (Kosfeld and Neckermann, 2011). Taken together with our study, these divergent result suggest the need to study award schemes in realistic environments and over longer time frames.

In terms of policy implications, this study suggests that recognition schemes should not be considered in isolation of more systematic and structural approaches to anti-corruption. Some respondents were hopeful that recognition of committee could set new standards, but we did not find any evidence that recognition of committees, which are not the only point of management for revenue sharing, improved the delivery of projects. At best positive recognition might play a supporting role in more structural reforms of the public sector.

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Supporting Information:

Recognizing Local Leaders as an Anti-Corruption Strategy: Experimental and Ethnographic Evidence from Uganda

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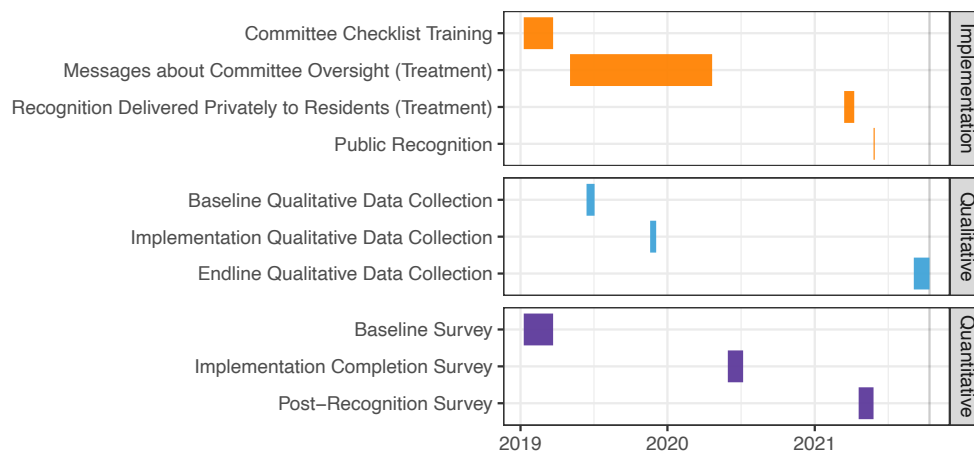# Contents

1 Implementation

1.1 Timeline

Figure S1: **Timeline of interventions and data collection.**

1.2 Committee Checklist Items

<u>Procurement Committee</u>

- Gain UWA approval for selected project. Do one of the following:

  - Pursue project approved by UWA;
  - Follow UWA Guidelines to make a change by getting permission from the Community Conservation Warden to hold a new planning meeting, holding a meeting, and securing the support of the community for a change.

- Secure and review bids for project. Do one of the following:

  - For each separate project complete the tasks associated with evaluating the bids and fill out at least three Contractor Bid Rating Worksheets;
  - Complete less than three Contractor Bid Rating Worksheets and fill out a Request for Additional Bids Worksheet to show the Committee's efforts to secure more bids from the Subcounty Chief.

- For each project, inform the Bwindi Information Network which contractor you have selected once the recommended contractor has been identified by your committee;

- Promptly report problems and provide updates to Project Management Committee the Bwindi Information Network and report to the Bwindi Information Network at least once every four weeks once a contractor begins work, even if there are no problems;

- Fill out the Contractor Evaluation Worksheet for each contractor;

Management Committee

- Select contractor identified by the Procurement Committee and report the contractor you have selected to the Bwindi Information Network;

- Fill out a Project Summary Worksheet for each contractor selected and contact the Bwindi Information Network once completed;

- Promptly report problems and provide updates to the Subcounty Chief or UWA's Community Warden along with the Bwindi Information Network and report to the Bwindi Information Network at least once every two weeks once a contractor begins work, even if there are no problems;

- Ensure proper labeling of revenue sharing project by contractor. Do one of the following:

    - Make sure the contractor has properly labelled all revenue sharing projects before providing the committee's final approval of project;
    - Receive permission from the Warden of Community at UWA Headquarters Bwindi to move ahead without proper labeling;

- Fill out the Contractor Evaluation Worksheet for each contractor;

1.3 Details of Prospective Recognition Treatment

Each combined project management committee (PMC) / community procurement committee (CPC) assigned to treatment was offered the opportunity to earn recognition if they completed a checklist of items during the implementation phase of revenue sharing. We regularly reminder members of procurement and management committees that the form of recognition to be given to all villages that adhered to guidelines was:

1. A large sign prominently placed along a roadway near or entering a village that commends the village for excellence in revenue sharing, listing the names of the members of the PMC and CPC in that village (or parish), unless they opted out.

2. A radio announcement commending the village for excellence in revenue sharing and specifically naming the members of the PMC and CPC in that village (or parish), unless they opted out.

Our research team, in partnership with the Uganda Wildlife Authority, offered training to all committees at the start of the revenue-sharing cycle on the management and oversight checklists to be completed. These trainings were offered in-person and included the chance to ask questions. At the end of each training, committees assigned to treatment were verbally informed about the possibility of earning recognition if they completed all the tasks covered in the training.

As part of these baseline training sessions, we collected all available mobile phone numbers for committee members. During the next several month, members of committees assigned to both

treatment and control received identical reminder messages about completing the management and oversight tasks covered in the baseline training sessions, delivered by outgoing mass voice calls. These messages covered both instructions for completing the tasks and the reasons why the tasks were important for the management of revenue sharing projects. Committee members also received instructions about how to receive either phone-based support for completing the tasks or replay previous outgoing messages. At the conclusion of these calls, members of committees assigned to treatment were reminded of the opportunity to earn recognition for completing the tasks and the specific format that the recognition would take. In addition to regular outgoing voice calls to members of committee, irregular mass calls to all subscribers of the Bwindi Information Network highlight the potential for project committees assigned to treatment to earn recognition.

1.4 Details of Retrospective Recognition Treatment

Upon completion of the implementation phase of the revenue-sharing cycle, we collected checklists from all committees and compiled all of the incoming oversight reports that they had submitted during the last several months. Based on the completion of the worksheets and calls, we determined that four committees had substantially achieved the guidelines for the management of revenue-sharing.

For each of these four committees, we conducted additional in-depth interviews to find out more about how implementation of the project had gone and what stood out to committee members about their performance. Based on these interviews, we developed a series of four, two-minute messages describing the key accomplishment of each committee. In these messages, we congratulated the committees and explained how their actions helped to improve management of revenue sharing and deter corruption.

The Bwindi Information Network is a service with 4025 subscribers who have opted-in to receive ongoing messages about park management and local events. We randomly assigned half of the subscribers to receive messages about the committees that had been recognized by outgoing voice calls over two weeks. We attempted each call three times for each subscriber. The subscribers assigned to the control condition received four outgoing voice calls describing different actions they could take to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in their communities, to ensure every participant was contacted an equal number of attempts. We also assigned half of the committee members, whose contact information we obtained during baseline training, to these exact same treatment arms.

1.5 Completion of Outgoing Calls

During implementation of both of the field experiments, committee members received outgoing voice calls. In the prospective recognition experiment, these outgoing voice calls provided reminders about the checklist items in both the treatment and control groups, and reminders of the opportunity to earn recognition in the treatment group. In the retrospective recognition experiment, the outgoing voice calls provided information about the members of committees that had earned recognition and the actions they took to earn recognition. Excluding outgoing calls that failed for technical reasons with the service provider and calls that were repeats for the subset of subscribers who we failed to reach with an identical earlier call, we see that any given outgoing calls reached approximately 55% of committee members (Figure S2) and that the rate did not decline notably

4

during the study (Figure S3). Additionally, the rate of contact is higher including incomplete calls, which are logged whenever the user hung up prior to the end of the recording. In some cases, audio files contained extra seconds of unused time at the end of the file, which cause calls to be logged as incomplete at a higher rate.
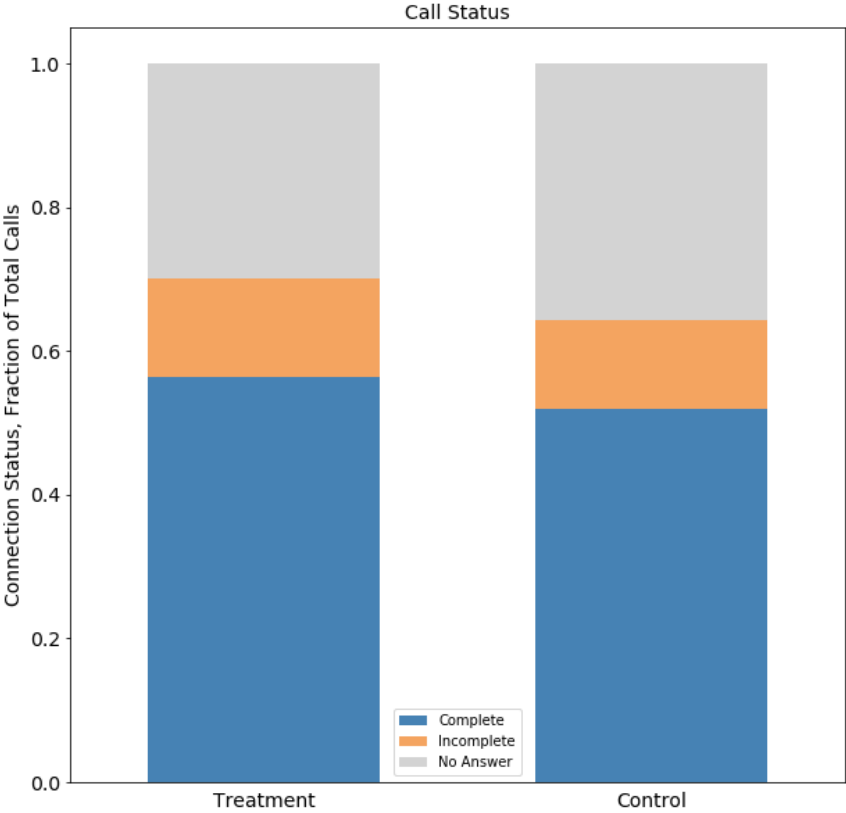

Figure S2: **Summary of completion status of all outgoing calls to committee members, excluding those that failed for technical reasons and repeated attempts**
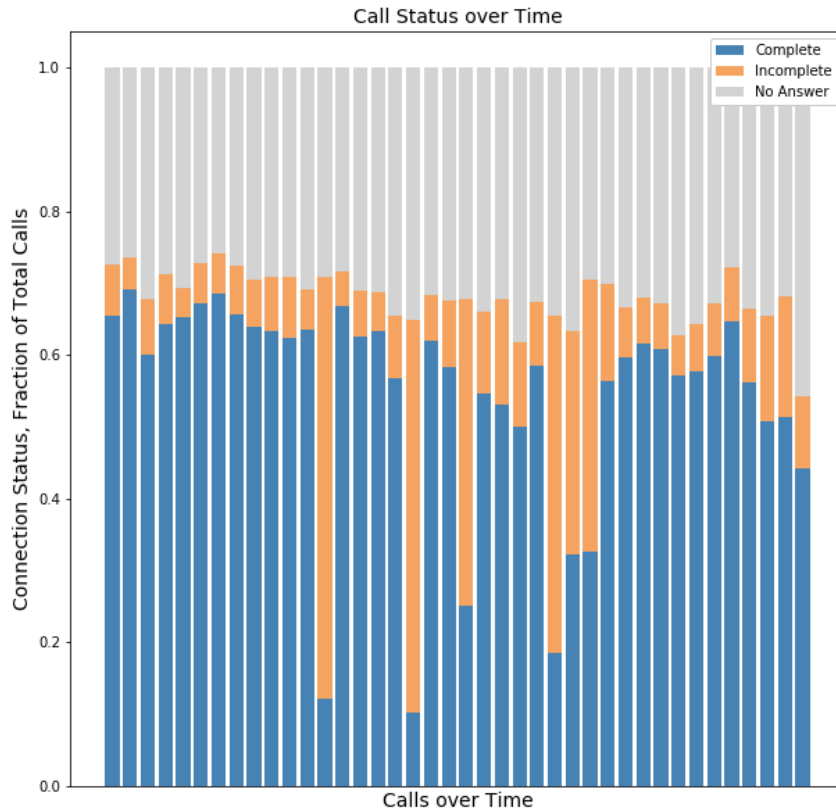
Figure S3: **Per call completion status of all outgoing calls to committee members, excluding those that failed for technical reasons and repeated attempts**

1.6 COVID-19 Safety

We originally planned to complete all data collection using in-person surveys, focus groups, and key informant interviews. However, the COVID-19 pandemic significantly disrupted our initial plans and required us to shift to remote interactions with committee members and residents. After March 2020, all interactions with participants in this study were conducted remotely.

We developed a strict safety protocol that was approved for emergency use by the lead author's home institution for training the enumeration team to conduct surveys remotely. The training took place outdoors with protective equipment and social distancing strictly observed. Upon completion of the training, enumerators completed the surveys remotely from their own homes. The survey on retrospective recognition was added later but completed remotely according to the same safety protocols. The only contact with participants after March 2020 was to collect completed oversight booklets from committee members, which was again conducted outdoors according to approved safety procedures.

The first two rounds of qualitative data collection were completed in person, but the final round

after the conclusion of the public recognition of committees were completed by telephone to committee members and residents. This precluded the use of focus group interviews for the final stage of qualitative data collection.

The installation of signs in the recognized villages strictly followed public health guidelines. The project manager traveled individually by private vehicle to oversee the installation of the signs, while taking all precautions required by local law including distancing and masking. Taken together, these practices mitigated risks of continuing the research during the active pandemic.

2 Additional Results

2.1 Complier Average Causal Effects

The prospective recognition treatment with committee members could be considered a type of encouragement design, which caused committee members to have more confidence that they would be recognized for their efforts. To rule out the possibility that the intent-to-treat results in Figure 2 (committee survey outcomes after prospective recognition treatment) are attenuated by non-compliance in encouragement to expect recognition, we re-estimate complier average causal effects by using treatment as an instrumental variable for the expectation of being recognized (i.e., the manipulation check measured from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)). Even though first-stage results are strong, there is no evidence that committee members who were effectively encouraged to expected recognition have local average treatment effects that would be unexpected under the null hypothesis.

Likewise, the retrospective field experiment that delivered notification to both committee members and residents about the officials and committees that had received awards for excellence in revenue-sharing had significant non-compliance. Using treatment as an instrument for whether committee members or residents had heard about the committee who received awards, we estimate complier average causal effects for the key outcomes presented in the main manuscript. There is no evidence that the main treatment effects are attenuated by non-compliance.
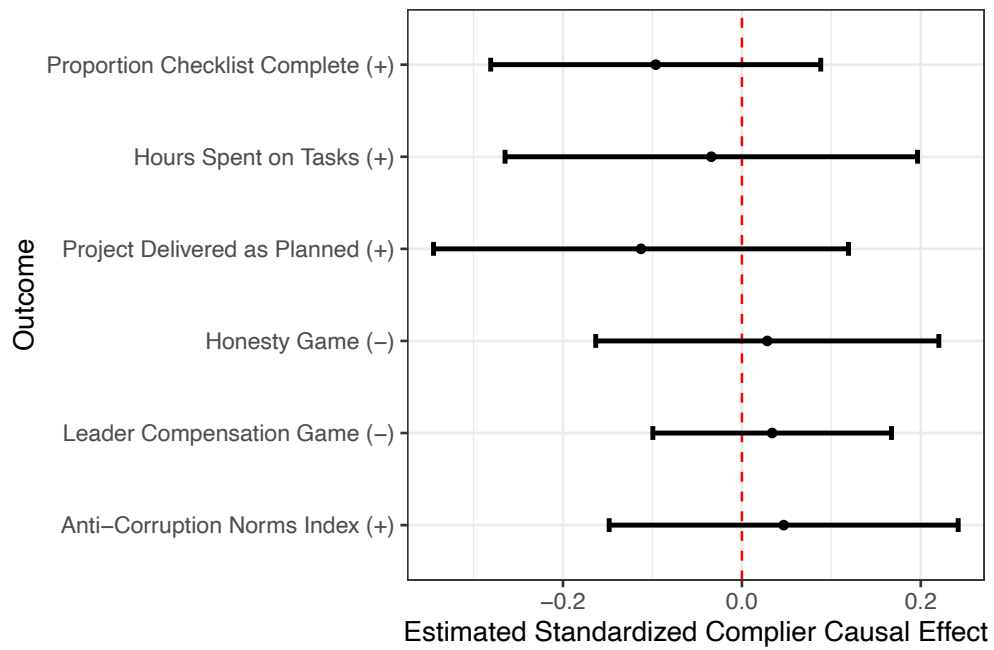
Figure S4: **Complier effects of prospective recognition treatment on effort, project delivery, play in behavioral games, and anti-corruption norms of committee members.** *Notes:* 95% confidence intervals derived from robust standard errors. Standardization is done by divided estimates and confidence intervals by the standard deviation of the relevant outcome among compliers in the control group.
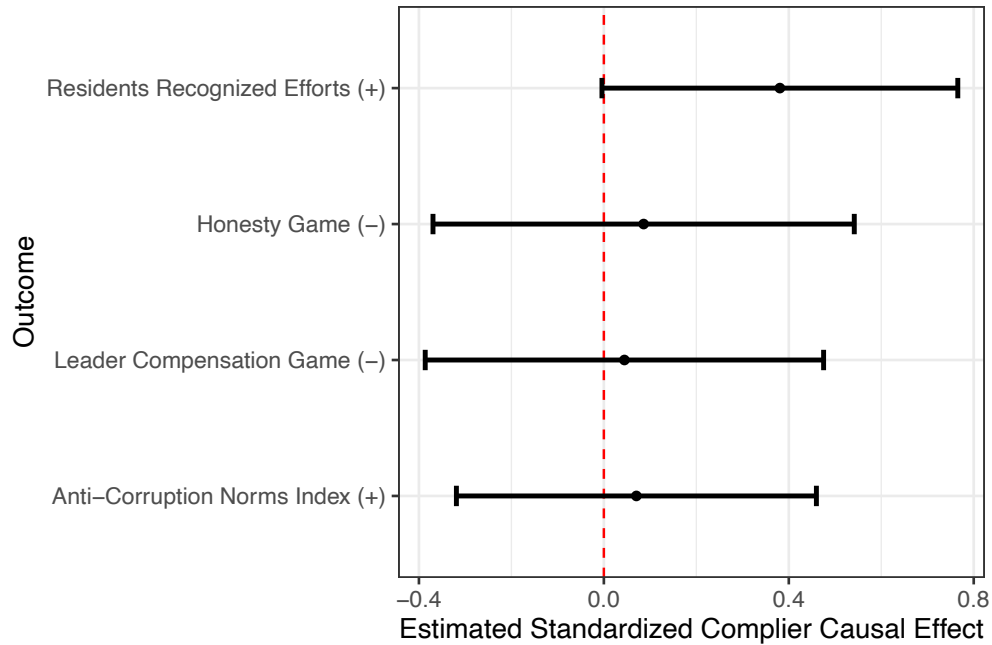
Figure S5: **Complier effects of retrospective recognition treatment on committee members' perceptions that residents recognized effort, play in behavioral games, and anti-corruption norms.** *Notes:* 95% confidence intervals derived from robust standard errors. Standardization is done by divided estimates and confidence intervals by the standard deviation of the relevant outcome among compliers in the control group.

Figure S6: **Complier effects of retrospective recognition treatment on perceived program effectiveness, play in behavioral games, and anti-corruption norms of residents.** *Notes:* 95% confidence intervals derived from robust standard errors. Standardization is done by divided estimates and confidence intervals by the standard deviation of the relevant outcome among compliers in the control group.
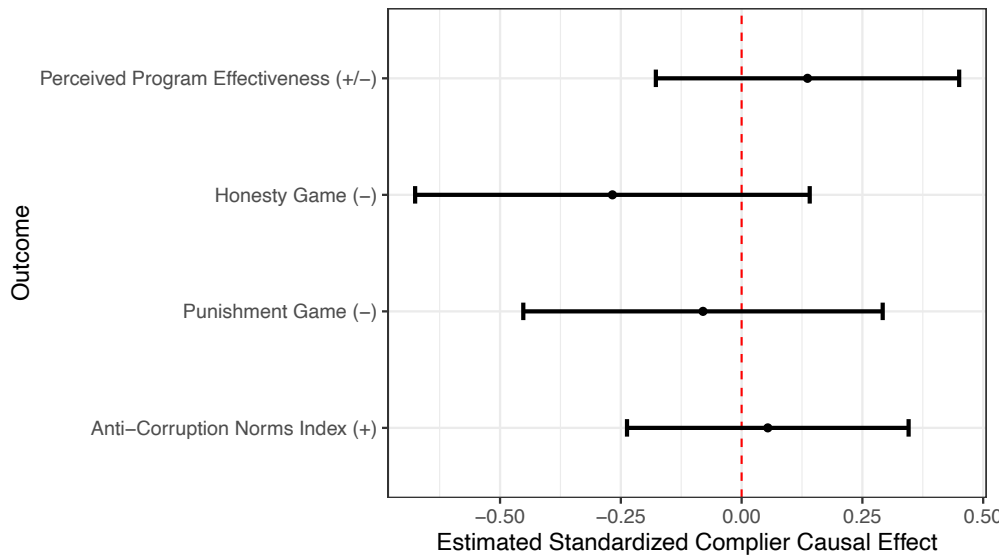
3 Pre-registration

We filed three pre-analysis plans associated with the field experimental aspects of this project: (1) an initial plan prior to the assignment of treatment (dated: 8 January 2019); (2) an updated plan documenting changes to the design and measurement protocol made necessary because of the COVID-19 pandemic prior to the collection of outcome data (dated: 6 June 2020); and (3) an addendum to the pre-analysis describing additional follow-up measures and a follow-up experiment prior to the collection of those outcome data (dated: 26 January 2021). All of the results reported in the main text follow the procedures outlined in the updated and addendum pre-analysis plans, though we note the following decisions that were not explicitly covered in the updated or addendum plans:

1. There were no baseline surveys conducted for village Ntungamo (village.id 65), which was due to an oversight during implementation of the baseline survey. We cluster impute the covariates for this village from parish averages for analysis, in line with the imputation procedures outlined in the updated PAP.

2. Our description of the covariate project delivered (O1) was incomplete in the PAP. In practice, villages had multiple projects of different sizes in previous cycles, which makes aggregation difficult. We therefore use average level of satisfaction with implementation from previous RS projects from village residents as this covariate. We believe this measure come closest to our intention of conditioning on past performance at implementation of revenue-sharing projects.

3. The updated pre-analysis plan does not mention how cluster imputation will work for covariates that are not measured on a Likert-scale. For monthly income (R22), we use the middle value of each income band at a numeric value for income. We transform the measure of literacy (R23) onto an interval scale as with other measures.

4 Measurement

As indicated in Figure S1, we collected data for the field experimental part of this research in several stages. When the project was first designed, we planned to complete baseline and endline surveys with committee members and residents in the field. We completed baseline surveys with committee members concurrently with the training on oversight responsibilities. We completed baseline surveys with a quota of residents from each of the revenue-sharing villages based on a random walk pattern. The COVID-19 pandemic forced us to complete all surveys after the baseline remotely by call center (see Section 1.6).

To conduct surveys of committee members after baseline, we used telephone numbers collected at the initial, in-person training on committee responsibilities for oversight. In the case of residents, we contacted all 4025 opt-in subscribers to the Bwindi Information Network as potential survey respondents. We developed this network over several years to promote communication between residents who lived near the park. Subscribers include residents from every frontline village, except those recently established. For each round of remote surveys, we attempted to contact

each potential respondent three times over three distinct days. In each round of the surveys, we randomized the order of the call list.

While full copies are the survey instruments are available in replication materials, Table S1 reports the measures used as outcomes and reported in the main text.

Table S1: Outcome measures reported in the main text

Figure 1: Prospective Recognition and Observed Committee Outcomes	
Worksheets Completed	The total number of oversight worksheets completed by each combined project committee, including the Contractor Bid Rating Worksheet, Contractor Evaluation Form (x2), Project Summary Worksheet, and Completion of Contract Worksheet [0-5].
Status Reports	The total number of unprompted, incoming status reports during the revenue-sharing implementation period [0-5].
Procurement Committee Rating	The average rating of the procurement committee performance as evaluated by the community conservation wardens and community conservation rangers [1 (poor) - 4 (excellent)], weighted by the certainty of the evaluation [1 (very uncertain) - 4 (very certain)].
Management Committee Rating	The average rating of the management committee performance as evaluated by the community conservation wardens and community conservation rangers [1 (poor) - 4 (excellent)], weighted by the certainty of the evaluation [1 (very uncertain) - 4 (very certain)].
Figure 2: Prospective Recognition and Self-Reported Committee Outcomes	
Expected Recognition	(MC1) If our committee completes all items of the checklist, we expect to receive public recognition in the form of signs, radio announcements, or ceremonies once coronavirus restrictions are lifted [1 (strongly disagree) - 5 (strongly agree)].
Proportion Checklist Complete	(D1) Proportion of committee checklist items reported completed from among 11 items on each checklist for the combined committee [0-1]
Hours Spent on Tasks	(C1.e) How many hours on average do you think you spent each week on your management or procurement committee responsibilities during the period of implementation for revenue sharing? [number]
Project Delivered as Planned	(D2) Have these project(s) been fully delivered as planned? [yes vs. all other responses]

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Honesty Game	(D3) Respondent asked to think of number 1-10 without revealing it. Enumerator states a random number from 1-10 and asks if it matches the respondent number, with 1000 shilling reward if respondent reports a match. Played for five rounds. Proportion of reported matches [0-1]
Leader Compensation Game	(D5) Each committee member is offered a fund of 5000 shillings and they can keep any portion. Whatever amount is left over after their withdrawal is tripled and sent to three random, anonymous residents in their village. Outcome is amount kept by committee member [0-5000]
Anti-Corruption Norms Index	(M2) Combined index of committee anti-corruption norms and values, aggregated by taking the mean of the z-scores of available items for each respondent [-3.12 to 1.22]
Figure 3: Prospective Recognition and Resident Perceptions	
Perceived Program Effectiveness	(H2) Combined index of resident perceptions of revenue sharing, aggregated by taking the mean of the z-scores of available items for each respondent [-3.59 to 1.20].
Honesty Game	(D3) Respondent asked to think of number 1-10 without revealing it. Enumerator states a random number from 1-10 and asks if it matches the respondent number, with 1000 shilling reward if respondent reports a match. Played for five rounds. Proportion of reported matches [0-1]
Punishment Game	(D4) Each resident is offered a windfall bonus of 5000 shillings and they can keep any portion. Whatever amount they keep will also be sent to a local leader who has displayed a willingness to keep more resources in the Leader Compensation Game [0-5000]
Anti-Corruption Norms Index	(M1) Combined index of resident anti-corruption norms and values, aggregated by taking the mean of the z-scores of available items for each respondent [-4.55 to 1.37]
Figure 4: Retrospective Recognition and Committee Outcomes	
Heard about Recognition	(MC.c) Have you heard about the committees that received awards for excellence in revenue sharing and what they did to earn those awards? [yes—no]
Residents Recognized Efforts	(C2) I believe local residents have recognized efforts that the management and procurement committees have made to implement revenue-sharing projects successfully [1 (strongly disagree) - 5 (strongly agree)]

Honesty Game	(D3) Respondent asked to think of number 1-10 without revealing it. Enumerator states a random number from 1-10 and asks if it matches the respondent number, with 1000 shilling reward if respondent reports a match. Played for five rounds. Proportion of reported matches [0-1]
Leader Compensation Game	(D5) Each committee member is offered a fund of 5000 shillings and they can keep any portion. Whatever amount is left over after their withdrawal is tripled and sent to three random, anonymous residents in their village. Outcome is amount kept by committee member [0-5000]
Anti-Corruption Norms Index	(M2) Combined index of committee anti-corruption norms and values, aggregated by taking the mean of the z-scores of available items for each respondent [-3.12 to 1.22]

Figure 5: Retrospective Recognition and Resident Outcomes	
Heard about Recognition	(MC.r) Have you heard about the committees that received awards for excellence in revenue sharing and what they did to earn those awards? [yes—no]
Perceived Program Effectiveness	(H2) Combined index of resident perceptions of revenue sharing, aggregated by taking the mean of the z-scores of available items for each respondent [-5.07 to 1.13].
Honesty Game	(D3) Respondent asked to think of number 1-10 without revealing it. Enumerator states a random number from 1-10 and asks if it matches the respondent number, with 1000 shilling reward if respondent reports a match. Played for five rounds. Proportion of reported matches [0-1]
Punishment Game	(D4) Each resident is offered a windfall bonus of 5000 shillings and they can keep any portion. Whatever amount they keep will also be sent to a local leader who has displayed a willingness to keep more resources in the Leader Compensation Game [0-5000]
Anti-Corruption Norms Index	(M1) Combined index of resident anti-corruption norms and values, aggregated by taking the mean of the z-scores of available items for each respondent [-6.37 to 1.07]

5 Ethnographic Evidence

5.1 List of Focus Groups and Interviews

Round 1 Focus Group Discussions and In-depth Interviews, Scoping and Pre-Implementation Phase

R1.I1 – In-depth interview with PMC member, Mukono village, 14/06/2019 (T)

R1.I2 – In-depth interview with CPC member, Omubunga Village, 6/15/2019 (T)

R1.I3 – In-depth interview with CPC member, Kyabworo village, 6/15/2019 (C)

R1.I4 – In-depth interview with PMC member, Murushasha village, 6/17/2019 (C)

R1.I5 – In-depth interview with PMC member, Kyogo-Kabale Village 6/18/2019 (C)

R1.I6 – In-depth interview with CPC member, Nyakabungo-Kashekyera Village, 6/18/2019 (T)

R1.I7 – In-depth interview with PMC member, Ndeego village, 6/20/2019 (T)

R1.I8 – In-depth interview with PMC member, Nteko village 6/21/2019 (T)

R1.I9 - In-depth interview with CPC member, Nombe village, 6/22/2019 (C)

R1.I10 - In-depth interview with CPC member, Rugandu village, 6/19/2019 (T)

R1.I11 - In-depth interview with Community Leader, Kanugu 7/4/2019 (T/C)

R1.I12 - In-depth interview with District official, Kisoro 7/4/2019 (T/C)

R1.I13 - In-depth interview with Local Leader, Kisoro 6/22/2019 (T/C)

R1.I14 - In-depth interview with Subcounty official, Rubanda 6/19/2019 (T/C)

R1.I15 - In-depth interview with UWA officials, Kisoro 6/21/2019 (T/C)

R1.I16 - In-depth interview with Subcounty Official, 6/19/2019 (T/C)

R1.FGD1 – Focus Group Discussion with PMC/ CPC members, Kazahi village (14/06/2019) (C)

R1.FGD2 – Focus Group Discussion with PMC/ CPC members, Kazahi village (14/06/2019) (C)

R1.FGD3 - Focus Group Discussion with Community members adults (Male), Omubunga village, 6/15/2019 (T)

R1.FGD4 - Focus Group Discussion with Community Members-Youths, Omubunga village,6/15/2019 (T)

R1.FGD5 - Focus Group Discussion with PMC/ CPC members, Bugandaro, 6/15/2019 (C)

R1.FGD6 - Focus Group Discussion with Community members adults (Male), Kyabworo village, 6/15/2019 (C)

R1.FGD7 - Focus Group Discussion with PMC/ CPC members Mpung village, 6/17/2019 (T)

R1.FGD8 - Focus Group Discussion with PMC/ CPC members, Rukungwe village,6/17/2019 (T)

R1.FGD9 - Focus Group Discussion with Community members adults (Male), Rukungwe village, 6/17/2019 (T)

R1.FGD10 - Focus Group Discussion with Community members adults (Female), Murushasha village, 6/17/2019 (C)

R1.FGD11 – Focus Group Discussion with PMC/ CPC members, Kyogo village, 6/18/2019 (C)

R1.FGD12 - Focus Group Discussion with Community members adults (Female), Kyogo village, 6/18/2019 (C)

R1.FGD13 - Focus Group Discussion with PMC/ CPC members, Nyakabungo village, 6/18/2019 (T)

R1.FGD14 - Focus Group Discussion with Community Members-Youths, Nyakabungo village, 6/18/2019 (T)

R1.FGD15 - Focus Group Discussion with PMC/ CPC members, Mashoho village, 6/20/2019 (C)

R1.FGD16 - Focus Group Discussion with Community members Youths, Mashoho village,6/20/2019 (C)

R1.FGD17 - Focus Group Discussion with Community members adults (Male), Ndeego village, 6/20/2019 (T)

R1.FGD18 - Focus Group Discussion with PMC/ CPC members, Murore village, 6/21/2019, (C)

R1.FGD19 - Focus group discussion with Community members adults (Female), Murore village, 6/21/2019, (C)

R1.FGD20 - Focus Group Discussion with Community members adults (Male), Nteko village 6/21/2019 (T)

R1.FGD21 - Focus Group Discussion with Community members adults (Male), Nombe village, 6/22/2019 (C)

R1.FGD22 - Focus Group Discussion with Community members Youths, Nombe village,6/22/2019 (C)

R1.FGD23 - Focus Group Discussion with Community members Youths, Nombe village,6/22/2019 (C)

R1.FGD24 - Focus Group Discussion with Community members Youths, Kashija village,6/22/2019 (T)

R1.FGD25 - Focus Group Discussion with PMC/ CPC members, Kashija village, 6/22/2019 (T)

R1.FGD26 - Focus Group Discussion with PMC/ CPC members, Mataka village, 6/19/2019 (C)

R1.FGD27 - Focus Group Discussion with Community members adults (Female), Mataka village, 6/19/2019 (C)

R1.FGD28 - Focus Group Discussion with Community members adults (male), Rugandu village 6/20/2019 (T)

Round 2 Focus Group Discussions and In-depth Interviews, Implementation Phase

R2.I1 – In-depth interview with PMC member, Kyabworo village, 11/27/2019(C)

R2.I2 – In-depth interview with CPC member, Nyamizo village,11/25/2019(T)

R2.I3 – In-depth interview with PMC member, Rugandu village,11/19/2019 (C)

R2.I4 – In-depth interview with CPC member, Ndeego village, 11/20/2019 (T)

R2.I5 – In-depth interview with CPC member, Nteko village, 11/27/2019(T)

R2.I6 – In-depth interview with PMC member, Nombe village, 11/23/2019

R2.I7 – In-depth interview with UWA official, Nkuringo, 11/27/2019(T/C)

R2.I8 – In-depth interview with District official, Rubanda, 11/26/2019(T/C)

R2.I9 – In-depth interview with Community leader, Mpungu 02/12/2019(T/C)

R2.I10 – In-depth interview with Community leader, Nkuringo 11/27/2019(T/C)

R2.FGD1 – Focus Group Discussion with CPC members, Kazahi village 11/26/2019 (C)

R2.FGD2 – Focus Group Discussion with Community members adults (Male) Kazahi village, 11/26/2019 (C)

R2.FGD3 - Focus Group Discussion with Community members adults (Female), Bugandaro village, 12/4/2019 (C)

R2.FGD4 - Focus Group Discussion with Community members Youths, Omubunga village 12/4/2019(T)

R2.FGD5 - Focus Group Discussion with PMC/ CPC members, Bugandaro village, 12/4/2019 (C)

R2.FGD6 - Focus Group Discussion with Community members adults (Male), Omubunga village 12/4/2019, (T)

R2.FGD7 - Focus Group Discussion with PMC/ CPC members, Rukungwe village, 11/25/2019 (T)

R2.FGD8 - Focus Group Discussion with Community members adults (Male), Rukungwe village, 11/25/2019 (T)

R2.FGD9 – Focus Group Discussion with PMC/ CPC members, Kyogo village (Kabale) 11/30/2019 (C)

R2.FGD10 – Focus Group Discussion with Community members adults (Female), Kyogo village, 11/30/2019 (C)

R2.FGD11 - Focus Group Discussion with PMC/ CPC members, Nyakabungo village (Kashekyera), 11/30/2019 (T)

R2.FGD12 - Focus Group Discussion with Community members Youths, Nyakabungo village 11/30/2019(T)

R2.FGD13 - Focus Group Discussion with PMC/ CPC members, Mashoho village, 11/26/2019(C)

R2.FGD14 - Focus Group Discussion with Community members Youths, Mashoho village, 11/26/2019(C)

R2.FGD15 - Focus Group Discussion with Community members adults (Male), Ndeego village, 11/26/2019 (T)

R2.FGD16 - Focus Group Discussion with PMC/ CPC members, Murore village, 11/27/2019 (C)

R2.FGD17 - Focus Group Discussion with Community members adults (Female), Murore village, 11/27/2019 (C)

R2.FGD18 - Focus Group Discussion with Community members adults (Male), Nteko village 11/27/2019(T)

R2.FGD19 - Focus Group Discussion with Community members adults (Female), Nteko village 11/27/2019(T)

R2.FGD20 - Focus Group Discussion with Community members adults (Male), Nombe village, 11/28/2019 (C)

R2.FGD21 - Focus Group Discussion with Community members Youths, Nombe village, 11/28/2019(C)

R2.FGD22 - Focus Group Discussion with Community members adults (Female), Kashija village, 11/28/2019(T)

R2.FGD23 - Focus Group Discussion with PMC/ CPC members, Kashija village, 11/28/2019 (T)

R2.FGD24 - Focus Group Discussion with PMC/ CPC members, Mataka village, 11/19/2019(C)

R2.FGD25 - Focus Group Discussion with Community members adults (Female), Mataka village, 11/29/2019 (C)

R2.FGD26 - Focus Group Discussion with Community members adults (male), Rugandu village, 11/19/2019(T)

R2.FGD27 - Focus Group Discussion with PMC/ CPC members Mpungu 02/12/2019

R2.FGD28 - Focus Group Discussion with PMC/ CPC members Mukono 03/12/2019 (T)

R2.FGD29 - Focus Group Discussion with Community Adult Female members Mukono 03/12/2019 (T)

<u>Round 3 In-depth Interviews, Post-Implementation Award Phase</u>

R3.I1 – In-depth interview with adult male, Kyabworo village 9/13/2021(C)

R3.I2 – In-depth interview with CPC, Bugoro village, 9/14/2021 (C)

R3.I3 – In-depth interview with CPC member, Kiriba Rubanda village, 9/13/2021 (C)

R3.I4 – In-depth interview with CPC member, Kyabworo village, 9/13/2021(C)

R3.I5 – In-depth interview with adult female, Kikobero village, 9/4/2021 (T)

R3.I6 – In-depth interview with adult female, Nteko village 9/5/2021(T)

R3.I7 – In-depth interview with adult female, Ryamihanda village,9/4/2021 (C)

R3.I8 – In-depth interview with adult male, Kikobero village 9/13/2021 (T)

R3.I9 – In-depth interview with adult male, Kiriba village, 10/9/2021 (C)

R3.I10 – In-depth interview with adult male, Nteko village, 10/9/2021(T)

R3.I11 – In-depth interview with adult male, Ryamihanda village 10/9/2021(C)

R3.I12 – In-depth interview with CPC member, Kikobero village 10/9/2021 (T)

R3.I13 – In-depth interview with CPC member, Nteko, 10/9/2021(T)

R3.I14 – In-depth interview with PMC member, Kikobero village, 10/9/2021 (T)

R3.I15 – In-depth interview with PMC, member, Nteko village, 10/9/2021 (T)

R3.I16 – In-depth interview with PMC member, Kikobero village, 10/9/2021 (T)

R3.I17 – In-depth interview with PMC member Kiriba village, 10/9/2021 (C)

R3.I18 – In-depth interview with Local leader, Ruhiya subcounty, 10/18/2021

R3.I19 – In-depth interview with PMC member, Bugoro village, 10/13/2021 (C)

R3.I20 – In-depth interview with PMC member, Kiriba village, 10/13/2021 (C)

R3.I21 – In-depth interview with PMC member, Kyabworo village, 10/13/2021 (C)

R3.I22 – In-depth Interview with CPC member Ryamihanda village, 10/10/2021 (C)

5.2 Extended Ethnographic Evidence

What were local expectations for the role that symbolic recognition might play in shaping project outcomes?

- ... if a village is appreciated it makes other people who were doing bad know that others do good things... putting on the poster and showing your victory means that there was no corruption also it means that the leadership is good and if they appreciate them, corruption will reduce and it calls for them not to change leaders often to reduce on corruption. – FGD CPC/PMC, Kashijja Village [R1.FGD24]

- This will encourage people to be to work hard. Someone who works hard will be rewarded always. – IDI PMC member, Nteeko Village [R2.I8].

- I am very happy to find the name of our committee members on the post. The rest of the committee members are very excited and the natives have a lot of trust in us. I think they might even elect us to the committee once again. – IDI CPC, Bugoro/Ishaaya, Kanungu [R3.I2]

- I would feel very happy and very glad. It would make me very proud and proud of what I had participated in to achieve this recognition. – IDI PMC Member, Kiriba A, Rubanda [R3.I17]

- yes it can make happy because it means that they used well the money for revenue sharing and I can put trust in them that next time that money should not go elsewhere. – FGD Adult Female, Mukono village [R2.FGD29]

- That person would feel so happy and hence people doing well his job for his people. When you do well for us we be proud of you but if you are a thief people cannot sit with you. – FGD Adult Male, Kyabworo Village [R1.FGD6]

- When something good comes to the village and you hear that you are the winner, there is no one who hates good and no one likes corruption even other people can appreciate the village when they see that signpost they can comment that these people are hardworking. – FGD Adult Female, Mukono village [R2.FGD29]

- Me that would make me happy, you never know that money worked on the school or water. A school can help my children attend school or water can be nearer rather that getting it from far areas in Munyanga this can make you happy –FGD Adult Female mukono village [R2.FGD29]

- I think this is possible to reduce embezzlement and corruption using this approach. Committee Members may not get close to the money but recognition may reduce corruption at the sub county chief and district. The problem of corruption is very common but if there is recognition it will reduce a bit in community programs. –IDI PMC, Bugoro/Ishaya Kanungu [R3.I9]

- I think it will encourage people to work hard to not only perform extraordinarily but also to leave tangible results that anybody can see. – IDI PMC, Kikobero Village [R3.I4]

- The Committee members compared the previous years performed very well and were able to do some work that can be seen in the community. I see recognition as a way someone can tell you that thank you for the good job that you would have done and in one way it is a way of saying that we should work harder —IDI PMC member, Kyabworo Village [R3.I21]

- This time there was limited theft like when compared to the previous projects. We were more vigilant. This time people were not getting goats as they did in previous revenue-sharing projects. Most people in the previous projects did not get goats and even those who got very poor quality of breeds i.e. very young or not worth the money that was budgeted for but this time everyone got. We followed all steps of the guidelines from identifying the contractors to participate in the whole revenue sharing process. — IDI PMC member, Kyabworo Village [R3.I21]

- I think we tried compared to the old teams that had received funds. We had decided to buy tanks as the community and that's what we did. — IDI CPC Member, Kyabworo Village [R3.I4]

- Recognition of any kind is very good. It makes teams add effort but despite this, I think our village was not selected among the good performers. The committee thought it was good to be recognised but we were not successful I guess. They put in a lot of effort working towards the reward. — IDI CPC Member, Kyabworo Village [R3.I4]

- Everyone on the committee worked really hard this time. We were active in the whole process of revenue sharing from the beginning to the end. In the previous project when people received goats and other items from revenue sharing money, what we got was not good and therefore we wanted a project that would help every household and we had enough more too. The committee members and community members worked hard to get this work done well. — IDI CPC Member, Kyabworo Village [R3.I4]

- Well, the views may vary from one person to another but they were generally happy about being recognised although they were not sure what it would be. I was happy that when we promised we worked hard toward it. It made me very happy and the rest of the committee members were also very happy. —IDI PMC Member, Kiriba A, Rubanda [R3.I20]

- We are told that we would receive a sign post in our community and some form of appreciation but we haven't received anything yet. I am not sure about others. This form of appreciation is not enough. We hoped to get some form of appreciation for our efforts like a goat for each Committee member or a piglet. —I DI PMC, Bugoro/Ishaya, Kanungu [R3.I19]

- We worked very hard in order to get this recognition and indeed we were happy when we got it. A schedule was drawn with a member designated to look after the project on a daily basis. The community members would participate but mostly remind us to do our roles properly so that we get the reward. The community members were active, at some point they organized to work with the contractor when he got challenges on the route that had been identified, they cleared the bushes and helped to remove some of the rocks as well. —IDI PMC, Bugoro/Ishaya, Kanungu [R3.I19]

- Yes. If people are appreciated publicly for outstanding performance, other people will also learn this benefit. When a person works hard and they are not appreciated, they are simply demoralized but with this appreciation, people get to work even harder. — IDI CPC, Nteko Village [R3.I13]

- I would feel very happy but we were not recognised. We however feel happy because in my view we performed well compared to the previous revenue sharing committees. People have hope that these funds can be used well. —IDI CPC Member, Kyabworo Village [R3.I4]

How did community members and leaders react to the opportunity to earn recognition while implementing projects?

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- ... if we were in the village that is recognized, we would feel that truly we are in a village where someone is supposed to live, a village without corruption where everything goes where it is supposed to be and we would be very happy and proud of our village... we feel strong after knowing that we have leaders, no corruption and good service delivery... and when people in the community see that signpost and hear what the radio is saying, in case of another function, they will always refer to the names of good performers and which will make them always perform better for their community. —FGD CPC/PMC, Kashijja Village [R1.FGD25]

- I think they were happy for us, especially since they also appreciate the fact that we tried to operate with transparency as much as possible... and we were also happy because our effort had been recognized. Because when you are complimented by other people about your work it is better than when you compliment yourself. —IDI CPC, Nteko Village [R3.I13]

- We were selected for recognition and I am looking forward to this recognition so that everyone knows that we did very well. Hearing my name on the radio is amazing but we also want to get every part of the road sorted so that when people come through the village, they will know that. The committee was happy with this kind of recognition because this shows that we were not corrupt — IDI CPC, Bugoro Village [R3.I2]

- The community members were very active and would supervise the road and give reports about what was being done to the committee members as well as the local leaders. They were active and when the councilors interfered, they were very vocal and these councilors have been removed from leadership positions within our community. —IDI CPC, Bugoro-Ishaaya Village [R3.I2]

- I would feel proud about my village and this gives me respect. If the village members are happy, I also feel happy —FGD CPC/PMC, Kashija village [R2.FGD23]

- I also become very happy due to good leadership. I also feel so happy because the village does not practice corruption and I am respected somewhere else because of being in a truthful village. — FGD PMC/ CPC members, Mukono Village [R2.FGD28]

- They feel happy because the project was completed well, they gave us another term office. — FGD CPC/PMC, Nyakabungo Village [R2.FGD11]

- I think they were happy for us, especially since they also appreciate the fact that we really tried to operate with transparency as much as possible — CPC IDI, Nteko Village [R3.I13]

  Some have expressed their satisfaction on how we handled the project and some have even said that if all projects were handled this way, we would be very developed by now. - PMC IDI, Nteko Village [R3.I15]

- I think there has to be better handling of funds in order for any real change to happen. — PMC IDI, Kiriba Village [R3.I20]

Why did the recognition produce limited results both during implementation and after the roll-out of the recognition?

- ... when the councilors [negatively] interfered, they [community members] were very vocal and these councilors have been removed from leadership positions within our community. The community members want to work hard and they want to make sure that this road is worked to the best that it can be because we know the importance of this road. — IDI CPC, Bugoro Village [R3.I2]

- ... recognition is an incentive for more hard work. When one's efforts are recognized, that person is encouraged to work even harder. Similarly, other people will also desire to work hard when given the opportunity so that they can also be recognized. — IDI CPC, Kikobero Village [R3.I12]

- I think it will because leaders will know that they are in the spotlight whether they are recognized or not because the reputation of the whole village is at stake and if they mess up, they will not be voted for subsequent projects. — IDI CPC, Ryamihanda Village [R3.I22]

- I think it will encourage people to work hard to not only perform extraordinarily but also to leave tangible results that anybody can see. — IDI PMC, Kikobero Village [R3.I16]

- As the saying goes, a good name is better than many riches. So, indeed, this recognition will have an impact... I would choose a good name among my people because that is also capital. It is more valuable than having money and being alienated from the people. —IDI CPC, Nteko Village [R3.I13]

- I would rather be poor and with a good name instead of being distrustful in order to accumulate fame and wealth. This sets a good record across the generations. For example, my children will know that I worked on this road even when I am gone. I am 60 years old now and a good name is very important to me. When my name is read on the radio, I get more respect in the community. —IDI CPC, Bugoro-Ishaaya Village [R3.I2]

- ... everybody wants to stay at the top. They have to be very careful because everybody is watching them and learning from their success in order to surpass them next time... I think they are now looked at as a symbol of success. Future leaders will also be held at that standard and will be expected to meet this expectation... It only challenges me to learn from these other committees and find out how they overcame their challenges and to learn from them. — IDI PMC, Kikobero Village [R3.I16]

- if they come and see what we have achieved, they will be motivated to also work hard so that they can achieve the same or even more. —IDI CPC, Nteko Village [R3.I13]

- The community was taught what to do and they followed it. The guidelines were provided and we used them accordingly. The money that was received, we knew it would be accounted for and therefore we had to be very careful with the funds we had received. As a new member, I knew I had to be very careful because my predecessor was interdicted and because of this, I also wanted to be different from them and do good work because of this. The community leadership and political influence was there and usually this disagrees with community needs because they want to take some of the funds. We handled this well and there was limited political interference.

  We were educated and since we had been voted by the locals, I decided to work by the book for purposes of transparency. When we were asked what can be done to recognize our efforts, we asked that we be recognized in the presence of the locals that voted us. — IDI PMC, Nteko Village [R3.I15]

- We are not educated and when we get someone from outside and knows that we are not educated, they will exploit us. — FGD PMC/ CPC members, Kyogo village [R1. FGD11]

- one is level of education you know the level of education also matters, most of our women are illiterates and they are very few who are educated and those who completed at least primary seven. Two, when they are sited with men, they normally listen to what men say and they are very few who can put up a hand and say something so it is their natural habit. — IDI LG Official, Kisoro [R1.IDI12]

- Another reason why people bribe is ignorance. For example where you find that some things are meant to be yours but because you are ignorant about them and you find that to get them you will

need to first pay some money but if we were aware of what is supposed to be ours, we would not be giving bribes. — FGD Adult Men, Rukungwe [R1.FGD9]

- The reason corruption increases is because, when the money is released the local person doesn't take responsibility. The fact that it comes from people from top offices, and the local person knows very little or nothing about it, even if the money is embezzled you cannot trace it... even if you knew you don't have the right cannot claim that money as yours. — FGD Adult Men, Rukungwe [R1. FGD9]

- Finding that I know someone and want him to do the job but doesn't have the certificate so I give him the job so that on the much money they give him I can also benefit. – FGD CPC/PMC, Mpungu [R1. FGD7]

- When you are a leader, relatives think that you should favor them for example when you are distributing items like for NAADs, Revenue sharing, they want to receive more than once... and if you get jobs on they will be wanting you to give it to them... so they think that since you are a boss you need to favor them or get something bigger, but in most cases, the proper way would be balancing so that if you choose one from the family, then you can balance it by choosing also the community member on the other side so that they don't say that you only favor your family. — FGD CPC/PMC, Mpungu [R1. FGD7]

- We chose to do a cattle project. There were some thoughts towards doing a road project as well. When they received the money, they decided to divert it towards the road project. And initially, they educated us on what we should base on to select the contractor, and eventually we selected people whom we thought were competent, transparent, and were going to serve the needs of the people. However, some money was diverted towards the road project, the cattle we managed to procure ended up not being enough for the beneficiaries. — IDI CPC, Kikobero village [R3.I12]

- The project here was not very successful because there was a bit of conflict and disorganization. We were organized at the beginning because we had agreed on what we wanted until some officials came and imposed on us the idea of cattle. Because of this disorganization, the project was bound to fail. — IDI PMC, Kikobero Village [R3.I16]

- The road was done well by the contractor. We wanted to open the road and this was done. However, the route was changed a bit from the requests of the residents. Some local leaders somehow interfered with what the community had proposed to serve their interests. The councilors interfered with where the road was going to pass and influenced the contractor to make it go through near their homes. The reason was not clear why the route was changed to the community members. — IDI CPC, Bugoro Village [R3.I2]

- I don't know, I can't answer that because I am not sure. Like I told you, we were not told what we would receive if we performed well. We did our best to ensure that all is done. The contractor never provided us with any form of accountability. There was a lot of government leaders' interference for the district, this made us become suspicious that there was corruption happening. As a member of the community, I am not sure about how much was spent and cannot gauge how much of the funds that were supposed to be used were actually used. —IDI PMC Member, Kiriba A, Rubanda [R3.I7]

- you see this is the problem which we have in Uganda now, people have been corrupted, the minds have been corrupted. First the chairperson will look at how much money they are going to give him let's say fifty million he will first look at that and what he gets lets say as salary and that is the main problem we Ugandans are having even in our homes people don't bring back balance after buying

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things and this is also corruption so it started from homes, even kids sent them to the market with some little balance they don't bring it back, so Uganda if we don't change now , where we are heading is bad. — IDI UWA officials, Kisoro [R1.I15]

- Like in my subcounty I had a person who had a case actually a simple case but I got a phone call from Kampala asking for why am detaining the person actually it was from IGGs office actually he had family wrangles with his wife a simple which I could have handled but because I got pressure but did I solve the problem no I had to let the man go — IDI Subcounty official, Rubanda [R1.I4]

- Corruption in Revenue Sharing started long time for example where the contractor would not supply physical goats but rather would request the beneficiaries to appear with their own goats and pictures would be taken, then the beneficiaries would be given money. The educated ones formed the Association (MCCDA) with the intention to embezzle the Revenue Sharing Funds. — FGD PMC/ CPC members, Rukungwe Village [R1.FGD8]

- ... corruption has eaten us and finished us. So when money comes to the district, they budget for it as if it is there's and yet it comes for us who are suffering with animals at the forest. And when it is like 10 million they know that 5 million is theirs, 3 is for the parish and 2 is for us at the village and they continue to say that they are the ones to look for the tenderer we start negotiating with them arguing that even if the money is less, let us get our own tenderer, and they refuse, they source for their own tenderer and bring us fake goats alleging that take it or leave it if you don't want. We end taking them but when they reach home; they die; that's how corruption is. — FGD Adult Male, Omumbuga Village [R1.FGD3]

- The people at the park edge have their crops destroyed by wild animals. Such people should have their crops refunded and this is possible compensation. This will encourage them to do conservation in their communities. — IDI PMC member, Kyabworo [R3.I21]

- The committee members who led projects to this level would have been rewarded with something else like if they were given some money as a reward, it would have been good. I think it's the best form of recognition for committee members... — IDI CPC, Kiriba Village [R3.I3]

- I think that in addition to all of that, the individuals should be given a tangible token such as money or goats or just a hamper of household products like soap. — IDI CPC, Kikobero village [R3.I12]

- Giving certificates and an envelope. And according to what the person has done and the profit made, we may give cows or envelopes. —FGD PMC/CPC members, Kashija Village [R2. FGD22]

- The order or means of sending money from UWA should be changed two or three members should be picked to be educated about the park related issues. The Park should put a plan for opening village bank accounts so that money should be sent on those accounts other than through district officials. — FGD PMC/CPC members, Mashoho Village [R2.FGD13]

- I think the other way is to organize a function and shake hands with members of the committee as they had said they would, initially. — IDI Adult Male, Ryamihanda Village [R3.12]

- I don't think there is any problem with it but maybe there would be a need to reward people a bit differently other than putting their names on the signpost. A tangible gift for remembrance would be good. — IDI CPC Member, Kyabworo Village [R3.I14]

- UWA can sponsor children from the village. It should offer solar systems to the community. Supply water to benefit the community. Increase education to inspire other villages. — FGD Adult Male, Nombe Village [R1.FGD21]

- I think it was a good effort just that not everybody listens to radio. I would have wanted the committees to be recognized in the presence of all the locals, like at a big event, so that others can learn that exceptional performance is recognized. — IDI PMC Member, Nteko Village [R3.I20]