



# End line Report of COVID-19 and Youth Question in Africa Project Uganda

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**CCRDA**  
Consortium of Christian Relief &  
Development Associations



Canada 

**End line Report  
Of  
COVID-19 and Youth Question in Africa Project**

**Uganda**

**Organization for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa  
with  
Makerere University & Uganda NGO forum**

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Kampala, Uganda**

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## List of acronyms and abbreviations

<b>CBO</b>	Community-Based Organization
<b>CCRDA</b>	Consortium of Christian Relief and Development Association
<b>CERP</b>	COVID-19 Emergency Education Response Project
<b>COTFONE</b>	Community Transformation Foundation Network
<b>COVISAF</b>	Covid-19 Vertically Integrated Social Accountability Framework
<b>COYOQA</b>	Covid-19 and the Youth Question in Africa
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organization
<b>DCDO</b>	District Community Development Officer
<b>DEO</b>	District Education officer
<b>DHO</b>	District Health Officer
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-Based Violence
<b>IDRC</b>	International Development Research Center
<b>IGAD</b>	The Intergovernmental Authority on Development in Eastern Africa
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>MoES</b>	Ministry of Education and Sports
<b>MoH</b>	Ministry of Health
<b>OSSREA</b>	Organization of Social Science Research in Eastern Africa
<b>SA</b>	Social Accountability
<b>UNNGOF</b>	The Uganda National NGO Forum
<b>USDP</b>	Uganda Skills Development Project
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organizations

## 1. The COYOQA Project

With support from IDRC-CRDI Canada under the CORE Project, the Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern Africa (OSSREA) in collaboration with the Consortium of Christian Relief and Development Association (CCRDA) in Ethiopia, the University of Makerere in Uganda and Uganda National NGO Forum, A three-year project entitled “COVID-19 and the Youth Question in Africa (COYOQA): Impact, Response, and Protection Measures in the IGAD Region” has been implemented in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda.

The COYOQA project sought to learn, evaluate, and monitor how the COVID-19 crisis potentially promoted youth agency in encouraging innovation, strengthening intergenerational dialogue, and promoting social accountability in Uganda. Traditionally most programs are assessed at the end, but this COYOQA project began at the start of the outbreak in 2020 with a baseline survey, and it has been an ongoing learning, evaluating, and monitoring experience of social accountability focusing on the youth's civic engagement during covid-19, but continues to empower youth leaders and youth-led civil society organization in promoting positive engagement of the youth is social accountability.

## 2. Overall Goal of The Project

To develop a COVID-19 Vertically Integrated Social Accountability and Advocacy Framework (COVISAF) to enable the documentation of reliable, contextually-grounded local data analysis and rapid feedback to communities and authorities to inform policies and decision-making for policy and practice solutions to mitigate the social and economic impacts of COVID-19 and prevent its re-emergence. Both formal (government) accountability and informal (youth-led community) accountability mechanisms complemented each other in a mutually reinforcing manner.

The focus of the research project was primarily on governments taking responsibility for commitment and actions, answering for them by explaining and justifying them to rights holders,

and being subject to a form of sanction where commitments and responsibilities are not fulfilled. The project further provided rapid support to ongoing work, to innovate new ways of learning and sharing; and enhanced capacities to inform current and future policy and practice solutions that strengthened the overall governance of the crisis and its aftermath.

### 3. The COYOQA Project In Uganda

The project was a capacity-building program that rolled out to build the capacities of youths in social accountability and improve both local and national governance. The policy engagement of the youth with policymakers to strengthen their partnership and also advocate for the inclusion of youth in public policy. The project focused on creating awareness among youth about their role as agents of change in society in holding their leaders and service providers accountable. In Uganda, the project's geographical scope was in three (3) major districts/cities dubbed as sites namely; the Kampala site included Kampala City and Kampala Metropolitan, the Masaka site included Masaka City and the Greater Masaka districts, and the Gulu site included Gulu city and the Greater Gulu region.

The Ugandan Constitution (Uganda 1995) has provisions for youth engagement in social accountability. The 1995 constitution of Uganda enshrined Social accountability in Article 38(1) where every Ugandan has the right to participate in the affairs of government individually or through his or her representative following the law(Uganda 1995). And 38 (ii) states that “Every Ugandan has the right to participate in peaceful activities to influence the policies of government through civic organizations”(Uganda 1995). This guarantees the sovereignty of the citizens of Uganda including the youth in the governance of the country particularly showing how central the citizens' power is in the governance and management of public affairs of the country.

However, the inclusion of the youths in meaningful policy engagement, and their public participation is still low(Robinson 2016, Nathan and Patrick 2018). In Uganda, the youth have not fully engaged service providers(Atim 2011). In cases where they have a voice, they lack the technical capacity to aggregate their issues and hold the government accountable. Even when the

youths voice their concerns, they lack “teeth” to bite. During the COVID-19 outbreak, government and service providers were mainly influenced by informal mechanisms like friendship, ethnicity, and nepotism to provide service (Aid-UG 2020, Kauzya and Niland 2020, Sentamu 2020).

At the start of the COYOQA project in Uganda, a baseline survey was conducted (Ssempebwa, Ntege et al. 2021). The baseline survey noticed that youths had a window of opportunity during COVID-19 to use the variable institutions (including private and government) to lobby for the efficient and effective delivery of social services (i.e. social accountability)(Ssempebwa, Ntege, et al. 2021). This was particularly possible for international and national organizations, through governments making multifaceted, complex, and expensive responses in response to Covid-19. This would necessitate CSO through the youth to play a critical role in social accountability as several studies indicate (restless 2011, Robinson 2016); however, the youths needed to have the capacity but also mobilized to do so.

In addition, the findings from the baseline survey (Ssempebwa, Ntege, et al. 2021) indicated that even the majority of the youths with some kind of level of education were not involved during (COVID-19) emergency preparedness and community approval that are enough to participate (or to be trained to participate) in social accountability. Yet at the same time, the youth's ability to participate in budgeting and accountability; knowledge of the mandate of the service providers in the COVID-19 response and of their rights and responsibilities; ability and motivation to demand information and to speak out against abuse; and their awareness of mechanisms for sharing information on the response was poor. In addition, the youth affiliation with (youth) organizations like CSO that could help them to overcome these limitations was weak. Thus, the youth involvement in the COVID-19 response and social accountability mechanisms, in general, was low and, for the greater part, casual, haphazard, and inconsequential (UWEZO 2020, USAID 2021, NIRAS 2022).

Although some youth and youth-led CSOs have information indicating corruption and other forms of abuses in the service provision during the response and after, their voice against the same is primarily via social media they did not have a strategic audience. Besides, Youths' involvement in policy design, budgeting, decision-making, oversight, and social audit of the response is

generally nonexistent. This is evidenced in the way youths and youth-led CSOs approached the pandemic at the start as a frightening, malignant, and elusive public health emergency to be mitigated by the government. But despite its popularization as expedient, especially at the start of the pandemic, the approach largely kept citizens especially the youth out of the response recipients of information, protective equipment, rations, and restraint from the national COVID-19 task force and the security forces implementing its directives.

Therefore, OSSREA envisioned, enhancing youths' meaningful engagement in the Covid-19 response and, subsequently, the social accountability and efficacy of the response during and after the outbreak. To do this it required urging both the government and youths to rethink the pandemic not only as a public health issue but as a public management as well. This required the mobilization of youths to participate in social accountability.

As we approach the end Covid-19 crisis, the youth leaders and youth-led CSOs who took part in the project were tasked and challenged through COVISAF to enhance the youth(s) ability to participate in the budgeting and accountability processes of the response via giving their knowledge on the mandate of the service providers in the response and of their rights and responsibilities and encouraging them to demand information and to speak out against abuse through mechanisms for sharing information that will reach and influence the decision-makers in the response.

## 4. End Line Survey

An end-line survey was conducted in response to the project especially targeting the piloted framework on social accountability during the project. This report, therefore, draws on end-line survey data collected at the end of the Covid-19 Vertically Integrated Social Accountability and Advocacy Framework ( COVISAF). COVISAF is a broader social accountability innovative platform led by the Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA), Makerere University, UNGOF, and COTFONE partnering with other youth-led CSOs in selected sites of Uganda. The platform was situated in the larger COYOQA project with a mixed

methodology cohort study that aims to build an understanding of how COVID-19 enables civic youth engagement in social accountability in Uganda. It includes field data collected at three points of quantitation and qualitative longitudinal components with survey field works. The selected districts of urban experience for COVID-19 included the capital Kampala and Wakiso: as Kampala. The fishing community, Rural experience, the cattle corridor Masaka, Lwengo, and Ssembabule: as Masaka. And lastly was rural remote and up-country Gulu City, Gulu, and Amuru district: Gulu.

The end-line survey assesses the impact of COVISAF pilot implementation in Uganda. This survey started by training ninety (90) TOT stakeholders on social accountability in three regions of Uganda, the central, southern, and northern regions with members from the various selected districts in those regions. The training was focused on social accountability in terms of civic participation of young people in public policy and holding the local leaders accountable, The major objective was to empower young people and create awareness of the process of government budgeting and the participation of the community in the policy-making process, participants who majorly consisted of young persons were task to create awareness among the youths and other people within their community about social accountability.

As stated before following the baseline survey that was conducted at the beginning of the project COYOQA in 2021; Youth had not been involved in civic engagement, especially social accountability. The incapacity to understand social accountability justified the need to hold a ToT training on social accountability. The training focused on planning and development, setting budgets, tracking expenditures, and monitoring the performances of projects. Six months down the road, the need for an assessment of the impact of the training can't be better emphasized, In that respect,

## 5. Methodology

This end-line survey assesses the milestone of this COYOQA project in Uganda. The survey was conducted targeting stakeholders who participated in the project implementation. Therefore, this

report is a synthesis of findings from the ninety (90) key informant interviews for Kampala, Gulu, and Masaka districts conducted by six (6) trained research assistants (2 for each site) covering 30 respondents per site. The target participants were the trained ToTs participants who included youth and local leaders and staff members of youth-led organizations.

### 5.1 Data collection and instruments

The total number of those interviewed was 88 respondents altogether in the KII interview between 21st – 25th March 2023 using a designed end-line KII questionnaire.

Table 1 Distribution of the participants in the end-line survey by area

	<b>Categories</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Kampala Metropolitan	Kampala city, Wakiso	30	33
Greater Masaka	Masaka, Lwengo, Sembabule	28	31
Gulu region	Gulu city and district, Amuru	30	33
	<b>Total</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100</b>

### Key informant interview

Data for this study were collected using a questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into Ten (10) parts.

1. Awareness; Respondents were asked to estimate the level of awareness of SA among youth-led CSOs and local leaders.
2. Capacities; Respondents were asked to whether capacities of youth-led CSOs and local leaders have been built. If there are any changes in service/ equality of services delivered in their community.
3. Budget Information; Respondents were asked if they enhanced access to budget information and to what extent is access to budget information, expenditure policies, service delivery enhanced by TOT?
4. Monitoring and Evaluation; Respondents were asked to explain the monitoring and evaluation tool they are using, why did they choose that method and why was it effective.
5. Action Plan; Respondents were asked if they/their institution had been involved in developing Community Joint Accountability Action Plan on any issues with their local leaders,
6. Initiatives; Respondents were asked for specific SA initiatives they engaged in.
7. Lessons they learnt while conduction SA initiative.
8. Enabling Environment; Respondents were asked if there are changes in provision of enabling environment for social accountability.
9. Access to Information; Respondents were asked to elaborate whether information for citizens are produced and shared openly and whether media and youth-led CSOs are allowed to oversight corruption in government.
10. Noticed Changes; Respondents to provide changes they have made/noticed in their working with youth-led CSOs and government service providers after TOT.

## 5.2 Brief about Kampala

**Location:** Kampala is the capital city of Uganda, which is situated almost in the middle of the country covering a surface area of 195 sq. Km. Kampala city is administratively divided into five



divisions namely: Central, Kawempe, Makindye, Lubaga, and Nakawa. Regarding poverty and unemployment levels, in Kampala city 39% of the population lives in absolute poverty and 43% of the population is unemployed according to Population and Housing Census (2002).

**Population:** According to the Population and Housing Census (2002), Kampala's population grew at a rate of 3.9% per

annum in the inter-censal period between 1991 and 2002. Also, the 2002 Census put the City population at 1.2 million people but the City has a daily transient population of about 2.3 million people. The City population growth rate is at 3.9% (average density: 51 in/ha). Urban areas in Uganda constitute 12.2% of the national population of which 41% of the urban population is in Kampala city alone.

**Physical Form of Kampala:** The form and structure of Kampala have been largely determined by the natural pattern of flat-topped hills and wide, shallow valleys on which it has been built. Kampala is also defined by the north shore of Lake Victoria and the extensive papyrus swamp, which line it. Kampala has been referred to often as “the garden city of Africa” because of its lush, green appearance, which is owed, in turn, to its pleasant climate and generous rainfall.

### 5.3 Brief about Gulu

Gulu District is a city in the Northern Region of Uganda. The regional headquarters are located in Gulu City which is also the administrative capital of Northern Uganda. The city consists of two divisions, Gulu West, and Gulu East.

**Location:** Gulu district is boarded by Lamwo district in the north, Pader district, and Omoro district to the east, Oyam district in the south, Nwoya district in the southwest, and Amuru district to the west.



**Population:** The national census conducted in 2002 put the population at 193,337, in the 2014 national census and household survey, the population of Gulu District was enumerated at 275,613

### 5.4 Limitations and challenges

There were limitations and challenges in conducting the survey many of these challenges are institutionally rooted in the failure of the system and organizational process. These included participants did not expect to be evaluated after six months from ToTs. They did not have the required monitoring tools to complete the task of monitoring social accountability that was required of them, Most of them went in without a preset list of questions and a workable plan on what they planned to do exactly, this undermined the quality of findings and put to question the legitimacy of results.

Other participants had already forgotten the doctrine of social accountability of the first training and as a result, could not give the right or necessary response to the study. In addition, some participants also expressed a lack of knowledge in mobilization skills, which directly affected their ability to conduct a valued, follow-up.

In addition, this study was limited by the scope of the study as TOT participants and staff of organizations of TOT participants were the only Respondents. Therefore, the small number of TOT participants could hinder the study as their small number means limited outreach.

Some TOT participants were difficult to locate or were engaged in their different works which made them create too little time for the interview and during that time their attention and concentration were elsewhere. This led some respondents to provide shallow responses with few to no specific local examples and little information.

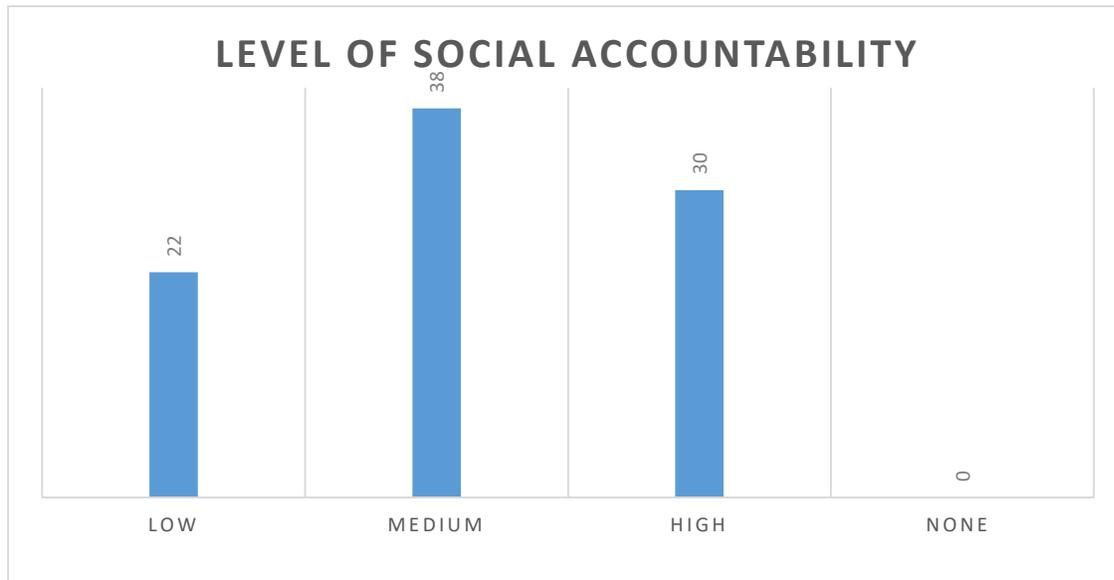
## **6. Presentation and Discussion of the Survey Findings**

The findings are presented and discussed concurrently according to the questions of the end-line survey.

## 6.1 Awareness

### *Level of Awareness on Social Accountability among Youth-led CSOs and Leaders*

**Graph 1:** Showing the level of awareness of social accountability among youth-led CSOs and leaders.



There was a consensus that the level of awareness of social accountability among youth-led CSOs and local leaders ranges from low to moderate. CSO youth Leaders who got trained considered social accountability to be known, but more efforts are needed to create more awareness programs for the youths in their organizations. To them there is a great level of awareness about social accountability for the CSOs since they have fought hard to give birth and support young youth-led CBOs in their advocacy work and training which has in turn boosted their sustainability in the community.

However, some participants still considered the awareness of SA among the youth to lead CSOs to be a work in progress. They argued that the awareness work done is still moderate, 50/50 for some reasons, for example, not all CSOs have social accountability training like that OSSREA did to be in a position to empower youths to engage. At the same time, some of those who were training as ToT have not passed on the information to other CSOs to broaden the chain and level

of awareness. This is because while they know the SA, they have no resources and capacity to conduct such training for other youth-led CSO leaders and the local leaders in their localities.

Similarly, there are mixed reactions between participants who are CSO youth leaders and service providers who attended the training of ToT on SA on this question; leaders of youth-led organizations that are active and sent their leaders for the training of training believe that their CSOs are aware of social accountability starting from the training they get from the OSSREA and other organizations that have come along in to aid in the training of the leaders on matters that concern public expenditure of citizens mobilization.

The local leaders who participated claimed that a few local leaders who have been engaged with CSOs are aware of social accountability and this is because they were brought on board since they believe you cannot engage community members without leaders and this is only to those leaders who show interest. Others most of the locals generally because of ignorance about SA and illiteracy participants claim that some leaders have not even got a chance to be trained in social accountability and they are not aware of it

And some said that the levels of awareness are very low since there is a shrinking space for youth-led CSOs and so many of them have not been educated in Social Accountability. Others suggest that the reason why it is very low is because of a lack of training on social accountability among local leaders. More local leaders know their mandate, they further added that some came into the positions they wanted but not specifically to do what they are required to do.

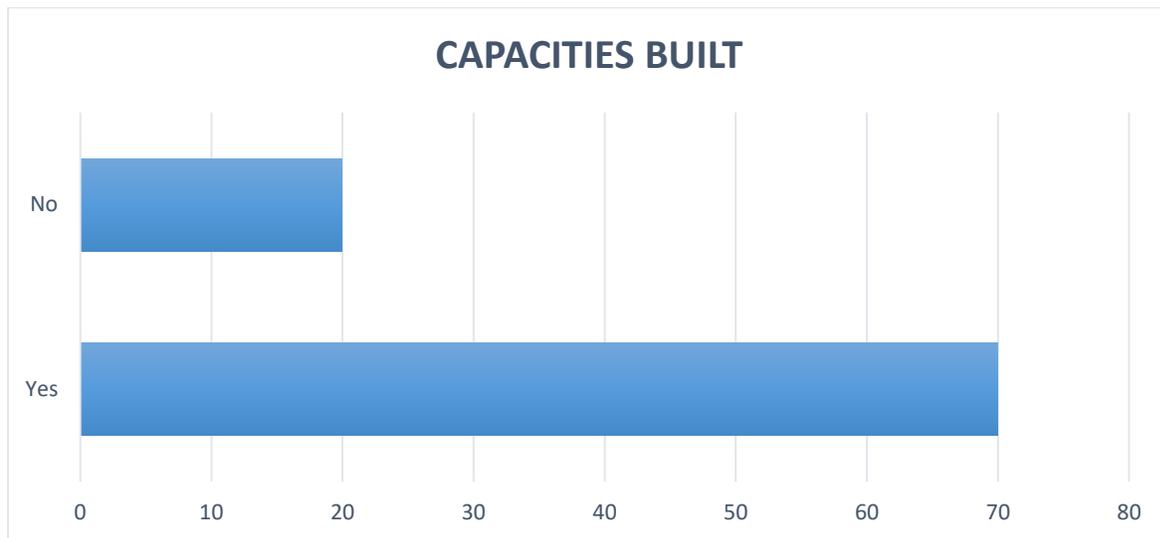
## 6.2 Capacities

*Have the capacities of the youth-led CSOs and local leaders in SA been built? What shows (changes)?*

Social Accountability (SA) in Youth-led CSO capacity building is still a work in progress, though a lot is being done to build their capacities, through things like attendance of joint accountability summits, and inclusion in public policy making. However, There was a consensus that capacity

building is limited. Limited because most rural leaders and local CSOs have not exactly benefited from capacity-building activities.

**Graph 2:** Showing if the capabilities of youth-led CSOs and leaders have been built on social accountability.



However, there has been a growing trend, and a shift in attitude toward social accountability ever since covid-19 outbreak. There has been more public involvement in projects, and there has been transparency. Some of the Youth-led CSOs' capacities are built since they have a chance of being trained by some organizations and also those that are trained have tried to train others which means many have built their capacities and testify that they participate in budget processes, hold duty bearers accountable among others though still, some have remained behind especially those who have not got a chance to be trained.

“...capacities have been built as there is a marked mindset change with demands for transparency and there is awareness of rights...

...youth have been provided the space to air out their voices about social accountability e.g. a series of radio talk shows like mega FM.” *Gulu leader*

“...a slow increase in activities that build capacities. Youth leaders have little influence on decisions made at councils and this also exists within organizations... but, there is little

change as there is still a lot of mismanagement of funds. *Local government representative participant in Gulu*

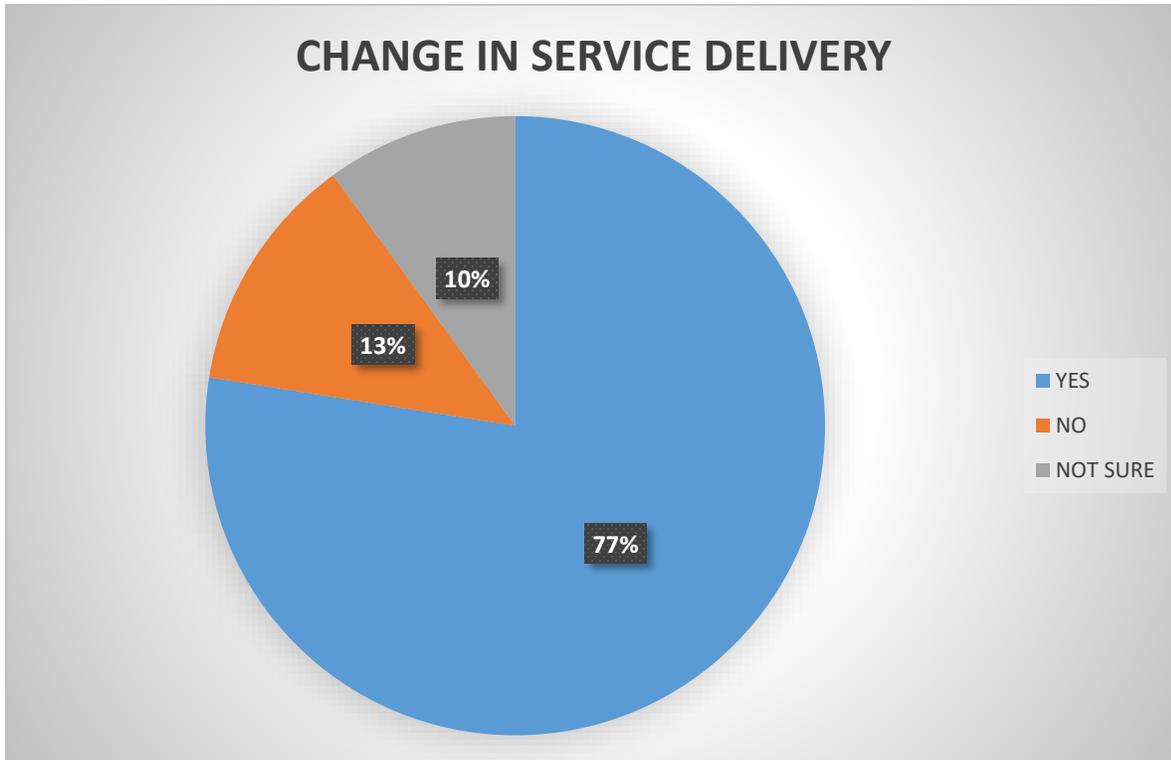
In addition, some local leaders have been engaged with CSOs and this has given them a chance to build their capacities more so those who have given in their time but those who have not got a chance to be engaged by the CSOs are ignorant about social accountability especially since the government has not given these people time to train them.

Some CSOs responded confirming that local leaders are responsive because; Many local leaders are now responsive to all the concerns of the people in the community. Local leaders have now sided with the community to demand better services from the state. One of the local leaders said,

“Local leaders and CSOs have bridged the gaps between the duty bearers and the community by setting up meetings and engagements to discuss better ways of how the community can best get services.” *CSO participant in Kampala*

*Is there any change in services/ equality of services delivered to citizens in your community?*

**Chart 1:** Showing the change in service delivery in the community.



Most respondents agree to witness changes in services particularly in road service networks, and health facility services most respondents claim that there is some change in services since leaders fear being held accountable; they have tried to give what they could to the citizens. Service providers are aware that some citizens follow up with the budgets of the divisions and they know that they are aware of everything that takes place at the division. For example, some government hospitals have also bettered their service delivery since the leaders have put them under pressure and demanded better service delivery, and some of the damaged trenches have been renovated by KCCA.

“Yes, there is change but probably, I'd rate it still at a moderately lower level. Why? Because still you find, there is still a lot of mismanagement of funds that you find funds allocated for its certain health and I could be improved upon but you find eighty percent of

that money is injected into corruption and then little of it is what is seen by youth or the community around”. The local government leader in *Gulu*

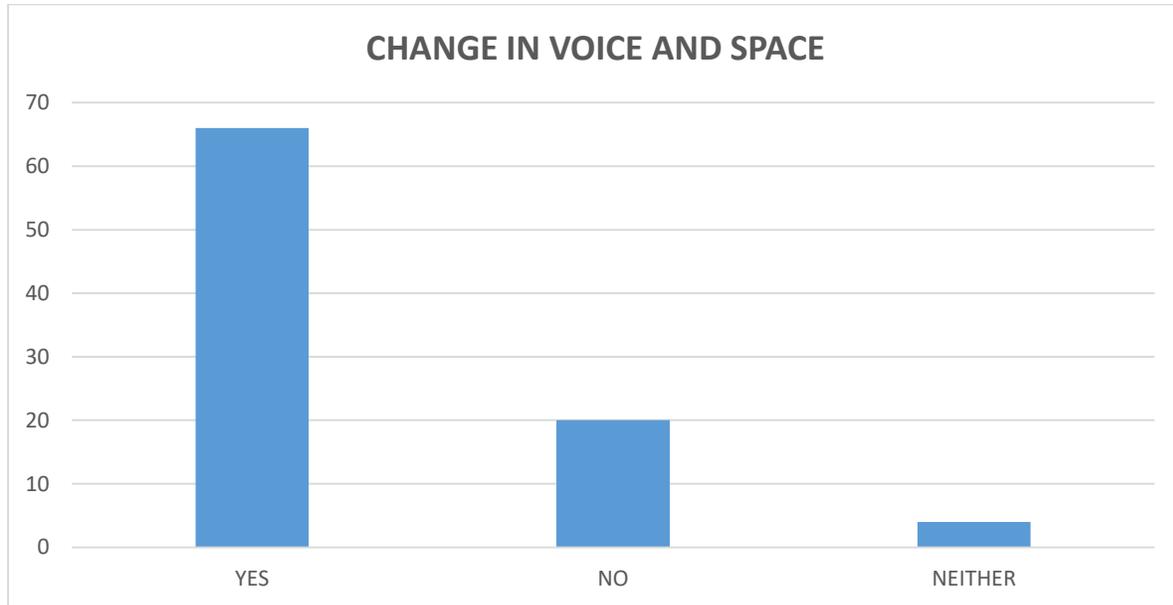
“Yeah, I would say that at least we’ve, we’ve seen some changes in, in service delivery into the community, and some training and some meetings like interface meetings between the leaders and the youth ...

I will say in my community, ah at least we’ve seen some security lights on, on, on streets eh, street lights they’ve tried to at least construct the drainage system” *CSO participant in Kampala*

In addition, with more youth programs being put in place like the PDM, CDD funds, and the YLP that is all for the community people. Therefore, efforts are made in the sense of equality and opportunities for the youth, and a lot of youths are becoming aware of their rights. For example, where there is a problem of unclean water, they are pushing for borehole construction, where the schools are far, they are pushing for community schools, and positive change in budgeting. Beyond that, there is a push for transparency on public expenditures, and information sharing.

*In your view, have you observed a change in youth empowerment in terms of voice and space provided for them to better voice their concerns about service delivery service performance corruption regarding public expenditure, or human rights violations?*

**Graph 3:** Showing if there is a change in terms of voice and space provided to the youth to better voice their concerns about service delivery and service performance concerning public expenditure and corruption.



The majority of the respondents agreed that more spaces are being provided for youths to better voice their concerns. The youth representatives in local councils, the National Youth Council, the National Youth Parliament, and Media platforms are examples of spaces cited that are present/ provided for youths to voice their concerns.

“Yes! Youth have been given platforms in my community. We normally have the ghetto parliament where all the youth come together from different zones, come together to talk about the issues affecting them in their community, It could be sexual SRHR rights then also maybe different issues on lighting, different issues on rubbish, different issues on education so, on health, they are so many things which youth have been able to view out so the platforms are there even to the division once in the while you are given chance at least to go to the chamber and talk to the councilors, town clerk the mayors and the issues affecting people which comes to maybe budget allocation and the youth side issues.” *Youth representative participant in Kampala*

“The youths have been empowered in terms of voice, and they now have spaces where they can easily show out their grievances or show out their commitment words, knowing and showing the world or the society. They're in that, they know all the demands to know whatever is happening around them. So, for example, there are many Radio talk shows like Mega even on TV that give room for users to express themselves. Okay. Yes. To express themselves concerning whatever. They feel it is not happening right in their community and they demand answers for them.” *Local government leader participant in Gulu*

In addition, many youths are now given space to participate in different government programs like the budgeting processes, youths are being taken to spaces like the parliament to voice out their views which are hardly more than how it was before and many NGOs are fighting so hard to provide youths with space and platforms where they can express themselves freely and openly.

“...I think now more than ever, the youth have an opportunity to voice their concerns and, express themselves. And I think several NGOs and forums have opened up to give them platforms, to be able to express themselves, and with the Advent of Free Press and free speech. With social media, you can see that there's a lot that exists online spaces Look at Twitter, and forums like WhatsApp there's a lot of activity around, voicing concerns, especially amongst the youth who have harnessed and liberated the schools in the 21st century. But also, I think the government has done quite a bit to create positions, for instance, environment, you know, how to use youth openings from the Member of parliament and representatives, you have Have women Council as all these things. So youth have some opportunities in the available structures to voice their concerns. *Local government leader participant in Gulu*

However, while most participants said yes they are given a platform, that space is given to them to occupy but unfortunately, they are not given a chance to articulate their views concerning service delivery to the extent that when they try out to speak they are stopped and fought. Therefore, youth offices have been established and offices of youth spaces have been occupied but you still fail to

air out their views concerning service delivery. When they speak, they are ignored or their views are not taken into consideration.

“I will say that at least we’ve, we’ve seen some change, cause most, most of the empowered youth they have tried, also the youth have tried to come and step out to like to, to position themselves in this ah, in this leadership positions and they have tried to engage themselves into leaders and they have tried to access the information. However about corruption and human rights violations most of the time in our community they tend to politicize those issues like, like when, when you like to hold some youth meetings to hold leaders accountable or demand services, the leaders tend to politicize such meetings. It leaves us with no space, to talk about it issues affecting youths”. *CSO participants in Kampala*

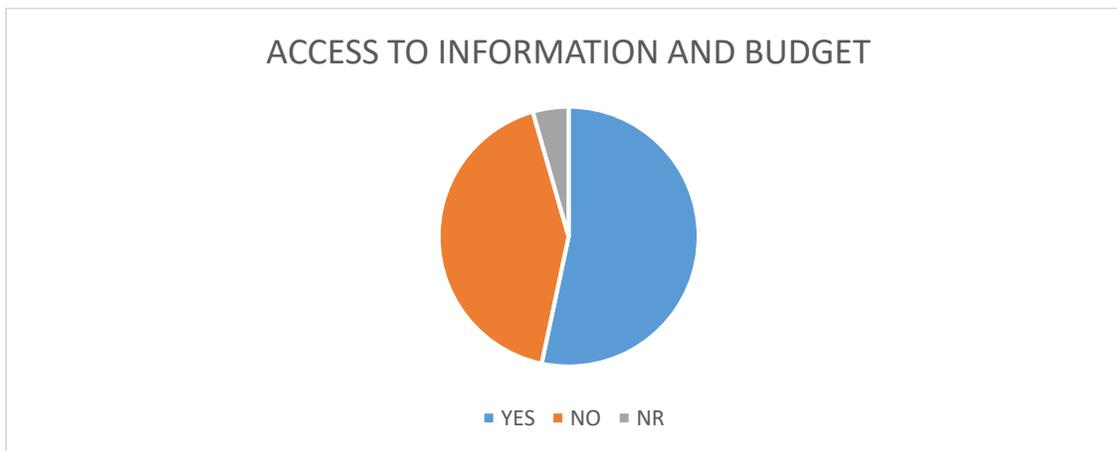
A few believe space is given to the youth but it’s still occupied by old people and the youth are denied a right to express their concerns about service delivery. They gave an example; that there are some youth positions at KCCA in the department of gender that are occupied by old people and when the youth asked how these positions were given to them they shut them up.

“I’d say it’s 50\50 because young people are willing to stand up and voice their concerns and hold leaders accountable. So it’s dependent on how exposed the young people are and the confidence to ask for accountability. While there is a large number of youth leaders the youth themselves cannot voice and articulate their concerns. So there is still a lot of work to do in terms of empowering the youth leaders and the youths themselves to make sure that their voices are heard”. *youth CSO leader participants in Gulu.*

### 6.3 Budgeting Information

*Do you have enhanced access to information on government budgets? (Budget literacy and information awareness?)*

**Chart 2:** Showing the enhancement of information on government budgeting and spending in the community.



There is information about government budgets but not accessible to everyone, especially the vulnerable youth. Most youth access it through private research and reading and few of the youth understand it. All respondents agreed that they have information on the government budget especially when they are interested in knowing what is there, however, participants argue that there is a general lack of knowledge as far as budget interpretation is concerned.

“...almost everyone with a device that can access information is at an advantage however not involved in the process...” *Youth leaders participate in Gulu*

“Through personal research, I will say I have looked at the budget but not in detail. Every June I know there is a new Financial year going to start and I will look at the budget, but I’ll skim through to a location, according to sectors that, I am sure where my interests are. I try to establish if there is any allocation, or legislation, that is going to go in terms of budgeting but not in detail.” *Youth representative participant in Kampala.*

Some participants claimed that their need for access to information about government budgeting came after the training. Participants claim that during ToT training, they were encouraged to follow the budget processes and planning. The youth began to try to trace the budgeting and planning process through the internet or follow up at the local levels like at the town hall budgeting. Therefore, Others confirmed that sometimes the information is obtained online while a few people who have the confidence and are empowered can still find out from their service providers' offices like KCCA division offices.

Others further said that when budgeting conferences are convened, youth-led CSOs are now invited. Therefore, different CSOs created room for their staff and the youth to engage in the budgeting process but it's still hard to put their suggestions into consideration.

Yet other participants said they are still not aware when the budgeting takes place, that they only get to know when the budget is being read and that's when they hear about the budget but with the planning, they are not always aware.

“...yea, at least service providers try, to give us some government information, and budgets but at the end of the day, they, don't allow us to access the information of their expenditures and how they spend the money. Youth representatives on the local councils, only participate in budget allocation like prioritizing what we want in our community. That is the only level that we are on now but we cannot access other information as regards expenditures. *Youth leaders representative participant in Kampala*

“All youth could have access but the means to access is the problem. To have access also means to have a tool like a good phone or computer, internet, and connection to the right source. Almost everyone has access but not everyone can access budget information. Yes, when we get access, but then they are not involved in the actual budgeting process, and implementation process”. *CSO Youth Leader participant in Gulu*

“Information about the budget is scarce. This is because even when the leaders are going to make a budget sometimes you cannot know even the local leaders if, just because for

them they are always at the division chasing after some issues for their community but if it wasn't that no .... You just hear that the budget has been made or maybe the budget is going to be read and you're like where have they done in from so no.” *Youth leader representative participant in Kampala*

“True there is information on the budget and expenditure but very limited, the first limitation is that information on real money is limited. Then a second limitation is the location of the information. Some offices and officers are hard to reach or catch, they have a lot of security you can not easily contact them.” *CSO leader participant in Kampala.*

*To what extent is access to information on budgets, expenditure policies, service delivery, and gaps in technical capacities enhanced by the TOT?*

To a greater extent, the training empowered them to understand the different duty bearers responsible for service provision, at the same time, the participants also were able to learn the different ways to request better services and follow-up.

They all agreed that the TOT built their capacity created awareness as far as their rights are concerned and empowered them to know well enough to demand services and accountability from their local leaders/leaders. Also, it made the local leaders aware of their roles and responsibilities as far as SA is concerned.

The ToT created awareness, especially among the youth-led CSOs leaders and the local leaders to be aware of their responsibilities and mandates especially on when and how to demand services from service providers.

The local leaders who took part in the training were able to build a good rapo at the same time they also became aware of how to work with youth-led CSOs on social accountability.

The training enabled the participants to mobilize youths for proper civic engagement in their communities to understand their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

“...when I heard about the internet portals available, it enhanced my access to public service info and budgets...” *Youth representative participant in Gulu*

“...now I know better to collaborate rather than compete with service providers...”  
*CSO youth leader participates in Kampala*

In addition, it has also helped duty bearers understand what they have to do in response to the youth demands especially those made by youth-led CSOs.

The training was also an eye-opener for some participants, after the training the participants claim to discover that access to information is limited. It is after the training that they found out that actually, service providers have not taken any initiative to talk about the budget and expenditure policy and that those with the information are the ones who have tried to look for it and this happens after the training CSOs pass them through about social accountability that they get to realize they have a right to this information.

As a leader, I participate and approve the budget. We have been exposed through the training as we also get to expose others and create awareness of their rights. *Local government leader participant in Gulu*

“The training has done a great job in spreading information and creating awareness amongst the young people. Right from the time, we took the OSSREA training on social accountability, I think it exposed us a lot. And now we know how to direct our fellow youths to be aware of their rights and what to demand. So, I believe yes, this training has helped us, to also engage others to expose them to know their rights.” *CSO youth leader participant in Gulu*

“...this trainer of trainers was really important because one, it is because of self-awareness, at least the youth leaders who took part now know that they have to do something, they're entitled to this information. Secondly, they know why they need to hold our leaders

accountable. So I could say this TOT significantly improved access to information.” *Youth leader representative participant in Gulu*

“Youths are made aware of their rights and local leaders know their mandate. And they can also demand their rights.” *Local government leader participant in Gulu.*

“The policies themselves are inhibiting, So to speak we have several policies in place that inhibit us from accessing information. For example, we have some what are called, escrow budgets or, you know, confidential budgets that we don't have access to the inner dealings of this budget. So regardless of our training of trainers and what we do not have full access to this kind of information.” *Youth leader representative participant in Gulu*

## 6.4 Monitoring and Evaluation

*What is the status and nature of youth-led citizen monitoring, evaluation, and reporting in your organization? What specific monitoring and evaluation tool are you using?*

The respondents said that the level of youth-led monitoring and evaluation is still low because the capacity of the majority of the youths has not yet been properly built since the training.

Most of the youth-led CSOs and local leaders use different methods to track performances; some participants said they use the PET method. This is because these methods are easy to use and do not require too much knowledge.

Most majority of the participants said they use Scorecards because it's very easy to track, and monitor progress and more so because it's easy to use. Participants explain that scorecards have been very effective and in this, they bring duty bearers on board, the young people, and other different service providers. They explained that the citizens air out the problems they face in the communities where they live and after they score out the biggest challenge which they want the duty bearers to work on first. They claim this tool is like an eye opener to the duty bearers to know the challenges their citizens face. First, It is easy to understand and it gives them room to bring the

duty bearers and community members to one table, and it is easy to generate results. Secondly, it is inclusive as the local people in the community are involved in the processes of activity monitoring and evaluation, and these are affordable methods.

“We mostly use scorecards in our organization because most times scorecards bring more participants, and it brings a large number of participants, to be part of practicing their issues as a community, and it more participatory which brings out people to be involved in the change.” *CSO youth leader participant in Kampala.*

Furthermore, is a Participatory method because it involves all stakeholders i.e. local leaders, and local people, from different communities and their expectations, priorities, and challenges are known.

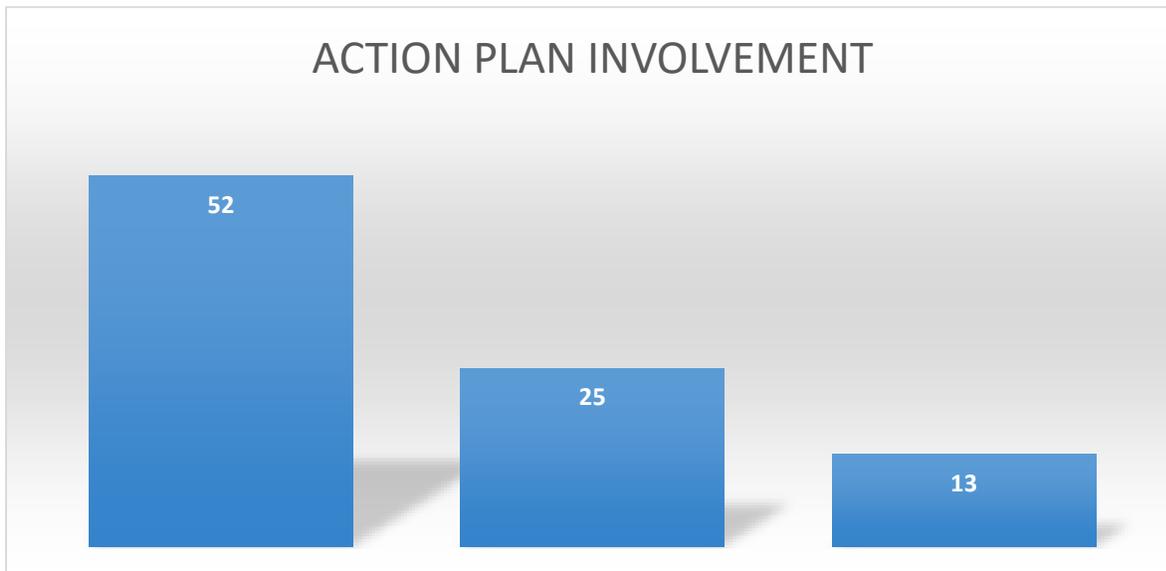
Others said they prefer to use a social audit. An example is when it was used in Makerere University by students in their community in this they had to look out for the challenges they face in the community and looked for solutions too.

And lastly is the use of weekly, monthly, quarterly, and yearly reports. However, the tools that stood out were the community scorecard and social audit as elaborated above.

## 6.5 Action Plans

After the ToT, have you or your institution been involved in developing community Joint Accountability Action Plans (JAAP) with local leaders on any issue in your community?

**Graph 4:** Showing the involvement of youth-led CSO and community leaders' joint accountability action plans after the ToT social accountability.



Most of the respondents were involved in awareness creation activities to build capacities of their fellow youths on social accountability and also on certain advocacy programs to raise awareness and demand for certain rights and services. Others have been involved in problem-solving activities on issues that affect their community.

Different organizations participated in different joint action plans that is to say; some had training on social accountability with their fellow organization members who had not participated in the training and also with leaders in their community, and others had training on budgeting with the leaders where they trained them to follow the budgets processes, some had an accessibility audit and in this they went in the community with local leaders to find the challenges people with disability face when using infrastructures in the community like roads, buildings, trenches among others.

Some of the specific examples cited were the baraza conducted in the Nankulabye market with local leaders and discussed the issues concerning market leaders and people around them.

“We have managed to sit down with our local leaders and KCCA on issues concerning the damaged trenches and poor garbage disposal in our community.” *She spoke.*

“So, what we have done specifically is creating awareness to girls in the community about their rights and urging them to advocate for issues affecting their wellbeing and have also been able to give out free sanitary towels to the girls in our community”. *She narrated.*

However, some of the youth-led CSOs, have not mobilized the youths to get involved in any joint accountability action plans even though, most of their leaders and their organizations have been involved in issues in their local communities in their local parishes. Participants said these have been involved in local media coverage from their local television stations and radio stations.

## 7. Social Accountability Initiatives

*What specific social accountability initiatives have you engaged in after the ToT? How and you do things differently?*

Most of the respondents said they had not been involved effectively in any Social accountability initiatives. However, some participants have taken part in the local community social accountability concerns. The local leader who participated said they have, created an environment for dialogue and shared knowledge a lot more than before. Most of the youth-led CSOs and the local leaders are involved in knowledge sharing and community mobilizations. i.e. mobilization of the local people to demand services within their local communities.

Participants listed down the social accountability initiatives they participated in after the training and these were as follows;

Most of them said they were able to teach their fellow staff and other partner CSOs about social accountability.

Some ToT participants and their organizations followed up on the construction of the projects for example; the Bwaise-Nakamiro channel that used to flood after the contractors failed to finish it since the work that was given to them was not done and in the process, they went to the local

leaders and KCCA to claim for the accountability of the construction which in turn the got another contractor to finish the work.

Other ToT participants and their organizations trained leaders and some community members on budgeting and how to participate in all its processes. For example; youth were trained on their rights and responsibilities and also passed on information to the local leaders on their duties and mandates to the community.

Some ToT participants said they had been in the budgeting processes at the division level.

Still, others took part in demanding financial accountability for a local project.

**Table:** showing some of the kinds of initiatives by the different participants

Area	Initiative (s)
Gulu	<p>“In the main market, with vendors who did not have stools in the market and were selling on the streets. We engaged the local council and the market leaders and a corruption case was exposed along the way.</p> <p>“We mobilized the community to construct a proper water source. And we also built a bridge to help school-going kids from the village to the schools.</p> <p>We do a lot of accountability on service delivery during community meetings now. I have engaged landlords in Kasubi to schedule a meeting to discuss garbage management, water point protection, and road opening. In addition, I also raised concern for families who connected their shelters/washrooms to the latrine which supplies the Water and sewerage system of Gulu which supplies tap water and I invited Urban TV.</p>

...holistically speaking regarding social accountability initiatives. I think for us as an organization, what we believe is the availability of information and freedom to access such say the information and the knowledge that we gather, we share in the form of brochures, public awareness campaigns, and stuff like that. We are not shy to put our initiatives or t-shirts that people walk around in society and then this information gets disseminated to the people that way. ***Gulu***

...advocating for the importance of entrepreneurship in nation-building. Also, we engaged the city council to disclose opportunities that are available for youths. We try to involve the local people more e.g. at Gulu Main Market we engaged the vendors right from the start.

Engaging people by providing them with information listening to their concerns and doing things within the law. ***Gulu leader local leader Participant***

Kampala

“...we had the safety walks which gave us a very good platform to know which issues should be handled in the community; we came up with so many different issues like lighting, health issues, safety issues”. ***CSO leader participant Kampala***

“We have carried out dissemination of the budget position paper on SRHR on GBV financing in Kampala for the financial year 2022-2023, 2024. In this meeting which took place at Fairway, there were parliamentarians, we had local leaders, and different partners the NGOs we work with who do more of the budget issues.” ***CSO Leader participant in Kampala***

Greater  
Masaka

“COTFONE widened the scope of issues to follow up beyond oil pipeline issues, we now follow road construction and maintenance; district budget management, school management, health services, etc.

“Knowledge sharing for policy-decision making. *CSO leader participant in Masaka.*

“We now get involved in public participation for implementation of community projects” *CSO youth leader participant in Masaka.*

“COTFONE engaged with the community together with duty bearers in the sand mining and extensive rice growing in Lwera wetland, Kalungu district.” *CSO leaders participate in Masaka.*

“Community engagement of East African Crude Oil Project service providers on effects on water sources and environment. *CSO leader participant in Masaka*

“COTFONE Brought together 5 youth-led CSOs from Central, Western, and Eastern Uganda to form a coalition to promote social accountability among others .” *CSO leader participant in Masaka*

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## 8. Lessons Learned

*What key lessons have you learned from social accountability initiatives in your community or your institution has been involved?*

Participants indicated that learned several lessons as explained below

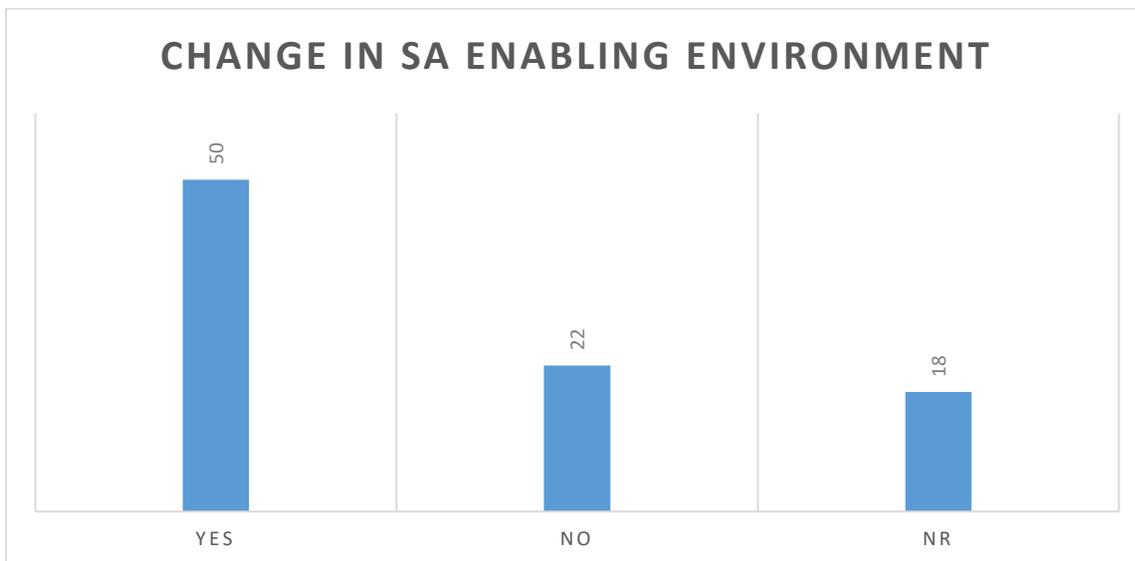
- The key lesson is that people don't understand how much power they have in their hands and how much responsibility they have in ensuring that the local leaders account for their actions.
- Participants learn that they have a right to hold duty bearers accountable concerning service delivery. Therefore, Social accountability work prevents corruption among service providers and prevents human rights violations by duty bearers.
- Others have learned that they should engage in budget processes rather than wait for the reading and that it helps for better allocation of resources.
- Some participants learned that it is the responsibility of every person to ensure that there is improvement in service delivery.
- Some learned that there is power in making coalitions like organizations working together and carrying a bigger voice. It's not a one-man effort as it is better and easier when there are connections and partnerships (strength in numbers).
- Some said they learned that many duty-bearers are ignorant of their roles and responsibilities and that citizens too don't know their rights. Therefore, the level of awareness in the community about social accountability is still very low. And youth-led CSOs may have some knowledge of social accountability, but they are curtailed due to inadequate resources.

- They further said that some citizens don't know where to report and who delivers what service which slows the service delivery in the community. Therefore, social accountability work needs long-term project training and constant follow-up for the youth-led CSO to be effective. What OSSREA did was too short for an effective follow-up
- Other lessons include; learning to work with other people, learning to not use violence, and still getting services
- Overall, the presence of active community monitors enhances better service delivery because service providers know they are watched

## 9. Enabling Environment

*Considering the ToT for youth-led CSOs and local government officials, is there a change in the provision of an enabling environment for social accountability?*

**Graph 5:** Showing the change in the provision of an enabling environment for social accountability after the ToT time of the training.



Several respondents agreed that there is an enabling environment for SA being provided however, the youths find it difficult to monitor activities and projects because they have little information on most of these projects. Also, there is still a big knowledge gap in terms of understanding crucial documents and government procedures. Some participant said there is a change that some government offices like the CDO's office so welcoming and has supported many youths to open up CBOs in their communities. An example is now that Youth-led CSOs have received funding to deliver mind-changing information to turn people into responsible citizens.

Secondly, Local leaders are now taking the youths as partners not rivals or threats to their positions and more platforms are being provided for the youths to express themselves.

However, some participants claim that the environment to a bigger extent is not enabling that when they try to hold duty bearers accountable it's always affiliated with politics and they end up in jail.

Other participants say to a smaller extent it's enabling since they have always gone to government offices and they are given what they want but it comes when you know some big person or when you're connected.

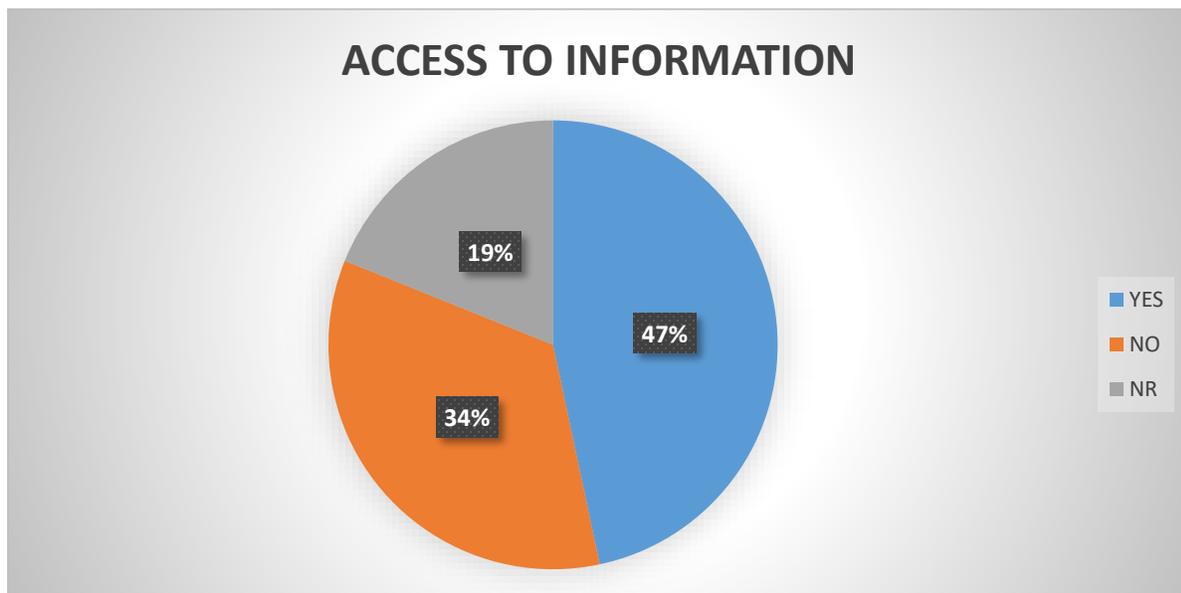
On the issue of whether youths have checks and balances on government expenditure; They said they were not sure if they could access them and some said they didn't have them.

About laws able to commit to providing youth-led CSOs to provide oversight to funds and resources/ Do citizens question the state? They said the government commits to working with CSOs to deliver services to the communities however the implementation is still low and more follow-up is still needed to realize this. They also agreed that citizens do question the state for example; Citizens in Namuwongo rose against KCCA on the damaged trenches and poor garbage disposal in their community.

## 10. Access to Information

*All government officials and other service providers have service charters that are displayed in their offices. Is the information for citizens produced and shared openly according to these guidelines? (budgets, procurement laws, public contracts, recruitment of staff, etc.)? Are media and youth-led CSOs allowed to oversight corruption in government institutions?*

**Chart 3:** Showing if service providers display service charters in their public offices to enable access to information on social accountability



Most respondents agreed that information is being shared on government notice boards, on the internet, and in media freely. However, most of the participants claim that the information displayed does not match with what they do in their offices.

When it comes to asking for accountability, budgets, and procurement policies service providers are always not ready to give the information and others do not even give you a chance to reach their offices like one who claimed that the town clerk of Nakawa is unapproachable

Besides, participants said

Most offices like the KCCA division offices have some information displayed however most of them do not update their information and some do not want their information to be displayed to the general public so there is still a need to enforce such.

In addition, this information is mainly for the educated because they are in written form and in English i.e. those who can't read have no access to that information. Others said that information is shared partly, but people don't normally seek information.

## 11. Changes and Suggestions

*After your training in social accountability, what changes have you made or noticed in your working with youth-led CSOs or government service providers?*

Most respondents gave different answers including but not limited to; inclusiveness, transparency, youth involvement, Local leaders becoming more positive and willing to work with youth-led CSOs, and local leaders having a better understanding of their roles.

The needs and contribution of the youths are being taken into account and more partnership has been shared platforms with the local, change in attitude.

Some claimed they have noticed a change in the allocation of resources since now some duty bearers fear holding them accountable for services they have not given yet money is accounted for.

Some noticed that youth are now engaging themselves in the available spaces and raising their voices since they know they have a right to do so.

There has been a reduction in crime rates since the citizens are now aware of their responsibilities and the mandates of the government and trust the process of better service delivery.

Government offices like the CDO's office are more welcoming to the youths and have helped spread government programs to the local people.

## 12. Conclusions

The level of awareness of social accountability among youth-led CSOs and local leaders ranges from low to moderate majorly because of illiteracy. In addition, capacity building has been done to a limited extent and is still ongoing. Limited extent because most rural leaders and local CSOs have not exactly benefited from capacity-building activities of social accountability. However, there has been a shift in attitude towards SA, there has been more public involvement in projects, and there has been transparency. This can also be reflected in the witnessed changes in services particularly in road service networks, and health facility services where most respondents cited examples of maternity homes, etc. Moreover, more spaces are being provided for youths to voice their concerns. The youth representatives in local councils, the National Youth Council, the National Youth Parliament, and Media platforms are examples of spaces cited that are present/ provided for youths to voice their concerns.

Information on government budgets especially when they are interested in knowing is accessible, but there is a general lack of knowledge as far as budget interpretation is concerned.

The COYOQA project through COVISAF pilot social accountability training was a good start in building the capacity of those who attended. They not only built their capacities in SA but also created awareness among youth leaders as far as their rights are concerned and empowered the participants to know well how to demand services and accountability from service providers/ duty barriers. At the same time, it made the local leaders aware of their roles and responsibilities as far as SA is concerned.

From the survey, it is also clear that the level of youth-led monitoring and evaluation is still low. This is mainly because the capacity of the majority of the youths do understand social accountability. However, those doing monitoring and evaluation mainly use the PET method and

the scorecard. This is because these methods are easy to use and do not require too much knowledge. Secondly, the tools are more inclusive as the local people in the community are involved in the processes of activity monitoring and evaluation, and these are cheap methods.

Some respondents were involved in awareness creation activities to build capacities of their fellow youths on social accountability and also on certain advocacy programs to raise awareness and demand for certain rights and services. Others have been involved in problem-solving activities on issues that affect their community. However, most respondents had fully involved in any Social accountability initiatives yet; but they were starting to get involved in demanding financial accountability of local projects. The training had created an environment for dialogue and shared knowledge a lot more than before among the leaders of the youth-led CSO and the district service providers.

In terms of lessons learned from the training of ToT to the piloting COVISAF a lot has been achieved starting with learning the concept and application of SA; participants cite that they learned to work with other people who are serving the youth. At the same, they have learned the difference between SA and activism, now they can engage the duty-bearers without becoming violent and still get services.

Furthermore, the survey also established that there is an enabling environment for SA being provided however, the youths find it difficult to monitor activities and projects because they have little information on most of these projects. In addition, there is still a big knowledge gap in terms of understanding crucial documents and government procedures among the youth. While there is information on government notice boards, on the internet, and on media freely, however, this information is mainly for the educated because they are in written form and English, i.e. those who can't read have no access to that information.

To effect social accountability there is a need to have a gendered approach to service delivery of what needs to change including but not limited to; inclusiveness, transparency, youth involvement, Local leaders becoming more positive and willing to work with youth-led CSOs, local leaders have a better understanding of their roles, etc.

### 13. Recommendations

The civil society in Uganda needs to create more awareness and training concerning SA among the youth to promote Positive civic engagement. Based on the findings of the survey, about the COYOQA project especially the COVISAF pilot project on social accountability among youth-led CSOs and local leaders. The finding of this study indicates that the Trainer of Trainers had a positive impact on the awareness creation of social accountability. However, there is a low level of awareness of SA among youth-led CSOs and Local leaders. In addition, even the creation of awareness and capacity is very low when it comes to social accountability.

The youth-led CSO should embark on mobilizing the youth leaders and the youth to understand SA and to increase the space where youth can hold duty barriers accountable. According to the survey, there is a gradual but slow positive change in service delivery/ equality of services delivered to citizens. More spaces are increasingly provided for the youths to better voice their concerns about service delivery, human rights violations, performances, corruption, etc. TOT created more awareness of the rights and responsibilities of both citizens and local leaders. Especially when it comes to information on government budget monitoring and evaluation tools for government programs. The project was a revelation especially to those participants, that it created awareness and advocacy campaigns for rights and demanding financial accountability.

The government should increase the enabling environment for social accountability, by promoting and creating awareness of the government structures that enable SA. For instance, according to the survey budget information and government spending are open to citizens but only shared and accessed by a limited number of people particularly those who can read and have gadgets that can surf the net.

Duty barriers should practice more gendered inclusiveness in service deliveries. While major changes were noticed by TOT participants, gendered youth inclusion, will promote SA accountability and better services if leaders work with the youths, a better understanding of roles by local leaders, etc.

The youth-led CSO should encourage a peer-to-peer approach to SA awareness creation together with community-centered training to create more awareness of social accountability.

NGOs should train organized youth local groups and youth-led CSOs on social accountability in the language that they easily interface with. This will enable the government to improve service delivery and the quality of services that the citizens are getting.

More training of leaders and citizens is needed in SA at all levels through leadership and mentorship platforms to have a positive and vibrant youth agency.

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