

RESULTS SUMMARY

Community engagement in budget planning in Uganda

Author: Oxfam Denmark (2024)



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PROJECT	<i>Title:</i>	Community engagement in budget planning in Uganda
	<i>Partner:</i>	Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG)
	<i>Country:</i>	Uganda
	<i>Period:</i>	2022-2026

CHANGE	<p>The establishment of six sub-county based Participatory Budget Clubs (PBCs) strengthened community engagement in public financial management processes, making education services more responsive to local needs. PBCs engage in the planning, budgeting, monitoring and accountability processes of their sub counties related to education. The community members of PBCs are local voices into local decision-making spaces but also feed into national level budget processes via the Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG).</p>
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CONTEXT	<p>The Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) 2015 provides the legal framework for public financial management in Uganda including local structures' participation in planning and budgeting processes. In practice this participation is not institutionalised and not necessarily complied with by local authorities. Documented and expressed needs of local communities and especially disadvantaged groups like women, people with disabilities and refugees are therefore not reflected in the budgeting and public financial management processes.</p>
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CONTRIBUTION	<p>Oxfam Denmark has supported CSBAG in establishing the PBCs in Terego, Madi Okollo, and Yumbe districts with Danida SPA-funding. The partnership between Oxfam and CSBAG entails capacity development and technical support, joint partner learning events and co-organising high-level advocacy platforms. CSBAG contribute to the change processes through mobilisation of PBCs, training, mentoring and bringing forward documentation from county level to district and national level by presenting their findings before decision-makers.</p>
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IMAGES	<div><p>Photo credit: Oxfam</p></div> <div><p>Photo credit: CSBAG</p></div>
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[See next page for more details](#) →

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ACTIVITIES

The PBCs hold community dialogues to get consensus and sign off from fellow community members on the issues they intend to raise in accountability forums with their duty bearers. The PBCs regularly monitor schools and other public services, identifying key concerns and translating them into issue papers which are presented to duty bearers at both district and sub-county levels during community interface meetings, where they advocate for necessary improvements. PBCs also track commitments made by authorities, ensuring follow-ups and reporting progress to CSBAG. In addition, they participate in village and parish planning meetings, guiding communities in identifying and prioritizing key issues. This process enables PBCs to influence local government budget frameworks, ensuring that community needs are addressed in district-level planning and decision-making. Local documentation is compiled and analysed by CSBAG for their evidence-based advocacy towards national decision-makers. PBC members participate in the national level campaigns and influencing work.

LESSONS

CSBAG has not yet evaluated the experiences with PBCs but plans to systematise the experiences in the coming year. Some lessons learned have been observed as part of monitoring and ongoing dialogue between Oxfam, CSBAG and the PBCs. One of them is the challenges of engaging women and refugees (and especially female refugees) in the PBCs. These groups are represented in all PBCs but in relatively low numbers compared to other groups. Secondly, sub-county officials have expressed high appreciation of the work because PBCs advocate for additional resources for public services in the districts. The sub-county officials state that they have learned something about policy influencing approaches. The PBCs have managed to expand their reach through training of other community members. There is a need to consider sustainability of the work including what kind of support Oxfam should provide for PBCs to continue their impact at local and national levels.

EVIDENCE

The results of the work of PBCs and CSBAG are evidenced in Annual Reports and the external evaluation: As a result of advocacy by PBCs of Madi Okollo district, sub-counties and schools have improved their delivery of basic education services e.g. latrine construction in Drabi, transfer and recruitment of teachers to schools where PBCs identified gaps, start of school feeding program in schools (Marize and Balala in Madi Okollo), construction of boreholes for schools (Manago and Marize). At national level CSBAG and Oxfam's joint evidence-based advocacy has reached multiple stakeholders. A report on education financing was published in December 2024 and presented at a series of roundtables as ways to influence national and district stakeholders. The report was covered by national media in May 2025. The importance of influencing work of PBCs, CSBAG and Oxfam as well as the report is confirmed by district duty bearers and Members of Parliament in the evaluation report.

DOMAINS

Development strategy priorities:

Insert strategy priority

Changes in the lives of people facing poverty, marginalisation or vulnerability

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Changes in laws, policies and practices that affect people's rights

X

Changes in the capacity of organisations and communities to support rights

X

Changes in partnerships and collaborations that support people's rights

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Changes in participation of groups facing poverty, marginalisation or vulnerability

X

Changes in local leadership of development and humanitarian work

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