

WOMEN'S CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN NEBBI AND YUMBE DISTRICTS

BASELINE STUDY REPORT

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AFARD, however, takes full responsibility for the views and errors expressed herein.

Dr. Alfred Lakwo
Programme Director
Nebbi, Tuesday, 05 May 2009

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ACRONYMS

AFARD	=	Agency for Accelerated Regional Development
DEC/SEG	=	District/Sub county Executive Committees
DLG	=	District Local Government
EC	=	European Commission
LLG	=	Lower Local Government
PDC	=	Parish Development Committee
PGME	=	Participatory Gender Monitoring and Evaluation
PIC	=	Project Implementation Committees
WC	=	Women Councillors
WCE	=	Women Council Executive

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The Agency for Accelerated Regional Development (AFARD) in partnership with the Delegation of European Commission in Uganda is implementing, 'Engendering Decentralized Poverty Resources Management Project' in six lower local governments: Pakwach, Panyimur, Akworo, Nyaravur and Jangokoro in Nebbi district, and Drajini in Yumbe district. This project seeks to promote an inclusive and empowered society through building the capacity of local communities for social accountability and poverty resource monitoring and the capacities of local governments for downward accountability. In so doing, the project aims at making decentralization work for women by promoting an active civic engagement of women as a constituency with local government officials. The broad objective of this project is, ***"local governments in West Nile districts of Nebbi and Yumbe provide gender sensitive and equitable services to the community"***.

The project stems from the fact that in Uganda both the 1995 Constitution and the 1997 Local Governments Act stipulate that decentralized development should respect human rights generally including that of marginalized groups like women. These legal frameworks further established systems and structures and provide resources to local governments for the furtherance of this goal. To the contrary, women are largely excluded from benefiting from government poverty reduction services hence their livelihoods and quality of lives have hardly improved. Such an exclusion raises two critical questions; first, whether grassroots women are participating in LLG policy processes and second, whether women leaders effectively represent grassroots women within the political spaces accorded to them. Answering these questions was the focus of this study.

Objectives and methodology of the study

That the project was designed with inadequate data on women's exclusion in the targeted LLGs, this study was, therefore, conducted to:

1. Establish women leaders' knowledge and performance of their mandated roles as well as their civic engagement skills for effective representation of women constituency.
2. Establish the level of grassroots women's participation in LLG policy processes.
3. Identify vital political capability and participation gaps for customising intervention strategies to local context.

4. Fine-tune the project monitoring and evaluation framework designed during the proposal elaboration stage.

That was collected through documentary review, individual interview surveys by trained Community Development Officers/Assistants based in the project areas to 148 parish and sub county women leaders as respondents and by trained enumerators to 2,232 grassroots women as respondents. Focus groups discussions were also conducted with women leaders. Finally, district feedback meetings were held with district and LLG leaders.

Summary of findings

The study findings are as below:

Finding 1: Women Councillors' awareness and performance of roles

Regardless of the numerous roles women councillors are expected to perform, only 51% were aware that they were required to keep in close consultation with their electoral areas. Yet, only a paltry 3% were aware that they were to use their skills for the development of their areas. Awareness and performance of all other roles were below 50%. The few active Women Councillors are largely comfortable presenting views to the councils (although which views remains yet another question!) and attending council meetings.

Finding 2: Women Council Executives' awareness and performance of roles

Only 59% of WCEs knew their roles of identifying women needs and none knew that for policy sensitization. Likewise 48% were performing identification of women's needs (48%); the needs they hardly carry forward to any other level of government or development partners for support. While none was engaged in policy sensitization.

Finding 3: Civic engagement skills among women leaders

Concerning political capability, women leaders were also found lacking almost all core civic engagement skills. None of the women leadership structure scored 50% in having any core skills for mobilization, communication, information management, planning & budgeting, monitoring & evaluation, advocacy, and alliance building. Worst cases are for Women Councillors who knew nothing both in advocacy and monitoring and evaluation skills.

Finding 4: Impediments to women leaders' awareness and performance of roles

From the focus group discussions it became evident that the major roadblocks to effective women's representation in the decentralized political arena and development processes were:

- Less coordination between WCEs and Women Councillors who are for most of the time engaged in wrangles about 'who is who' in the LLG political arena.
- Because of lack of leadership induction, many women leaders are simply ignorant of what their roles are as well as how to effect such roles.
- The women leadership especially at the district and LLGs are not providing ample guide to both lower level women leaders and to fellow grassroots women.

- Many women are illiterate and do not effectively participate in LLG meetings that are conducted in the English language.
- Sometimes LLG meeting venues are far, typically in the parish and sub county headquarters.
- Many planning meetings are ill planned without caring that the women, who are also bread-makers in their homes, have to juggle between their domestic and public roles..
- Mobilization for meetings conducted by LCs and Parish Development Committees (PDCs) exclude women.
- LLGs segregate between Women Councillors and WCEs in paying participation allowances.
- Some men prevent their wives/sisters from attending public meetings.
- Unfulfilled budgetary promises has overtime accumulated into 'participation fatigue'.
- Religious dogma continues to curtail effective engagement of women in a male arena.

Finding 5: Grassroots women's participation in the planning and budgeting processes

Many grassroots women are significantly excluded from LLG planning and budgeting processes as at most only 3 in 10 participate in each planning stage. The scope of participation however declines up the LLG hierarchy from 30% participating in village meetings to only 4% monitoring LLG budgets.

Finding 6: Grassroots women's satisfaction with budget cycle

Generally, grassroots women are less satisfied with the development management processes in their lower local governments. The dissatisfaction level rises with increasing levels (as well as centralization) of the planning and budget management from 70% for mobilization to 91% for PIC operations.

Way forward

The consensus view agreed upon during the district feedback meetings to improve on women's participation and local government responsiveness and accountability (with gender sensitivity) are to:

- Build Women Forum as a coordination institution right from the village to district levels. Through the Forums, more capacity building should be conducted on issues of team building, roles of women leaders, women's rights, planning and budgeting, leadership skills, and government policies.
- Widen mobilization channels so that the greater population of both women and men attend and voice their concern in local government policy-making processes.
- Sensitize more men and women on gender issues so that the influence of culture and male rigidity as well as the poor perception about women's empowerment is improved.
- Promote political engagement of women into leadership position. Women should be encouraged to join politics as are men in order for them to fend for their constituency.

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This section provides background information about the project. It also positions the project within the national call for gender equality and concludes by presenting the justification for the project intervention as well as the project focus.

1.2 About the project

The Agency for Accelerated Regional Development (AFARD) in partnership with the Delegation of European Commission in Uganda is implementing a 34-month project called, 'Engendering Decentralized Poverty Resources Management Project'. This project is under implementation in six lower local governments: Pakwach, Panyimur, Akworo, Nyaravur and Jangokoro in Nebbi district, and Drajini in Yumbe district. Building on AFARD's last six years of work in engendering service delivery in Nebbi District, the project seeks to promote an inclusive and empowered society through building the capacity of local communities for social accountability and poverty resource monitoring and the capacities of local governments for downward accountability. In so doing, the project aims at making decentralization work for women by promoting an active civic engagement of women as a constituency with local government officials.

The broad objective of this project is, "**local governments in West Nile districts of Nebbi and Yumbe provide gender sensitive and equitable services to the community**". The specific objectives are:

- Objective 1: Women and government leaders have increased knowledge and skills to champion women's needs in local government decision-making processes.
- Objective 2: Effective participation of women in local government budgeting and planning increased.
- Objective 3: Local governments are transparent and accountable to their constituents in general and to women in particular

This goal and objectives address gender inequalities in the current local government services delivery and will be operationalised from three fronts namely:

- First, ensuring that the capacity of women and government leaders, as representatives of their constituencies, right from parish to LLG levels are built as an empowerment strategy for them to know their rights and roles; and that they acquire the requisite skills for exercising such rights and roles. This will enable them to be ready to effectively engage each other during planning, budgeting and implementation.
- Second, changing the mindset of the decisionmakers – politicians, technical staffs, the women, and civil society organization actors- towards gender needs as human rights that must be adhered to during policy formulation and services delivery. This will open up the policy arena for both the ‘traditional’ policy makers and policy beneficiaries. And, women leaders will be enabled to effectively utilize such spaces so that their voices are responded to by way of local government commitment to equitable services delivery.
- Finally, ensuring effective communications of plans and budgets by leaders to their electorates so that people know what is planned for them and how implementation is progressing.

The above three fronts present the cardinal ways and means for engendering decentralized governance and social accountability briefly presented below.

1.3 Decentralization and gender equality in Uganda

In Uganda, both the 1995 Constitution and the 1997 Local Governments Act (now amended) stipulate that decentralized development should respect human rights generally and the rights of marginalized groups like women in particular. As such, decentralization policy was adopted in 1992 and resource management have since been decentralized to local governments. Equally, a 1/3 political quota for women councillors (WCs) has been established in all Lower Local Government (LLGs) structures. Likewise, a parallel Women Council structure (with Women Council Executives – WCEs) was established in 1993 running from village to national level. Further, a policy of participatory decentralized planning was adopted.

All the above legal and institutional frameworks were adopted with the hope that decentralization would bring all LLG actors (women and men alike) to work in unison for a local area and gender responsive poverty reduction. To the contrary, women have remained a category excluded from benefiting from government poverty reduction services hence, their livelihoods and quality of lives have hardly improved. However, women’s exclusion is strongly attributed by both women leaders and local government officials to **women’s low participation in LLG planning and budgeting processes** where resources are shared in the best interest of vigilant actors.

Given that women are numerically more represented than men in and have the potential to dominate the decentralized political space, their exclusion by, and gender insensitivity observed in, local government development processes raises two critical questions; first, whether grassroots women are participating in LLG policy processes and second, whether

women leaders effectively represent grassroots women within the political spaces accorded to them. Answering these questions is the focus of this study.

1.4 Engendering governance and social accountability

There is an increasing global concern for widening women's political space in governance as a way for strengthening women's relationship with the state and gendered citizenship (Young 2000; Kabeer 2005; Goetz 2007). Engendering politics is therefore envisaged as providing an enabling environment for improving women's rights against socio-political exclusions (Jackson 1999) as well as making government responsive and accountable to its constituencies (Manor 1999). Such gender concerns are highlighted under decentralization policy that is a political reform aimed in part at promoting local development (Oluwo 2001) because the localization of governance under decentralization opens an arena in which elected leaders and their electorates in a '*local-local dialogue*' co-partake in 'participatory co-governance' (de Wit 1997). However, enhancing effective women's political participation requires: (i) transformative participation; (ii) exercise of citizenship; and (iii) local government accountability as are explained below.

- a) Participation: The elaborate works of Gaventa (2004) and Hickey & Mohan (2004) on transformative participation alludes to its ingredient to citizen's political participation. Both authors argue that transformative political participation is about cooperative and collaborative agenda setting and implementation by both state actors and those they are meant to serve. Herein, an open door to policy making is inevitable as public dialogue provides for different voices and interest to be heard and catered for.
- b) Citizenship: As Cornwall (2000) notes, citizenship is about people's agency, identity, dignity, self-respect and awareness about their entitlements, rights and responsibilities. In the exercise of citizenship Gaventa (2005: xii- xiv) points out that a transformation occurs in a manner that 'the hitherto poor, beneficiaries, and users of donor/government services become rightful and legitimate claimants of such services'. This perspective sees citizenship as deepening democracy beyond the hegemony of representative democracy into one that Avritzer (2002) terms the '*participatory public*' and Ackerman (2004) as '*co-governance*'. In this situation, political space and political representation of citizen-state relations is characterized by equality and mutual respect thereby making people 'markers and shapers of the processes of governance' (Cornwall & Gaventa 2001: 2-4).
- c) Accountability: On the foci of accountability there is increasing consensus that it is about the responsiveness of the state to citizens' voices (McGee *et al.* 2004). Accountability is noted to entail both the demand and supply side wherein accountability especially of state officials involves *answerability* (obligations to inform about and explain what they are doing), *enforcement* (the capacity to impose sanctions on those who violate their public duties), and *receptiveness/responsiveness* (capacity of officials to take into account citizens' knowledge and opinion). These dimensions of

accountability (in the view of Behn 2001 cited p.8) yield: (i) *financial accountability* concerned with financial accounting; (ii) *accountability for fairness* that focuses on adherence to ethical standards; and (iii) *performance accountability* that looks at the accomplishment of agreed upon public needs (pp.7-8). While the first two dimensions are concerned with *how the government does what it does* they can be effectively gauged using *legal accountability* measure, the third, however, requires an assessment of public policy (plans and budget) using relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, and impact tests. Seen in this way, government accountability does not entail voting (*vertical accountability*) alone but also *Horizontal accountability* that is concerned with the tango between voters and elected leaders before the next election in pursuit of varied interests (state and non-state inter-agency).

Social accountability

The three intertwined concepts of participation, citizenship and accountability are better exemplified by social accountability that according to Laney (2003) is all about the civic engagement of citizens and civil society organizations with state institutions on matters of public resource management. Within the decentralization context, therefore, social accountability can be seen as a process of ensuring that civic actors fully participate in the allocation, disbursement, and monitoring and evaluation of decentralized resources in view of agreed upon goals. It entails citizens demanding for services and local government officials supplying such services as agreed upon (Malena *et al.* 2004: 1). Such synergetic relation is why Malena *et al.* (2004: 4-5) echoes that social accountability 'improves governance' – through enabling voice of the electorates to matter in the policy board room; increases 'development effectiveness' – by breaking information asymmetry between state agencies and the populace; and leads to 'empowerment' – by reactivating political space for the excluded in governance arena. Therefore, social accountability brings to light a rights-based approach to development where participation of the poor, government responsiveness to the needs identified, as well as upholding transparency of actions undertaken become mandatory (Malena *et al.* 2004: 7). It is through social accountability that; the budget processes involve the poor and marginalized (participatory budgeting), budget allocations are for needed services (allocation efficiency and effectiveness), budget utilization are in line with agreed upon priorities (utilization discipline), and eventually end-users are informed of what their budget actually did (budget transparency). Herein, the traditional notion that budgets and budget processes are technical and a preserve of policy-makers and their technocrats because the ordinary people do not comprehend budget issues is weaned off as many people access information about the budget. In the process, government legitimacy is improved as more citizens start to engage in public budget management thereby regaining their space and confidence in government. By so doing, manipulations in government resource allocation and utilization are exposed and resolved amicably. Associated with this is the aspect of increased responsiveness and transparency as more people would know what were agreed upon and question any deviation. This is what Goetz & Jenkins (2005: 15) term as the 'new accountability agenda'.

1.5 About this survey report

In order to strengthen the political capability of women as a constituency for civic engagement, it became imperative to conduct this baseline study to establish the level of: (i) political capability of women leaders for effective civic engagement in local government policy processes; and (ii) participation of grassroots women's in local government planning and budgeting processes.

The findings of the survey presented in this report is organized into 6 parts starting with this part that presents the project brief and part 2 which explains the study methodology and population. Part 3 focuses on the findings on the political capabilities of women leaders. In part 4 current grassroots women's participation in LLG planning and budgeting processes are presented. Part 5 explores the way forward for improving women's civic engagement with LLG functionaries. Finally, Part 6 presents the refined monitoring & evaluation framework from an outcome and impact perspective.

OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction

In this section, the justification, objectives, and the methodology used in conducting the baseline study are presented. And the demographic characteristics of the study population is analysed.

2.2 Why the study

The design of Engendering Decentralized Poverty Resources Management Project was at a time when AFARD was closing its European Union funded Civil Society Capacity Building Project in Nebbi district. As such, this project was designed with inadequate data, which unfortunately could not present an entire picture of women's exclusion in the targeted LLGs in both Nebbi and Yumbe district and thereby allow for effective impact target setting. This study was, therefore, conducted to:

5. Establish women leaders' knowledge and performance of their mandated roles as well as their civic engagement skills for effective representation of women constituency.
6. Establish the level of grassroots women's participation in LLG policy processes.
7. Identify vital political capability and participation gaps for customising intervention strategies to local context.
8. Fine-tune the project monitoring and evaluation framework designed during the proposal elaboration stage.

2.3 Methodology

In order to collect relevant data to meet the above objectives, four questions were asked:

- (a) To what extent are women leaders aware of, and are executing, their mandated roles as women's representative? Do they have the requisite political capability skills to effectively

represent women constituency? What constraints continue to impede their effective representation of the women constituency?

- (b) To what extent are grassroots women participating in local government planning and budgeting processes?
- (c) In what ways can existing gaps be bridged in order to increase grassroots women's participation and women leaders effectiveness?
- (d) What outcomes and impact targets can this project achieve within 3 years of effective implementation?

In answering these questions, the following were done:

- **Individual interview survey** was conducted using open-ended questions administered by trained Community Development Officers/Assistants based in the project areas to all parish and sub county women leaders as respondents. This survey asked every woman leader about their knowledge and performance of their roles as are prescribed in their statutes. It also solicited information on whether they had civic engagement skills.
- **Individual interview survey** was also conducted using open-ended questions administered by trained enumerators to grassroots women respondents who were randomly and purposely sampled from the various villages in the project area. The questionnaire asked about respondents' participation in the various LLG budget cycles. It also explored their satisfaction with how decentralized development processes are managed in their various LLG besides soliciting their opinion on how best they felt things can be made better.
- **Focus group discussion** were held with women leaders (both WCs and WCEs) jointly in the various project LLGs to explore how they have executing their roles, what constraints their effective performance, and what would improve their effective representation of grassroots women.
- **District feedback meetings** were held with district leaders wherein the preliminary survey findings were discussed in-depth and practical intervention options identified, analyzed and prioritized.
- **Documentary review** was also conducted especially of the project logframe in order to review the project design-stage targets vis-a-vis the baseline benchmark.

2.4 The study population

Table 1 below presents a summary of the various respondents involved in this study. What is evident from the table is that in summary, the project is dealing with young, moderately educated women, who by virtue of their marital status can command respect from the community.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of respondents

Characteristics	Grassroots women	Women leaders
Total Population (number)	2,232	148
District (%)		
• Nebbi	73.4	72.3
• Yumbe	26.6	27.7
Sub County (%)		
• Akworo	17.5	14.2
• Drajini	26.6	27.7
• Jangokoro	13.0	14.9
• Nyaravur	17.2	16.2
• Pakwach	12.1	12.2
• Panyimur	13.6	14.9
Age groups (%)		
• Up to 20 years	8.8	1.4
• 21-30 years	32.7	20.9
• 31 – 40 years	29.6	31.1
• 41 – 50 years	16.9	29.1
• 51 years and over	12.1	17.6
Marital status (%)		
• Single	7.1	2.0
• Married	88.4	92.6
• Widow	4.5	5.4
Educational status (%)		
• None	33.6	9.5
• Primary	57.8	50.7
• Secondary	8.1	37.2
• Post-secondary	0.6	2.7
Occupation (%)		
• Farming	87.8	85.1
• Fishing	0.5	1.4
• Employees	1.1	6.1
• Business	8.5	7.4
• None	2.1	-

Source: Individual survey

WOMEN LEADERS' POLITICAL CAPABILITIES

3.1 Introduction

In this part, attention is given to explore how equipped women leaders (women councillors who are part of the elected local council structure and women council representatives who are elected women council leaders) are in effectively representing women constituency within decentralized development processes. Knowledge of their mandated roles and the performance of such roles and finally whether or not they have civic engagement skills are analyzed.

3.2 About mandated roles and responsibilities

The 1993 National Women Council Statutes and 1997 Local Council Statutes indicates the roles and responsibilities of the various categories of women. Table 2 below summarizes such roles. Evident from the table is that as leaders, women leaders are provided a perfect fit within the LLG policy-making processes or development management cycle. They have the political space to identify women's concern, table it to the local council, provide feedback to their constituency, engage in direct project implementation and monitor and evaluate how development interventions are benefiting women. Whether or not such nuance task specifications are adhered to is analyzed below.

Table 2: Mandated roles of women leaders

Women Council Executives	Women Councillors
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Identifying women's concern 2) Policy sensitization 3) Linking women to decision makers 4) Advocacy for women's rights 5) Monitoring development services 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Maintain close contact and consult with the electoral area. 2) Present views, opinions, and proposals to the Council. 3) Attend Local Council and (sub) Committee meetings. 4) Appoint at least a day in a given period for meeting the people. 5) Report to the electorate the decisions and actions of the Council. 6) Use his/her skills, profession, experience, or specialized knowledge to the benefit of the Council. 7) Take part in communal and development activities in the electoral area/district.

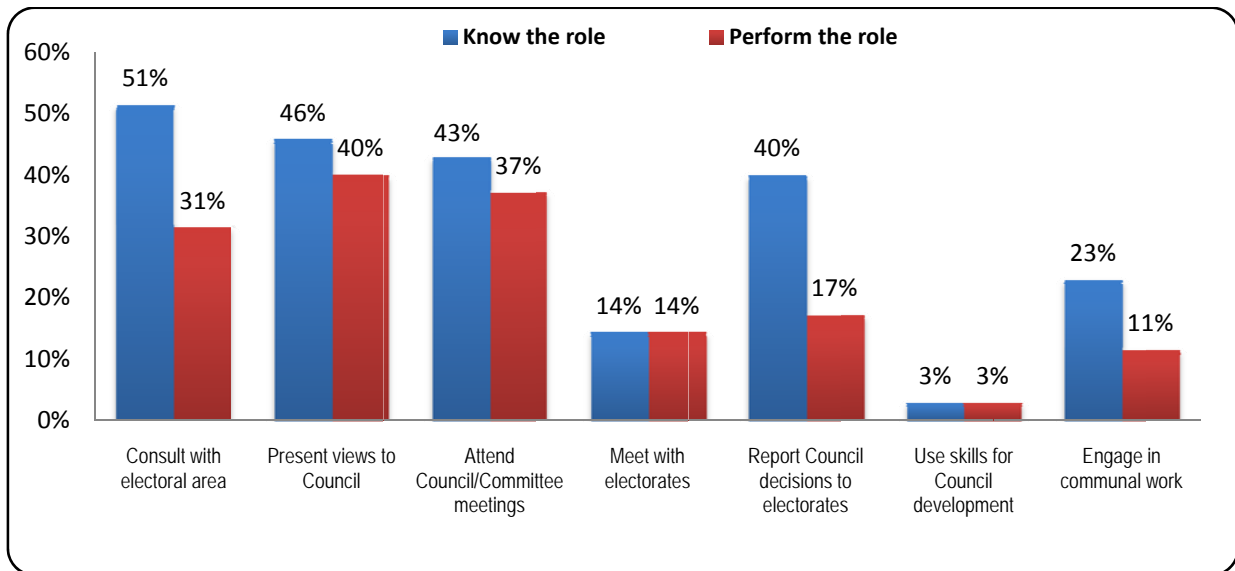
Source: 1993 National Women Council Statute

Source: 1997 Local Council Statute

3.3 Women Councillors awareness and performance of roles

Overall, 30 women councillors were interviewed on whether they knew their roles as councillors and if at all they were performing those roles. As figure 1 shows, majority of women councillors were not aware of their roles as elected leaders. Apart from 51% who were aware that they were required to keep in close consultation with their electoral areas, the awareness of all other roles are below 50%. Thus, it is not surprising that for almost all roles, performance do not match with the knowledge (except for meeting with electorates and using skills for council development). The few active Women Councillors are largely comfortable presenting views to the councils (although which views remains yet another question!) and attending council meetings. Meanwhile, using their skills for local development just like engaging in community work and meeting with electorates are less performed.

Figure 1: Women Councillors' awareness and performance of roles (%)



Further analysis of the awareness and performance of mandated roles by sub county is presented in table 3 below. It is evident from the table that Nyaravur LLG has the weakest elected women councillors who largely do not know, neither do they perform their representative roles. And in almost all LLGs Women Councillors are not utilizing their skills to enhance their Council's development.

Table 3: Women councilors' awareness and performance of mandated roles by sub county (%)

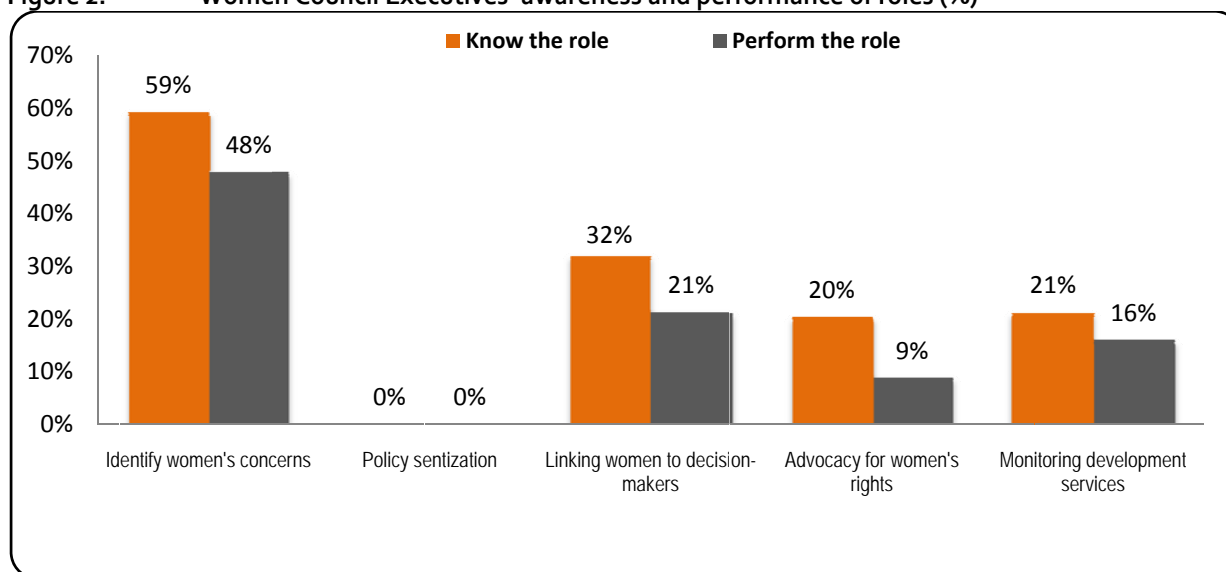
Mandated Roles	Akworo		Drajini		Jangokoro		Nyaravur		Pakwach		Panyimur	
	Know roles	Perform roles	Know roles	Perform roles	Know roles	Perform roles	Know roles	Perform roles	Know roles	Perform roles	Know roles	Perform roles
Consult with electoral area	50	50	50	40	50	50	-	-	50	-	100	33
Present views to Council	50	50	50	40	50	50	-	-	25	50	83	50
Attend Council meetings	50	50	20	10	50	50	-	-	75	75	83	67
Meet with electorates	25	25	20	20	-	-	-	-	50	25	-	17
Report Council decision to electorates	50	50	30	20	50	17	-	-	50	25	67	-
Use skills for Council development	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	25	-	-
Engage in communal work	-	-	-	-	50	50	-	-	-	-	83	17

Source: Individual survey

3.4 Women Council Executives' awareness and performance of roles

A total of 118 Women Council Executives (WCEs) were interviewed about the knowledge of their roles and whether they were performing such roles. Figure 2 below reveals that like their counterparts the Women Councillors majority of WCEs were also largely not aware of their roles and were not performing most of what they were elected to do. The few active WCEs do concentrate their efforts in identifying women's needs; the needs they hardly carry forward to any other level of government of development partners for support.

Figure 2: Women Council Executives' awareness and performance of roles (%)



From table 4, it is clear that Nyaravur, Drajini, and Panyimur LLGs are where WCEs were least effective especially in performing the very roles they know as their mandates. Meanwhile, in all the LLGs, WCEs were not aware of, and were not performing, the role of their constituency sensitization on the different government development policies.

Table 4: WCE's awareness and performance of mandated roles by sub county (%)

Mandated Roles	Akworo		Drajini		Jangokoro		Nyaravur		Pakwach		Panyimur	
	Know roles	Perform roles	Know roles	Perform roles	Know roles	Perform roles	Know roles	Perform roles	Know roles	Perform roles	Know roles	Perform roles
Identify women's concerns	77	71	45	39	100	75	11	-	50	43	94	75
Policy sensitization	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Linkage to decision-makers	53	47	19	19	69	38	11	-	29	29	25	-
Advocacy for women's rights	35	35	-	-	69	25	11	-	7	-	19	-
Monitoring development services	18	12	-	-	94	75	11	-	29	29	-	-

Source: Individual survey

3.5 Civic engagement skills among women leaders

With regards to political capability, women leaders were also asked to mention the skills they had that would aid them during civic engagement. Overall, Figure 3 below shows that both Women Councillors and WCEs lacked core civic engagement skills. Worst cases are for Women Councillors who lack both advocacy and monitoring and evaluation skills.

Figure 3: Women leaders' civic engagement skills (%)

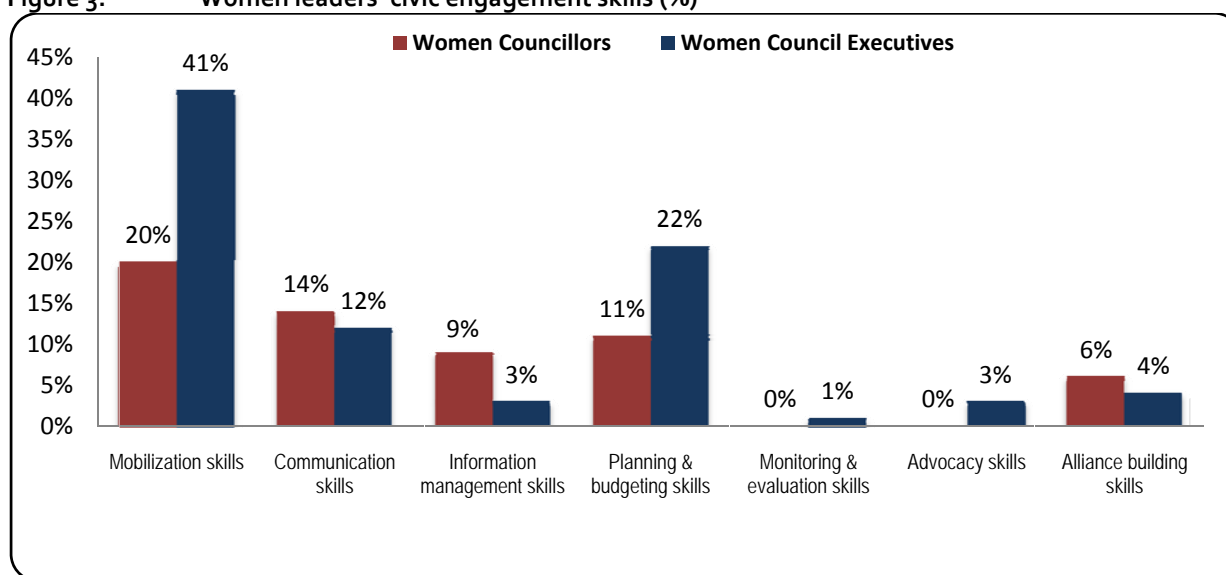


Table 5 reveals the skills variation between the various LLGs. Evident from it is that Nyaravur, Jangokoro and Panyimur LLGs have women leaders who lack most of the basic civic engagement skills.

Table 5: Women leaders' civic engagement skills by sub county (%)

Civic engagement skills	Women leaders	Akworo	Drajini	Jangokoro	Nyaravur	Pakwach	Panyimur
Mobilization skills	Women councillors	25	40	17	-	25	-
	Women Council Executives	41	39	75	16	50	31
Communication skills	Women councillors	-	40	-	-	25	-
	Women Council Executives	18	7	-	5	50	6
Information management skills	Women councillors	-	20	-	-	25	9
	Women Council Executives	-	10	-	-	-	3
Planning & budgeting skills	Women councillors	25	10	17	-	25	-
	Women Council Executives	18	-	63	5	-	69
Monitoring & evaluation skills	Women councillors	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Women Council Executives	-	-	-	-	7	-
Advocacy skills	Women councillors	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Women Council Executives	6	-	13	-	-	-
Alliance building skills	Women councillors	-	20	-	-	-	-
	Women Council Executives	-	16	-	-	-	-

Source: Individual survey

3.6 Impediments to women leaders' performance of roles

From the focus group discussions held in the various LLGs with women leaders, the following impediments were identified as major roadblocks to effective women's representation in the decentralized political arena and development processes:

- Less coordination between WCEs and Women Councillors who are for most of the time engaged in wrangles about 'who is who' in the LLG political arena instead of refocusing their attention to building synergy among themselves to the benefit of women; the constituency they represent.
- Many women leaders are simply ignorant of what their roles are as well as how to effect such roles. This ignorance is worsened by the lack of leadership induction as elected leaders are 'treated as if they have known and mastered their roles and responsibilities' remarked a women councillor in Jangokoro.
- The women leadership especially at the district and LLGs are not providing ample guide to both lower level women leaders and to fellow grassroots women on why women deserve to be present and heard in LLG planning and budgeting processes. 'They are simply comfortable with being enthroned in leadership positions to the detriment of their fellow women' observed a woman leader in Akworo LLG.
- Many women are illiterate and do not effectively participate in LLG meetings that are conducted in the English language. They prefer not to attend than be there 'like a corpse' noted one woman leader in Pakwach LLG.
- Sometimes LLG meeting venues are far, typically in the parish and sub county headquarters. And given the fact that most of women leaders are elderly women, they find it difficult to walk to such venues.
- Many planning meetings are ill planned without caring that the women, who are also bread-makers in their homes, have to juggle between their domestic and public roles. The

situation is worsened by the increasing food insecurity that compel many women to give preference to their household needs than concentrating on public-related activities.

- Mobilization for meetings conducted by LCs and Parish Development Committees (PDCs) exclude women because they are not required by the gendered lifestyle to engage in public discussions; a preserve for men.
- LLGs segregate between Women Councillors and WCEs in paying participation allowances as such the WCEs feel unfairly discriminated against.
- Some men prevent their wives/sisters from attending public meetings arguing that public meetings are for men only and any woman who dare step in such an arena is a social deviant.
- Unfulfilled budgetary promises has overtime accumulated into 'participation fatigue' noted the WCE Chair of Akworo LLG while she argued that often women turn up for meetings, press for a need which is accepted for funding but hardly are such needs honoured.
- Religious dogma continues to curtail effective engagement of women in a male arena. For instance, Muslim women are not expected to argue and dialogue with men.

3.7 Concluding remarks

It is evident from answering the study question on women leaders political capability that foremost, WCs are relatively more aware of their roles than WCEs. Likewise, they are performing more of their roles than WCEs although whether or not such performance benefit their women constituency is another subject of discussion. Yet, WCs are more reserved about the use of their skills and physical indulgence in community work for the development of their councils. Such a scenario is more pronounced in Nyaravur, Jangokoro, Drajini and Panyimur LLGs. Finally, women leaders generally lack core skills for monitoring and evaluation, advocacy and alliance building.

Not surprising, ignorance of roles added to limited skills has enabled leadership conflicts to breed among women leaders thereby reducing their vigilance to counter bad mobilization, LLG segregation as well as the ability to overcome male chauvinisms and religious constraints.

GRASSROOTS WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION

4.1 Introduction

This section presents the findings on the participation of grassroots women in key local government planning and budgeting processes. It starts by presenting the revised guidelines on local government budgeting cycle. It then focus is on exploring to what extent grassroots women as participating in the different stages of the budget cycle approved by Ministry of Local Government as is summarized in Table 6 below.

4.2 Approved local government budget cycle

Table 6 below presents the revised LLG budget cycle. It shows the entrenchment of the roles of political and technical leaders in determining development direction in any LLG. Less and less of grassroots people's participation is provided for. How women can navigate, to their benefit, within such a closed-door decentralized development management approach can best be seen from the analysis that follows.

Table 6: Local government budget cycle

Stage	Activity/event/step	Responsibility Centre	Output
Stage1. Consultations with central Government	National Budget Conference	Ministry of Finance (C. G Agencies)	National priorities, resources & inter sector allocations communicated to local governments Recurrent and development grants ceilings communicated to local governments, alongside changes to sector policies and guidelines.
Stage 2	Local Government Regional Budget Framework Paper (LGBFP) Workshop	Ministry of Finance, Planning & Economic Development, Ministry of Local Government, Local Government Finance Commission and Line Ministries	a) Revised Indicative Ceilings of RTB and Contracts Committee communicated to Local Governments b) LGs given guidance on preparation of LGBFP(Draft templates given)
Stage3 Proposal of policy	(a) A Local government must decide and agree on its policies and activities of the next financial year.	The Executive Committee of Council meet to discuss and agree on council policies and Activities for next FY	a) Policies and activities for the next FY are proposed by the Executive Committee b) Indicative ceiling for departments agreed by the Executive Committee for issuance by the budget desks

	(b) Budget Desk prepares local government budget call and circulates it to heads of departments and Lower Local Governments.	Budget Desk with approval of Executive Committee	Budget call circulars issued to department and LLGs to guide the budget process
Stage 4 LG Budget Conference	Holding of Local Government budget conference	Stakeholders in the Local Government Budget process (Councillors, Heads of Departments, NGOs/CSOs, Opinion Leaders, etc)	a) Review performance for previous year b) Agree on priorities for next financial year c) Contribute inputs to the LGBFP
Stages Costing of Priorities	(a) Review of sectoral performance and identification of sectoral priorities. (b) Detailed costing of activities done (c) First draft LGBFP made (d) Updating council's development plans	Heads of departments Budget desk and Heads of departments	Sectoral performance revised and priorities identified. Detailed cost of activities. Draft LGBFPs ready for review by District Executive Committee (DEC) Council's development plans updated.
Stage 6 Review of costed priorities	(a) Draft LGBFP approved by Executive Committee (b) Preparation of draft budget and incorporating adjustments. The budget must balance, this means that council's programmes must be prioritized to available revenue.	Budget desk Executive Committee	(a) LGBFP approved (b) Draft budget reviewed by DEC
Stage 7 Budget presentation	The budget is presented by the chairperson or designated representative of the local council to the council as a bill for consideration by Council.	Presented by council chairperson to full council	a) Budget presented for consideration and referred to the respective standing committees for scrutiny by 15th June. b) The flexibility proposal is also presented for consideration by Council
Stage 8 Budget scrutiny	On receipt of the proposed budget estimates, council will refer them to standing committee for scrutiny and recommendations for approval.	Standing committees	Recommendations for approval
Stage 9 Budget debate and approval	Standing committee's recommendations are debated and budget approved by 31st day of August each FY.	Full council	Budget approval
Stage 10 Publication and communication	Signing of the budget by the Chairperson and Distribution of the approval budget to all interested stakeholders.	Signed by Chairperson and distributed by CE	Budget signed Budget distributed.
Stage 11: Budget Implementation	Activity work plans are drawn for first year for implementing the budget	Heads of Departments draw plans and Council approves	Activity plans prepared
Stage 12: Budget Monitoring	(a) Heads of department carries out supervision (b) Executive Committee does the monitoring and Evaluation (c) other councillors do constituency monitoring	Heads of Departments Executive Committee Councillors	Budget Monitoring and Evaluation

Source: Ministry of Local Government (August 2007) *The Local Government Financial and Accounting Manual*, 2007. pp. 38-39

4.3 Women's participation in the budget cycle

While LLG budget processes are now vested in LLG Executive and Sectoral Committees and the Councils, the vigilance with which women can gain from such a process is dependent on how effectively their core needs are mobilized, prioritised, and presented to the various committees and the councils. Thus, asked whether they had participated in the various planning and budgeting processes of their LLG plans and budgets in the financial year (FY) 2008/09, Figure 4 presents the different levels of participation at the various stages of LLG planning and budgeting processes.

Figure 4: Grassroots women's participation in LLG budget cycles (%)

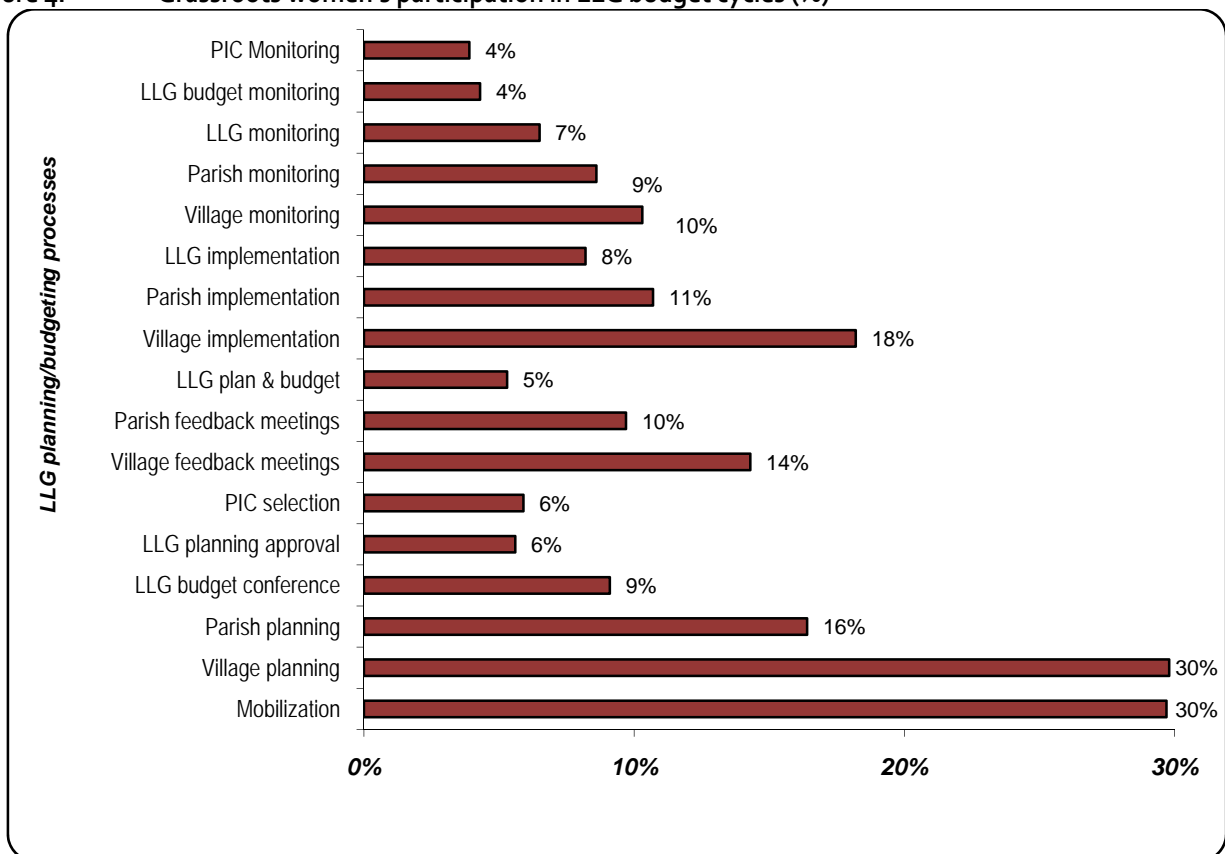


Figure 4 above shows that generally many grassroots women are significantly excluded (see annex 1) from LLG planning and budgeting processes as at most only 3 in ten participate in each planning stage. Further, two intriguing things stand out: first, grassroots women are somewhat actively participating in the various LLG policy processes as long as it is within the village confines and second, arising from this first observation is that the higher the level of local governance the lesser they participate.

Table 7 below shows that LLGs in Jangokoro, Nyaravur and Akworo were the worst culprits in terms of sidelining grassroots women from participating in their annual planning and budgeting processes compared to the case in Pakwach, Panyimur and Drajini LLGs. Such exclusions are more pronounced in budget approval and PIC selection meetings as well as during monitoring of LLG projects and budgets; roles always conclave for elected politicians.

Table 7: Grassroots women’s participation in 2008/09 budget cycle by LLG (%)

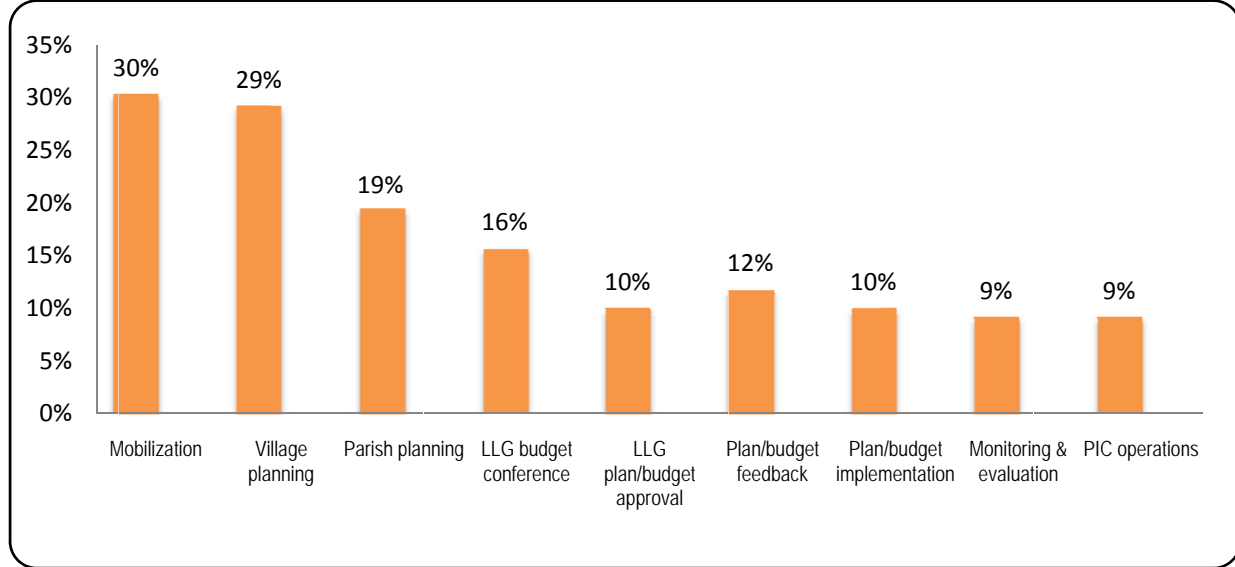
	Akworo	Drajini	Jangokoro	Nyaravur	Pakwach	Panyimur
LLG planning and budgeting processes						
Participated in village mobilization	51	23	11	13	53	33
Participated in village planning meetings	52	23	10	13	54	33
Participated in parish planning meetings	12	19	4	3	45	22
Participated in LLG budget conferences	7	3	3	2	36	15
Participated in LLG budget approval	2	2	1	1	23	12
Participated in PIC selection	3	2	2	1	23	13
Received village feedback meetings	14	18	13	3	14	24
Received parish feedback meetings	5	20	2	1	9	15
Received LLG plan & budget feedback meetings	3	10	1	1	2	12
Participated in village project implementation	18	17	23	4	34	20
Participated in parish project implementation	3	19	2	1	24	12
Participated in LLG project implementation	2	14	1	2	20	9
Participated in village project monitoring	4	12	10	3	27	10
Participated in parish project monitoring	3	14	3	1	24	7
Participated in LLG project monitoring	1	11	-	1	20	6
Participated in LLG budget monitoring	1	3	2	1	20	4
Participated in PIC monitoring	-	2	3	1	20	3

Source: Individual survey

4.4 Grassroots women’s satisfaction with planning and budgeting processes

Figure 5 below shows that generally grassroots women are less satisfied with the development management processes in their lower local governments. The dissatisfaction level rises with increasing levels (as well as centralization) of the planning and budget management. For instance, during mobilization when many people are required to ‘bless’ LLG plans some involvement breeds satisfaction but as the process gets less participatory and more technocratic or political like in plan/budget approval, feedback, implementation and monitoring many women are excluded and hence they are more dissatisfied.

Figure 5: Grassroots women' satisfaction with budgeting processes (%)



4.5 Concluding remarks

It is evident from the ministry guidelines as well as the findings from the grassroots women that local government planning and budgeting processes are more technocratic and political with more powers and roles vested in LLG officials. Grassroots women are thus significantly excluded from most of the stages. For what takes place at their levels, at least 2 in 10 women participate. Meanwhile up the budget cycle ladders only 1 in 10 of the women leaders ventures into the political arena. As a result, many women are dissatisfied with how decentralized development processes are managed.

5.1 Introduction

The effectiveness of social accountability is dependent on effective civic engagement that is a process of organizing citizens or their entrusted representatives to influence and share in public affairs. Yet people marginalized by the state need to know their rights so as to effectively exercise them in 'collaborative policy making'. Thus, the quest of any political capability building project needs to recast its attention to enabling people gain the ability and confidence for sustained constructive political interaction (Whitehead & Gray-Molina 2003).

This part therefore provide answers to the third objective of this study of exploring ways and means for plugging in the gaps that are impeding both grassroots women's effective participation and women leaders' effective representation of women constituency. It presents the best-bait options after critically building a consensus on the various views of the different LLG stakeholders – grassroots women, women leaders, and local government officials.

5.2 Views of grassroots women

Figure 6: Recommendations for improving local government planning & budgeting processes

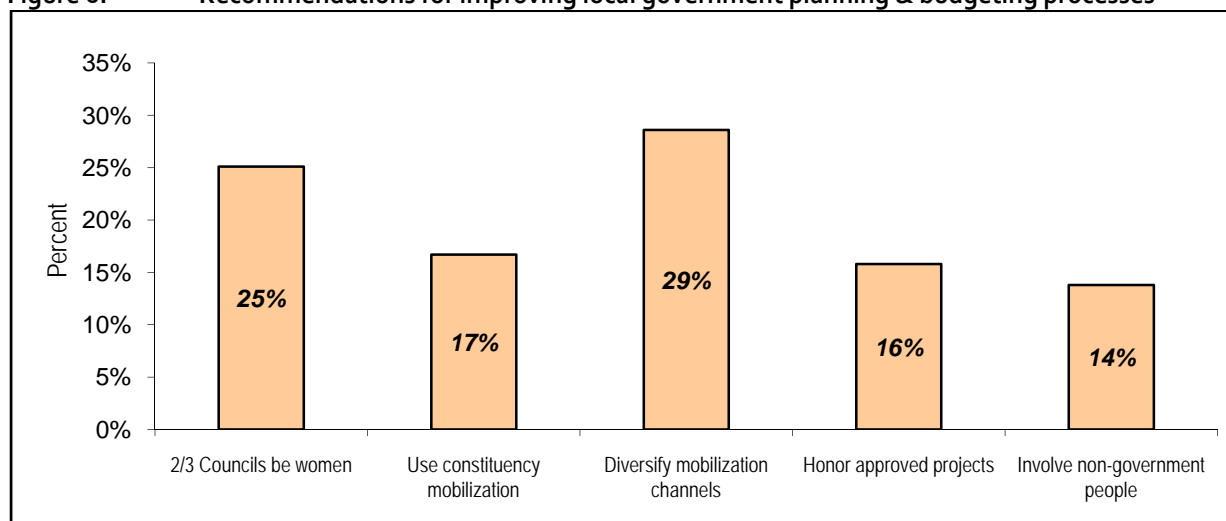


Figure 6 above presents what grassroots women identified during their individual survey was critical for improving both the processes and outcomes of local government planning and budgeting processes. Evident therein are the concerns for better mobilization (46%) by every constituency representatives and diversified communications channels and increasing the numerical representation of women in local councils (25%).

5.3 Views of women leaders

When women leaders were asked during the focus group discussions how best they can improve on their women's representation within the current local government planning and budgeting processes they responded with the following:

- Women leaders need to adopt a shared vision and responsibility for their women constituency in order for them to effectively use their various political space and capabilities to influence policies in the best interest possible for gender equality. This will also reduce their baseless 'show-off' conflicts
- Skills training to enhance women's effective representation should be conducted for both women leaders and male leaders so that every actor in the LLG political arena speaks the same language.
- Given the high illiteracy level among women, LLG meetings should be discussed in the local language
- LLGs need to take affirmative action to target Functional Adult Literacy programmes specifically at women to improve on their literacy status.
- Annual planning and budgeting meetings should be planned timely in order to avoid the crisis management practice of ambushing people with invitations for planning meetings
- The responsibility for mobilization should be decentralized to the various categories represented in the council so that different constituencies are able to reach out to their electorate; a practice always blocked by a centralized mobilization approach.
- Civic education should be conducted up to village levels for both men and women in order to sensitize grassroots communities on the vitality of women participation in local governance.
- Women leaders should be provided with exchange visits in order for them to learn from other LLGs the antics of leadership and dialogue.
- LLG Committee meetings should be opened to special categories of people to attend. For instance, WCEs, CSOs, and religious leaders, among others should be allowed to participate (even without voting rights) in such meetings in order to widen the views to be discussed as well as to cross-check vested interests of Committee members.

5.4 The consensus recommendations

The consensus view agreed upon during the district feedback meetings to improve on women's participation and local government responsiveness and accountability (with gender sensitivity) are to:

- Build Women Forum as a coordination institution right from the village to district levels. Through the Forums, more capacity building should be conducted on issues of team building, roles of women leaders, women's rights, planning and budgeting, leadership skills, and government policies.
- Widen mobilization channels so that the greater population of both women and men attend and voice their concern in local government policy-making processes.
- Sensitize more men and women on gender issues so that the influence of culture and male rigidity as well as the poor perception about women's empowerment is improved.
- Promote political engagement of women into leadership position. Women should be encouraged to join politics as are men in order for them to fend for their constituency.

REFINING MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

6.1 Introduction

This last part of the report presents the refined project logframe as an instrument of performance measure and accountability. It specifically focuses on the project impact and outcome levels aware that output measurement are a function of input and activity tracking.

6.2 The revised monitoring & evaluation framework

Table 8: Project Logframe

	Intervention logic	OVI	Assumptions
Overall goal	Local governments in West Nile districts of Nebbi and Yumbe provide gender sensitive and equitable services to the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 60% of LLG budgets is allocated for services sectors • At least 60% of LLG budgets is actually disbursed for services sectors • At least 5% of LLG budgets is allocated for gender-related affirmative action annually • 80% of women have positive perceptions of LLG officials 	Central government is committed to decentralization and empowering marginalized groups
Specific objective 1	<i>Women and local government leaders have increased knowledge and skills to champion women's needs in local government decision-making processes.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70% of WC know and perform their roles. • 70% of WCEs know and perform their roles. 	<p>Gender issues remain a priority to all LLGs.</p> <p>Women leaders are willing to engage with local government agencies</p>
Expected results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope of & reasons for women's non-participation in local government planning and budgeting known • Participatory poverty resource management knowledge and skills gaps of Women and local government leaders identified. • Capacity building of women & LLG leaders customized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building manuals tailored to the identified capacity gaps in place by Q1 Y1 • 90% of Women leaders are able to mobilize women to engage in planning and budgeting processes • 90% of Women leaders have effective communication skills • 50% of Women leaders are able to document gender changes • 60% of Women leaders are able to conduct gender responsive planning • 60% of Women leaders are able to conduct participatory gender monitoring & evaluation • 60% of Women leaders are able to conduct gender responsive advocacy 	<p>The elected leaders in the various women council structures are trainable.</p> <p>LLG staffs from CDSs remain committed to furthering gender issues</p>

	<p>to local needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased knowledge by Women leaders of their mandated roles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60% of Women leaders are able to build alliances 	
Specific objective 2	<p><i>Effective participation of women in local government planning and budgeting management increased.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of women leaders are engaged in mobilisation 60% of women leaders are participate in village planning meetings 70% of women leaders participate in Parish planning meetings 90% of women leaders participate in LLG Budget Conferences 90% of women leaders participate in LLG Plan approval 	<p>A popular participatory decentralised planning approach is upheld by central and local governments.</p> <p>The Contracting Authority releases funds in line with local government planning and budgeting cycles.</p>
Expected results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness among LLG leaders of the need for engendering development processes Increased awareness among grassroots women of their rights in LLG budgets Increased awareness among grassroots women of LLG planning processes Increased mobilization of grassroot women to participate in LLG planning and budgeting processes Increased participation of grassroot women in LLG planning and budgeting processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60% of women leaders participate in Village feedback meetings 70% of women leaders participate in Parish feedback meetings 90% of women leaders participate in LLG Plan/budget feedback meetings 60% of women leaders participate in Village project implementation 70% of women leaders participate in Parish project implementation 90% of women leaders participate in LLG project implementation 60% of women leaders participate in Village level project monitoring 70% of women leaders participate in Parish level project monitoring 90% of women leaders participate in LLG level project monitoring 	<p>The Women Council structures remains active in mobilising women as a constituency at various levels of local councils</p>
Specific objective 3	<p><i>Local governments are transparent and accountable to their constituents in general and to women in particular</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 90% of LLGs communicate about approved plan/budget to lower units increased 90% of LLG have progress reports that include gender disaggregated data of achievements 	<p>Government uphold its commitment to transparency and accountability and affirmative actions for marginalised groups</p> <p>Financial scope of and remittance to local governments continues to increase and be timely so</p>

			that locally committed to projects are addressed with the desired quality and speed.
Expected results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased access to LLG approved plans and budgets • Increased awareness of LLG approved plans and budgets • Increased involvement of women leaders in LLG plans and budgets tracking 		Central government support to decentralised budgets continues.

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Annex 1: One-sample t-test for grassroots women participation

LLG planning and budgeting processes	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Participated in village mobilization	2,232	1.70	0.457	175.904	2,231	0.000*
Participated in village planning meetings	2,232	1.70	0.457	175.782	2,231	0.000*
Participated in parish planning meetings	2,232	1.84	0.371	233.907	2,231	0.000*
Participated in LLG budget conferences	2,232	1.91	0.288	312.831	2,231	0.000*
Participated in LLG budget approval	2,232	1.94	0.233	393.119	2,231	0.000*
Participated in PIC selection	2,232	1.94	0.231	397.763	2,231	0.000*
Received village feedback meetings	2,232	1.94	0.236	388.635	2,231	0.000*
Received parish feedback meetings	2,232	1.86	0.351	250.236	2,231	0.000*
Received LLG plan & budget feedback meetings	2,232	1.90	0.296	303.364	2,231	0.000*
Participated in village project implementation	2,232	1.95	0.225	409.276	2,231	0.000*
Participated in parish project implementation	2,232	1.82	0.386	222.344	2,231	0.000*
Participated in LLG project implementation	2,232	1.89	0.309	289.753	2,231	0.000*
Participated in village project monitoring	2,232	1.92	0.274	330.216	2,231	0.000*
Participated in parish project monitoring	2,232	1.90	0.305	294.082	2,231	0.000*
Participated in LLG project monitoring	2,232	1.91	0.281	321.582	2,231	0.000*
Participated in LLG budget monitoring	2,232	1.93	0.247	369.572	2,231	0.000*
Participated in PIC monitoring	2,232	1.96	0.202	458.002	2,231	0.000*

* denotes statistical significant at 5% and 1%

Source: Individual survey