



Capability Statement

About us

Forum for Women in Democracy (FOWODE) is a non-partisan women's organization operating in Uganda with its head office in Kampala. FOWODE grew out of the women's caucus of the 1994-1995 constituent assembly (CA) that debated and passed the 1995 constitution. During the assembly, the women delegates used the caucus to increase their political influence, broaden the base for support of women's issues and advocate for a gender-sensitive constitution in all aspects. The success of the women's caucus paved the way for the formation of FOWODE as a nongovernmental organization to offer a platform for Ugandan women's learning, networking, sharing experiences and advocating for gender equality and equality in decision-making process

FOWODE strongly believes that if women are empowered to participate at various political levels in the country, then the resulting policies, laws, plans and budgets would favor and strengthen the women's empowerment process in Uganda. Whereas FOWODE has women as their main focus, the organisation strives for gender equality and thus involves men in all its work.

Vision

A just and fair society where women and men equally participate in and benefit from decision making processes.

Mission

To promote gender equality in all areas of decision making through capacity development, community empowerment policy engagement and strategic partnerships

Our values

1. Respect of women's rights as human rights
2. Respect of diversity
3. Gender equality and equity
4. Accountability and transparency
5. Integrity
6. Excellence

Organisational Objectives

- To identify and implement strategies to increase women's participation in all areas of decision making including the establishment of a research and training center of women's leadership.
- To advocate for gender equality in laws, policies and programmes.
- To provide a forum for women and other marginalized groups to influence public policy through dialogue and negotiation.

- To sensitise and educate women, people with disability, young people and other vulnerable groups in society about their human and civil rights.
- To encourage collaboration of women leaders in the Eastern African sub-region and internationally through information exchange, seminars, workshops and conferences.
- To cooperate with other women organisations in working towards the goal of gender equality.

Our work

FOWODE has two main programs; Women and Leadership (WLP) and Gender and Economic Policy Programme (GEPP). Our overall goal is to improve women's participation in governance.

Under the Women and Leadership Programme, FOWODE is building a critical mass of young leaders for transformative leadership; enhancing the capacities of women to effectively manage campaigns, participate in legislative engagement and push for gender responsive policies. We also seek to improve women's civic competences and build bipartisan coalitions to effectively champion gender and women's rights.

The Gender and Economic Policy Programme FOWODE seeks to promote equitable benefit for women and men from government policies and programmes. FOWODE seeks to achieve this by engaging in gender and economic policy issues, to enable women and men benefit from government economic policies and programmes in a more equitable way. We are enhancing capacities of legislators, government technocrats and CSOs for gender responsive macroeconomic policies as we advocate for engendered fiscal policies and budgeting processes. Building a critical mass of empowered women and men for improved budget transparency and service delivery at all levels is key in our quest.

Experience

FOWODE has long term experience in policy and advocacy work centered on promoting gender responsive budgets which address the needs of men, women, boys, girls and marginalized groups. FOWODE also has lengthy experience in building leadership capacity of women, young women and men in a bid to build a cadre of leadership that is knowledgeable and sensitive to the importance and need for gender responsive public planning and budgeting at national and local level. In terms of substantive thematic expertise, FOWODE has, since her establishment, been promoting gender equality and women's leadership in Uganda. FOWODE has been interesting women in joining politics, preparing women candidates for elections and building the leadership capacities of women for effective legislative engagement. To date, FOWODE has trained over 20,000 women who have contributed to the passing of gender sensitive laws and budgets.

FOWODE has championed gender responsive budgeting that has led to the adoption of gender budgeting by the government, development of gender policies by different government ministries and opening up of space for civil society participation through the enactment of the Budget Act 2001 which has now been replaced by the Public Finance and Management Act (PFMA) 2015. FOWODE played a big role in advocacy for passage of the Budget Act 2001. Inclusion of the Certificate of Gender and Equity in the PFMA is one of the most recent achievements that we have significantly contributed to. This certificate is a tool that will ensure gender compliance in all government ministries and departments.

Recognizing the fact that women's empowerment requires a holistic approach that encompasses both the political and socio-economic aspects that affect women's effective participation in governance, FOWODE broadened her intervention approach in 2012 to establish communities of hope for women's socio-economic empowerment through agriculture. FOWODE initiated a community based model of Female Farmers Groups in Amuru, Amuria and Napak districts. The model aimed at, increasing female farmers' agricultural productivity for improved household food security and socio-economic livelihood. Through effective implementation of this model, FOWODE saw a remarkable improvement in food security at household level, making over 150 female farmers more food secure. Women who are able to meet their basic practical needs are more likely to participate in the public activities of their communities, including seeking election for political offices.

FOWODE has over the past 5 years built over 74 Communities of Hope with agency and power driving their own change in 18 districts. This critical mass of community activists' demands for accountability from duty bearers and for gender responsive service delivery through their platforms called the Village Budget Clubs (VBCs). In order to ensure sustainability, the VBCs have been facilitated to form legally recognized groups, register them as Community based organizations at District and sub county levels and link them to government development programs. FOWODE will bring her experience in mobilising and working sustainably with communities into the implementation of this project.

FOWODE is a trusted partner at both National and local level. In parliament, FOWODE was instrumental in formation of and has a recognized working relationship with the Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) Champions group – comprised of both male and female members of parliament. Additionally FOWODE works closely with the Uganda Women Parliamentarians Association (UWOPA) and the Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) in her advocacy for gender responsive laws, policies and budgets. At local level, FOWODE has signed implementation MOUs with local governments in over 18 districts in Uganda demonstrating cordial working relationships with the political and technical leadership.

FOWODE has successfully implemented similar projects in over 18 districts of Uganda and at National level. FOWODE has over the years acquired the requisite financial management expertise to manage large grants. Over the last five years alone, FOWODE has successfully handled grants of up to 6,144,110 US Dollars in total. These grants have enabled FOWODE to build a critical mass of 72, 148 citizens with ability to demand for accountable leadership and Gender sensitive service delivery; enhance women's voice in the political and economic arenas resulting into an improved legislative and policy framework at national and local level; and enabled FOWODE to carve out a niche as a key player in influencing legislative, political, policy and budget processes from a gender perspective.

Unique Capabilities

FOWODE has been and continues to be an exemplar in promoting gender equality and women's leadership in the country. She has strategically positioned herself as an organisation campaigning for women with voice, power and resources engaging effectively in governance. The organisation

has made a tremendous contribution to strengthening women's participation and voice in the political arena as well as engaging macroeconomic governance issues from a women's rights perspective using the tool of gender responsive budgeting (GRB).

Some of FOWODE's outstanding achievements include research and advocacy on key gender issues which have led to some strategic changes in key legislations such as the requirement for gender and equity compliance of plans and budgets of ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) under the Public Finance Management Act 2015. FOWODE has trained women and men leaders and built partnerships which have paid off as a result of the unrelenting efforts of key Legislators that are convinced that gender is of great importance to the development of our country. One of the notable gender champions is the Rt. Hon Speaker of the Parliament of Uganda, Rebecca Alitwala Kadaga.

We have enhanced the capacities of women leaders at national and local government level, leading to more women aspiring for strategic elective government positions such as mayors and Local Council Chairpersons. This has increased the voices of women in decision making and improved budget focus on gender issues. FOWODE's interventions have greatly contributed to the body of knowledge on gender, leadership and decision making. The organisation is also committed to creating space for young women and men leaders to explore issues of alternative and transformative leadership.

FOWODE seeks a more inclusive and participatory budget process both at the national and local government level in its bid to make gender central to government budget debates both at the technical and legislative levels. To ensure linkages with the community, FOWODE has mobilized and formed Village Budget Clubs (VBCs) made of women, men and youth who monitor the usage of public funds at local level. VBCs have been instrumental in fostering a change in service delivery, particular in the sectors of Education and Health.

Institutional Arrangements

FOWODE has 33 staff based at its headquarters and field level. The organization also has a total of 8 volunteers whose capacities are built as they support in the implementation of organizational activities. The Secretariat is supervised by a Board of Directors elected by members of the General Assembly (GA), the highest decision making organ. The Board of Directors gives policy direction to the Secretariat, approves work plans and play as oversight role. Furthermore, the Board is responsible for the recruitment of the staff that implement the organization's activities.