

ANNUAL REPORT 2018

Gathering Citizen Voices to Improve Public Services

SEMA







16,847

CITIZEN VOICES

were heard on how they experience critical public services in Uganda, in 2018.

49 CITIZEN with citizen
FEEDBACK recommendations
REPORTS were delivered to these public offices.

Many civil servants made changes to their offices to improve the experience for citizens.

At one third of the public offices, citizen satisfaction improved by 18% and corruption rates decreased by 12%

SEMA helps improve public services. And with this, we make an immediate impact on citizens: not only do they feel their voice matters as they visit a public office, they also get to benefit from improved services the next time they visit that office. Local government partners finally get to see where and how they can improve services at particular offices. Civil servants have never before seen how they are doing compared to others, and what they can do to improve the customer journey for citizens. They feel empowered to do better.

This is what we wake up for, every morning. Our team started to test this initiative in 2018, and, luckily, we were able to make a real change. It was a bumpy ride with many achievements and many lessons, which we love to share with you in this report.

We are already moving on to new developments and new highlights in 2019, and we can't wait to continue the SEMA journey with you.

On behalf of the SEMA Team,

Nathalie



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WHAT WE DO



**CITIZEN
FEEDBACK
COLLECTION**



**CUSTOMIZED
DATA
REPORTS**



**DATA
TO ACTION**

Who we are

Millions of citizens in East Africa rely on public services that are inefficient, ineffective and corrupt.

This is a huge problem, since public services are essential in the lives of citizens: think of victims seeking help from the police, or mothers applying for birth certificates to enroll their children to secondary school.

SEMA improves the functioning of public institutions in Uganda by giving citizens a voice to provide feedback on their services; and presenting this feedback in an effective way to local offices and headquarters.

We believe that by 2030, the most utilized public services in East Africa will use a customer feedback tool in order to assess and improve their service delivery.

SEMA is specialised in developing user-friendly data collection tools that **allow all citizens to give anonymous, quick and reliable feedback** about their experience at public offices.

After the data is gathered, it is presented in digestible and **customized citizen feedback reports** that allow the lowest ranked public servants to understand how they are performing.

Finally, our **data-to-action strategies** provide different incentives to public offices to improve, while sharing results at different decision making levels (local offices - headquarters - Ministries).

What we did in 2018

In 2018, SEMA started working in Uganda. Our priorities were to:

- 1) Establish public partnerships in order to test our technologies and methods.
- 2) Develop technologies that allow enough citizens to give feedback.
- 3) Deliver the data in a way that leads to improvements at offices.
- 4) Secure enough (financial) support to grow our operations in 2019.

1

Establishing public partnerships

In 2018 SEMA established a partnership with the Justice Law and Order Sector (JLOS) to test technologies and collect data at the Uganda Police Force, the Uganda Registration Services Bureau, the Uganda Human Rights Commission and the Immigration Department. Through this permission, we received approval to work at 5 police stations in Kampala (Central Police Station, Kiira Road Police Station, Jinja Road Police Station, Wandegaya Police Station and Ntinda Police Station).

Commitment by the Ugandan justice sector to work with SEMA was also expressed during the JLOS Annual Review Conference in October 2018, where the Chief Justice publicly launched SEMA as one of the innovations the JLOS sector will work with in 2019.

In 2018 SEMA also established a partnership with the Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) to test technologies and collect data with its main divisional offices in 2018. Through this partnership, SEMA received approval to work at 3 divisional KCCA offices (Central Division, Nakawa Division and Headquarters/Town Hall).

With support of D-Prize, we tested three ways of collecting data in 2018 at these public offices:



2

Developing our product offering

1. **Custom-made IoT feedback devices.** At every office where SEMA is installed, citizens can press a smiley face: angry, all the way to thrilled (5 point scale). We developed a first and second SEMA prototype with support of two international IT consultants, and also purchased and tested devices from an existing international company (OMBEA). The second SEMA prototype is the version we aim to use for further scaling in 2019.
2. **On-site in-person interviews.** To match the device data, we gather qualitative data by conducting short in-person interviews with trained students at the exit of each office. We trained over 10 volunteers to conduct in-person interviews with citizens in 2018.
3. **An automated, toll-free phone line.** If no data collector is around and citizens want to give more feedback than just pressing a button, they may call SEMA's Interactive Voice Response line where they can record their message. This line has been updated several times with different menu's in 2018.

SEMA started data collection on 12 March 2018 and has continued data collection at these public institutions the entire year. A total of 16847 citizen feedback points were gathered through a combination of devices (6742 presses), interviews (9121) and IVR phone-calls (984).

3

Delivering the data meaningfully

In 2018, a total of 49 data reports were delivered to each of the 8 public offices we worked with in 2018. These reports led to various changes and improvements that are shared in the next section.

With support of the Knowledge Management Fund, we developed data-to-action strategies that we tested and use to create more impact in 2019. These strategies included a combination of follow-up meetings with public offices, stakeholder meetings, ranking and highlighting best



performing offices, sharing data on social media and with CSOs and engaging public media.

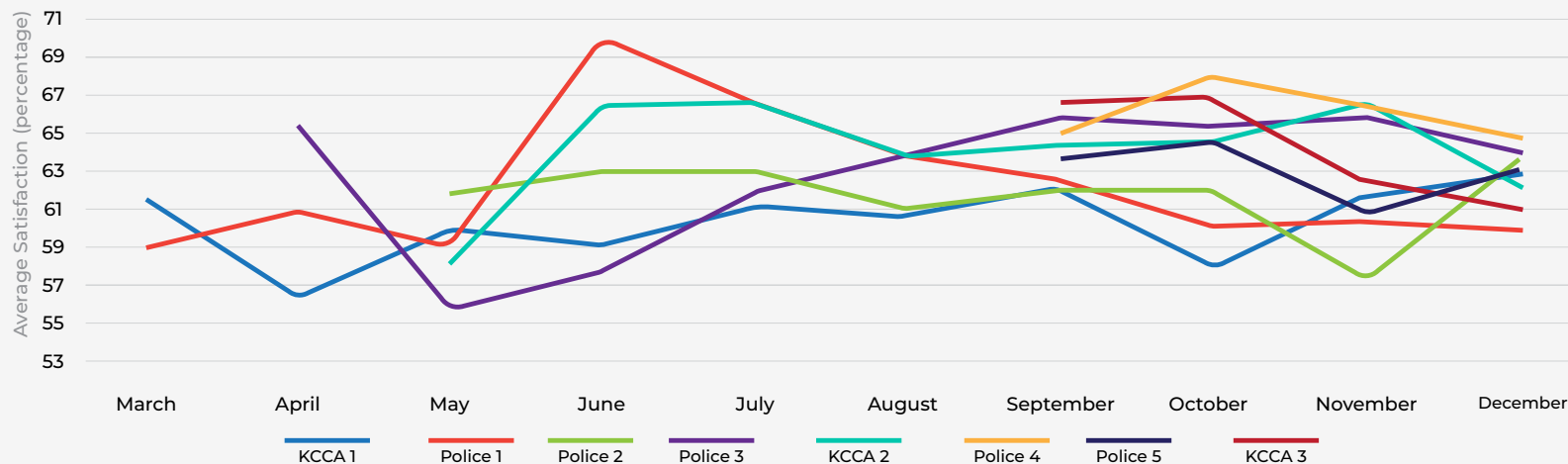
We measured our outcomes through conducting regular impact surveys with civil servants and managers of public offices. Moreover, in 2018 we established the SEMA Advisory Group in Uganda, which includes five expert members from JLOS, KCCA, the Democratic Governance Facility, Twaweza East Africa and the Uganda Police Force. These advisors met 4 times in 2018 to discuss how SEMA's data collection and data-to-action strategies could be improved.

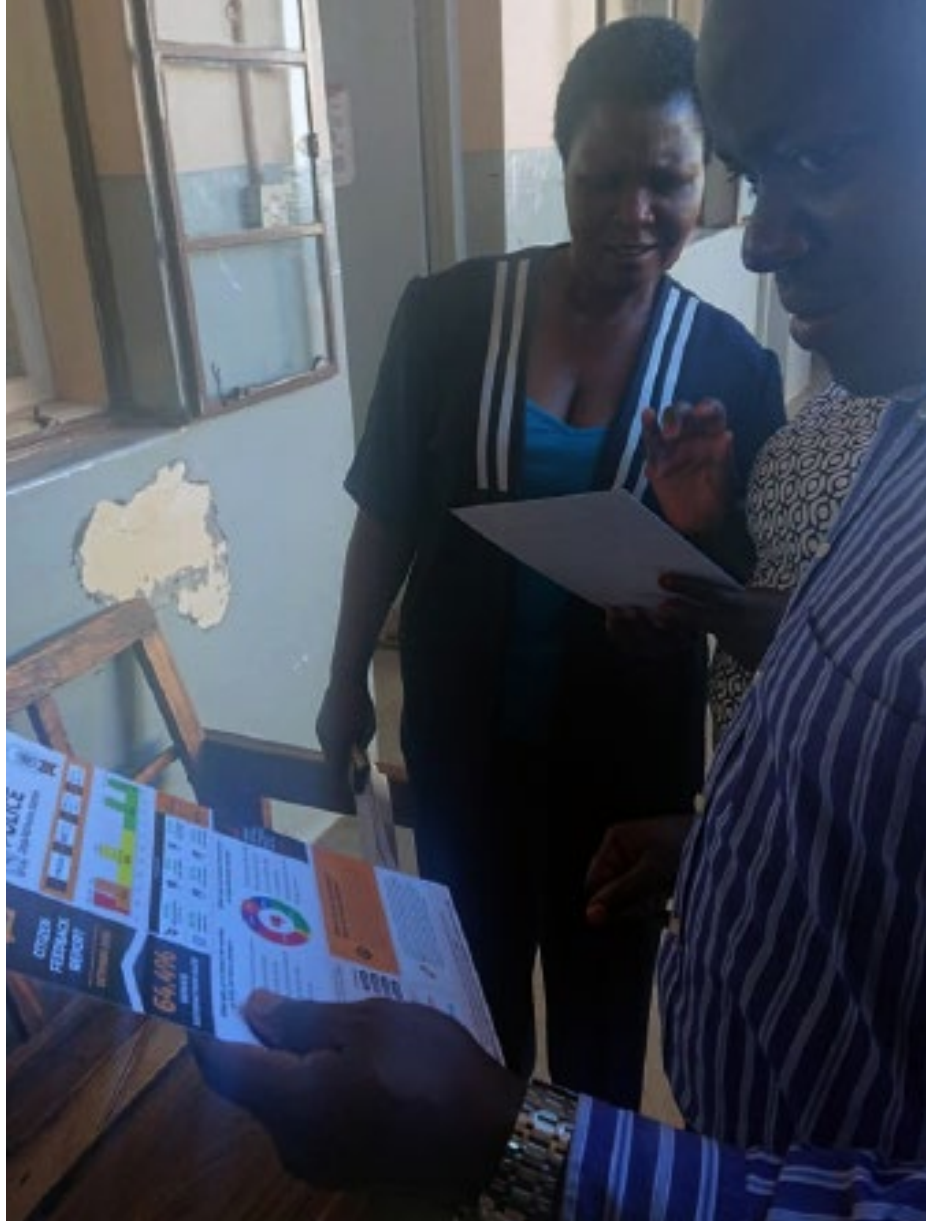
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Securing financial growth

In terms of financial sustainability, SEMA received support from D-Prize and the Knowledge Management Fund (under the Knowledge Platform for Security and the Rule of Law) in 2018.

Citizen satisfaction with public offices 2018





“Since SEMA started collecting data at our police station, it helped me change my character. I didn’t use to smile at people when they come in, but now I smile at them – hoping we’ll get a better report next time.” - Police officer

In Q4 SEMA was also awarded support from Transparency International and Innovation4Change (Hub Afrique). Thanks to this support, SEMA was able to participate in the 18th International Anti-Corruption Conference in Copenhagen (22-24 October 2018) and the Shared Learning Convening on Alternative Funding Models for CSOs in Accra (26-28 November 2018). Grants from Transparency International and Innovation4Change only arrived in SEMA’s accounts in 2019.

Formal discussions about a funded partnership between SEMA and JLOS and the KCCA have started in 2018 and continue to be pursued in 2019. A few private sector sales strategies were developed for SEMA, but due to strategic reasons we abandoned these ideas.

First signs of impact

With over 16000 citizen voices gathered, and 49 data reports delivered, SEMA has been able to leverage the power of citizen feedback to improve public services. Most importantly, over a period of 9 months in 2018, we have seen an increase in average citizen satisfaction rate of 18% at three public offices, and a decrease of 12% in corruption rates at four public offices.

SEMA’s Theory of Change

If we present enough
citizen feedback data regularly, and in
customized and understandable formats to
the lowest ranked public servants, the highest
ranked policy makers, and civil society partners,
we can incentivise and advocate for concrete
public service improvements and monitor the
quality of public services over time.



Our [data-to-action report](#) highlights 10 lessons learned, based on various strategies tested in 2018:

1. Bringing feedback data directly to those that deliver the services is much needed.
2. Giving citizens a continuous platform to speak up next to where the services take place has a social control effect.
3. If you use hardware for data collection, ensure simplicity and a continuous improvement of its integration in the service location.
4. Some changes to improve public services are easy wins, but others can't be done unless you involve those at the top.
5. In many cases citizen feedback demands from civil servants a mindset change, with a stronger focus on customer care.
6. You need changemakers in every institution you're trying to improve.
7. Over time, data becomes less interesting to some, and perceived as a threat to others.
8. The role of public media announcements of feedback data is precarious.
9. Recognising efforts and, in some cases, rewarding, works better than shaming.
10. If you collect data, your role should stay neutral and independent.

Team & Governance

SEMA was founded by Timothy Kakuru (Community Manager), Nathalie Dijkman (CEO) and Connor Sattely (CTO). The team expanded in 2018 with an Operations Manager (Joanith Nsasiirwe), and 8 (Ugandan) volunteers who gather data, support in data analysis, social media and IT support: Alvin Abaho, Umar Balikanda, Shine Nuwasasira, Pamela Namala, Loise Akello, Emily Tusiime, Edward Ntende, Grace Nakafeero and Belina Mwebaze.

In addition to its core team, SEMA also engages various consultants to support its technical needs, which includes a talented graphic designer (Adrian Aturinda), an awesome hardware design expert (Timothy Somers), and a great software expert (Attalan Mailvaganam).

Finally, SEMA benefits from a group of fantastic (international) expert advisors, including most importantly Wilfried de Wever, Catrien Bijleveld, ASP Ojok Moses, Edgar Kuhimbisa, Dorah Mafabi, Claire Ollama, and Violet Alinda.

In 2018, Stichting SEMA received ANBI status in The Netherlands, and was registered in Uganda as a foreign company (company limited by guarantee).



“Every morning when I walk into my office and I see that device with the question ‘How was the service today?’, I’m reminded of what I’m here for. To serve citizens in the best possible way.” – KCCA civil servant

Partners:



Accounts

SEMA Profit & Loss 2018

Revenues	€	36,342.92
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Expenditures

Human Resources	€	6,806.90
Volunteer reimbursements	€	6,358.28
Feedback device production	€	8,006.64
Other technology costs	€	2,705.50
Administrative costs	€	2,401.47
Office costs	€	700.00
International travel	€	3,049.43
Communications	€	1,808.79

Total Expenditures	€	31,837.02
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Net assets at the end of 2018	€	4,505.90
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Outlook for 2019

A lot was achieved in 2018, the founding year of SEMA. After completing a successful pilot, we plan to scale up our operations in 2019. Concretely, this means we will focus on the following outcomes:

1. Public partnerships with JLOS and KCCA will be formalized and translated into paying partnerships, either in the form of SEMA being procured as a third-party service provider, or through a direct partnership that is supported by a donor.
2. Expansion of SEMA data collection across 30+ public offices in Uganda, leading to at least 50.000 citizen voices being heard and 100 feedback reports distributed in 2019.
3. Product development of SEMA's feedback device to shift to local production in East Africa, which will lower the overall cost-of-sales.
4. Continuation of testing our ToC, leading to better data-to-action strategies, including testing of awards for best-performing offices and regular stakeholder meetings.
5. An increase in revenue from both public and private sources to about 75.000-100.000 EUR.
6. If cost-of-sales can be lowered due to local device production, we will continue to test private sector sales of SEMA tools.
7. Exploration of pilot in neighbouring countries or countries where partners provide immediate entries into government partnerships with backed-up funding.
8. A solidified and dedicated SEMA team, with local directors in our Ugandan office.

**Want to partner with us, work
with us, give us feedback,
share your ideas, or just talk?
Please contact us!**

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