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TRAINING REPORT ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGETING (GRB) WORKSHOPS HELD IN ALL LOWER LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN NEBBI DISTRICT FROM 25th -31st August 2005

1.0 Introduction

Development is a human right. This right is not gender blind! However, with the widening gender gaps in almost all human and economic development indicators between men and women, boys and girls, it is imperative that new strategies in part demand for all governments to develop and implement gender responsive and sensitive programmes/projects. However, the operationalization of such a demand requires that the mindset of policy makers and implementers as well as policy beneficiaries is changed in order for the former to develop policies that respond to gender needs and the latter to demand for such policies.

It is against such a background that AFARD, with co-funding support from HURINET (U) conducted a one-day training workshops on human rights and gender responsive budget (GRB) in all the lower local governments (LLGs) in Nebbi district. Aware that the government planning and budgeting system is exclusionary and non appreciative of women's needs and thereby either directly or indirectly limit women's representation, the training targeted the marginalized women. Women representatives from all the LLGs and representatives from parish/ward women council, women councilors, executives and selected technical staff of all LLGs in the district participated in this training.¹

2.0 Training goal and objectives

The main purpose of the training was to strengthen the capacity of the women council and councilors to undertake specific gender budgeting analyses of their LLG development plans and mid-term expenditure framework. Thus, the training focused on imparting skills and knowledge to women council, and lower local government councilors and technical staff on women's rights and gender budgeting.

The objectives of the training were that at the end of the training sessions participants are:

¹ The focus on women and a few local government personnel was purposely done because:
? Women for whom policies should respond needed the skills with which to echo their voices among policy makers.
? In phase two of this project only local government personnel will be targeted.

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- ? Able to enumerate at least 3 cardinal issues related to women's rights as stipulated in the Constitution.
- ? Able to explain development from a human rights perspective and position women's rights as pivotal in local government development process.
- ? Able to use a gender responsive budget analytical tool to analyze annual local government budgets.

To a greater degree, participant's expectations and evaluations were in line with the training objectives as is contained in the box below.

Box 1: Summary of expectations and evaluation remarks

Expectations	Evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ To acquire knowledge on: the rights of women; what is and how to do a gender responsive budget; new policies/laws that relate to women; the roles and responsibilities of the women council; the relationship between the women council and women councilors; and how to work harmoniously with the LLGs. ☞ To know each other especially the women council leaders from village to sub county/town council levels. ☞ To know how to support the women council at the LLG ☞ To get insights into how much money has been allocated to the women council from the various LLGs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ From now on, I know that it is our right as women to contribute to the decision making process and not to be announced to that 'this is the budget for women'. We must be participating in the annual budget conference (A parish women leader in Erussi). ☞ Leaders in local government should now not wait for us to ask for information. They MUST be providing us this information periodically. However, since they knew this but were playing fowl, we shall start demanding for it (A parish woman leader in Nebbi town council). ☞ I now know how to ask why a budget is must be gender responsive and will ask whether a budget is providing for equality between men and women. (Woman Councilor in Paidha)

Source: Excerpt from expectations and fears

3.0 The training process

The training underwent a double phased process. It started with the training manual development and ended with the training organization, implementation and evaluation. Below by trainers are some of the key actions that were followed.

Training manual development

The training manual passed through a number of stages until the final documentation as spelt hereunder:

- ? The first step involved the selection/appointment of two key persons who spearheaded the evolution of the first draft of the manual. These people were from AFARD and Nebbi district local government (community based services directorate) involved in and with experience in gender issues. They identified and reviewed a number of documents and reports: the local government planning process; human rights; gender and development especially gender responsive budgeting. And, to repackage the texts so identified, they undertook a mock training trial from which practical methodologies, contents, and scope were derived and revised. Eventually, a draft training manual was produced.
- ? The second stage witnessed the manual reviews by some selected local experts. These were drawn from the Women Council, Local Government Clerk to Council and Administration, and a sister NGO – CARITAS. The major task of this team was to see and advise on the suitability and usability of the draft manual. Four feedback meetings were held and the discussed views were used to revise the draft manual into the final document.
- ? A third activity was an in-house refresher training of trainer. The persons who participated in the manual review were subsequently identified as facilitators. However, given their diverse experience and inclination with gender issues, a facilitator's orientation that took two days was conducted. Such an initiative promoted the training by getting a clear understanding of the training theme, materials, teamwork, and strategy among the trainers.
- ? Finally, the revised manual from the in-house coaching was adapted to the participants' use. This involved design and development of a simplified version of the facilitator's manual as participant's handout, translation of some portions of the manual into the local language –Alur- and making some reference materials on the Convention of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) as part of the package for the participant's handout. The essence of doing so was to ensure that the training fit into the participant knowledge and practice system, and to provide a quick reference point.

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The training: organization, implementation and evaluation

Before the actual training, mobilization was done using a multi-faceted approach. Radio announcements were aired; letters of invitations were sent; and personal visits to the sub county and town council headquarters were made. All these were done to ensure that all the identified participants got the information; and convenient venues identified.

Eventually, all the 19 training workshops were held in the various lower local governments for the invited 45 participants. The table below shows details of attendance.

After the training, all the trainers together with other AFARD member evaluated the training in order to assess the training processes and learn lessons for future programming.

Table 1: Attendance by gender by LLG

No	LLG	Participants		Total	%tage turn-up
		Women	Men		
1	Pakwach	39	6	45	100
2	Panyimur	44	1	45	100
3	PakwachTC	42	4	46	102.2
4	Panyango	33	8	41	91.1
5	Wadelai	40	5	45	100
6	Akworo	41	4	45	100
7	Parombo	40	9	49	108.9
8	Erussi	42	3	45	100
9	Nebbi	32	16	48	106.7
10	Nebbi TC	40	5	45	100
11	Kucwiny	29	10	39	86.7
12	Nyaravur	33	12	45	100
13	Paidha	39	6	45	100
14	Paidha TC	42	3	45	100
15	Nyapea	38	7	45	100
16	Jangokoro	38	7	45	100
17	Zeu	44	1	45	100
18	Atyak	36	12	48	106.7
19	Kango	40	5	45	100
Totals		732	124	856	100.1%
%tages		85.5%	14.5%		

Source: Training registration sheets

Positive notes

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- ? Overall, a 100% turn up was realized with more women than men participation as was designed. In certain cases even those who were not invited attended the trainings.
- ? The zeal towards the training was positive as evident by the turn up at a time when the rainy season has virtually compelled many households into farming activity.

Limitations

- ? The available one-day duration for the training was too inadequate. As a strategy, the training ended late and some methods were modified.
- ? Language remained a challenge in Kango where the use of Alur language proved inadequate given the composition of participants from other language speaking groups - Kebu and Lendu. Translation by fellow participants also took time.

4.0 Challenges

Contained in the table below are the challenges that the training identified for the realization of a gender responsive budget/policy.

Actors	Challenges
Women as individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌘ The high rate of illiteracy greatly affected the level of self confidence and esteem in some of the women ⌘ Most women are inadequately informed of their rights and other provisions meant to protect and promote their rights ⌘ Most of the women were concerned as to why the training was organized late when their term of office is almost expired
The women council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌘ Most women councils are not functioning due to lack of knowledge of roles and poor facilitation from the LLG-the common say is that “no money, no work/meetings”. There is also a weak link with the LLG women councilors as well as the village and parish women councils; they are also not aware of who they should work with. ⌘ The LLG women councils do not have plans and budget. ⌘ Members of WC lack the skills to advocate for their rights and to enable other women know their rights. ⌘ The capacity of the WC and also the women councilors to question and engage LLGs budgeting and planning processes and therefore the outcomes from these processes is still low and less appreciated. This is further worsened by the women’s capacity inadequacies in engaging and being involved in their respective LLGs programme development (planning, management and monitoring).
Local governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌘ Limited financial capacity to organize a similar type of training for its staff and WCs. ⌘ Poor prioritization of gender issues generally and women concerns in development plans and mid-term expenditure framework. This is mainly

	<p>an attitudinal problem: <i>that the women are ignorant and are tools for winning elections</i> (sighted in Panyango LLG)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✍ Limited capacity to carry out a systematic and well organized GRB and gender analysis and mainstreaming. ✍ Development is taken to mean hardware facilities which do not favor software interventions like support to the women council. ✍ The centralization of capacity building grant at the district level has limited the LLGs in including and implementing emerging, unique and relevant specific LLG needs especially that of the women council leave alone the universalisation of the core modules ✍ Development is in most cases taken as a privilege not as a right because of politicizing development and the whole practice of vote buying. ✍ Information sharing between the LLG and the women council is very weak. For instance, in Paidha town council some funds were allocated to the women council however, the communication was not sent to them. Equally, communication on when and how development plans and budgets are generated are not passed to the women council to increase their participation and inclusion. ✍ Some LLGs are not aware of the kind of support and coordination mechanisms that they should use in order to build and consolidate their interventions with the women council
National policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✍ Although national policies on gender and human rights exist, it was noted that: policy generation are not done in consultation with the local community; policy dissemination is inadequate; and policies are not prepared in a consumable format e.g., policy translation.

5.0 Lessons learnt

- ? A multi-actor approach to any training enriches contents by building on diverse expertise and experience of the actors.
- ? Translation of training content into the local language increases understanding and usability of the training.
- ? A multi-channel communication strategy for mobilization reduced non-attendance rates.
- ? Policy makers do not need only the awareness created by advocacy and lobbying about gender issues. They too need to have the knowledge and skills to conduct gender analysis in order to critically and positively audit their plans and budget for gender responsiveness.
- ? Awareness of roles, lobbying and advocacy skills are relevant and essential for the functionality of the women council

6.0 Recommendations

Based on the above observations, we recommend the following key activities to be undertaken as a way of strengthening the women council institution and a response to gender budgeting (focusing on the LLGs)

- ? There is need for a well planned and packaged programme that focus on enhancing the knowledge level of the women council on their roles and responsibilities. This should target the women council at parish and village levels since most interventions on role enhancement have been concentrated at the LLG level. Additionally, a systematic and regular refresher training need to be organized for the women council at LLGs to particularly provide backstopping in areas where weaknesses have been identified and to boost/rekindle their capacity to demand from their respective LLGs what is due to them. With elections coming up in 2006, such training should be done covering the entire women council structure from district to parish level.
- ? There is need for capacity building on civic competence under a programme that targets the general populace. The purpose of this input would make the people to be aware of their civic rights and responsibilities among other issues than the usual voter education which has been misconstrued to mean civic education. This recommendation is supported from the view that, in most cases people are not aware of their entitlements and thus their contribution to the development of the nation.
- ? There is an urgent need to reorganize and refocus the relationship between the women council and the councilors at all levels with a view of consolidating and utilizing their numerical advantage to demand from the respective councils. This can be achieved through team building interventions at all council levels.
- ? Because of the limited knowledge, skills and negative attitude among the technical staff and the political leadership on issues that involve women generally and gender mainstreaming in particular, it is important that a capacity building programme on gender mainstreaming and GRB be directed at all LLGs: technical and political personnel. Such a strategy should also target NGOs/FBOs as actors in engendered development.
- ? There is need to mobilize women as a constituency to participate, at all levels of local governments, in planning and budgeting processes in order to echo (and force is need be!) their needs.
- ? Gender audit should be done in all local government plans and budget to ensure conformity to GRB and where deviations are found, the women of the areas must be mobilized to question the power that be.
- ? Women council executives need specialized skills capacity building programme to be able to manage not only the WC but also the entire local government development processes. They need to know how to plan,

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mobilize resources, execute and monitor plans, and advocate different power centers.

- ? An active engagement of gender responsive men in the GRB is requisite. This will facilitate breaking the power and resource center crust that are denied to women as well as setting an emulatable basis among men whose rigid attitude delimit their support for a positive gender issues.
- ? There is a need for a mass campaign to challenge and reposition the mind set that development is a privilege to that that support and uphold development from a human right perspective. This can be achieved through a well designed IEC strategy for materials and knowledge dissemination.

7.0 Conclusion

In all, the training was well conducted. The desired target was reached and the laid down objectives attained. However, the realization of an effective impact of the training is dependent on the capacity and strategy that the WC adopts towards LLG planning and budgeting processes. Beyond this level, there is need to backstop their capacity in order to delimit the front from which LLG can ignore GRB. As such, the training identified plausible entry point required to change development policy discourses and practices at the LLG levels. It will remain a challenge for both AFARD/HURINET (and other well-wishers) to strive toward attaining a GRB.