Table of Contents

Chairperson’s Remarks ........................................................................................................5
Executive Director’s remarks ...........................................................................................7
Operating Environment ....................................................................................................9
External ............................................................................................................................10
Internal ...........................................................................................................................13
Strategy 1: Community Empowerment .......................................................................16
Strategy 2: Capacity Development ..............................................................................22
Strategy 3: Policy Engagement .....................................................................................28
Strategy 4: Institutional Development .........................................................................34
Strategy 5: Strategic Partnerships ................................................................................36
Challenges .......................................................................................................................40
Lessons ............................................................................................................................41
Financial Performance 2016 .........................................................................................42
Board of Directors .........................................................................................................44
Forum for Women in Democracy (FOWODE) is a women's rights national non-partisan organization that grew out of the 1994-1995 Constituent Assembly Women's Caucus which debated and passed the 1995 Ugandan Constitution. FOWODE has strategically positioned itself as a champion for women's rights protection, participation in political decision making, and engaging in issues of macroeconomic governance such as Gender Responsive Budgeting. The organization has continued to be a pacesetter in promoting gender equality and women's leadership in the country and although we primarily focus on women's issues, FOWODE seeks gender equality and thus involves men in all aspects of its work.

FOWODE’s vision is a just and fair society where and men equally participate in and benefit from decision making processes. Our mission is to promote gender equality in all areas of decision making through community empowerment, capacity development, policy engagement and strategic partnerships and alliances. The organization currently works in 14 districts namely: Wakiso, Mityana, Lyantonde, Rukungiri, Kabale, Amuru, Amuria, Gulu, Busia, Kibuku, Kibaale, Kabale, Napak and Masindi and at national level.
2016 was a year of great strides, opportunities and achievements as FOWODE marked 21 years of a phenomenal journey in the advancement of gender equality and equity. Our 21st anniversary coincided with the General Elections in Uganda where grassroots communities mostly women, participated. FOWODE played a critical role in preparing the grassroots communities especially women to influence nurturing of a leadership and democratic environment that positively shapes the rights and opportunities for women to succeed. Specifically, women’s capacities were enhanced to ably articulate national development issues, develop popular manifestos and life skills including public speaking.

There was increment in the numbers of women attending campaign rallies in comparison to previous elections and an increment was registered in numbers of women nominated to contest on direct parliamentary seats from 23 in 2011 to 83 in 2016. Additionally, there was progress as more women were appointed to ministerial positions (from 16 in the last cabinet to 22 in the new cabinet putting women at 28%). As we count our gains in women’s leadership, it is vital to applaud the male champions who have continuously advocated for women’s rights, gender equality and women’s empowerment. Engaging with male champions at all levels is a key strategy that FOWODE prioritized in its Strategic Plan 2013-2017 which has, undeniably enabled us achieve our goals.

Informed by the vibrancy of women’s issues at the global level, we were re-invigorated in our quest to continue making our contribution to changing the status quo by spearheading a process aimed at advancing gender equality in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). FOWODE therefore developed a publication dubbed “Voice to Action: Advancing Gender Equality in the SDGs,” as a foundation document for engagement and ensuring that “No woman is left behind by 2030” in Uganda. In recognition of the need for strong partnerships in the delivery of the gender agenda, FOWODE fostered the formation of the Uganda Gender Consortium on SDGs (UGCS), a conglomeration of CSOs whose core role is actualizing the “Voice to Action”. The Gender Consortium will monitor and report on the components of gender equality in the SDGs at the local and national level.
forward therefore, we hope that all stakeholders will support women’s leadership and agency on SDGs and ensure gender budgeting for the equitable distribution of resources among women, men, girls and boys.

As is the practice and to demonstrate good governance within the organisation, FOWODE held her Annual General Meeting to account to the members on progress made towards achieving our strategic goal of “Empowered Women, Transformed Societies”. 2016 ushered in a new Board of Directors comprised of 5 charismatic women to carry forward FOWODE’s vision and take her to the next level of growth. I would like to commend the outgoing Board of Directors for the tremendous job done in supporting and playing a critical leadership role through it’s oversight function and provision of strategic direction. I am humbled to end my 6-Year tenure as the Chair of the Board of Directors and deeply honoured to have steered FOWODE to such great heights.

As a Board we appreciate the Government of Uganda, Development Partners, Implementing Partners, Management and Staff of FOWODE for their support that has made it possible for FOWODE to make a difference. We shall continue working tirelessly to ensure that FOWODE’s contribution remains significant to the development of Uganda and shaping gender equality and women’s empowerment in Africa and internationally. We remain a strong and committed organization to foster gender equality and women’s empowerment.

FOWODE will continue Shaping the Future in 2017 and beyond!

Solome Nakaweesi-K.

Chairperson

Board of Directors (2011 -2016)
We at the Forum for Women in Democracy concluded 2016 riding high on our remarkable achievements. The major highlight of the year was our 21st birthday which we used to celebrate our phenomenal journey of defying barriers, shattering glass ceilings, navigating the corridors of power, breaking new ground and re-imagining the future. I would like to share with you some of our outstanding achievements over the years:

FOWODE started her work during the Constituent Assembly (1994-1995) when she led women and introduced landmark gender sensitive provisions in the Constitution. Her work resulted into the birth of one of the most gender sensitive Constitutions in the world. The Constitution opened the way for thousands of women to have a public voice at both the national and local levels through affirmative action that was entrenched in the Constitution and subsequently in the Local Government Act. Working with women across the political spectrum, to date we have trained over 20,000 women leaders who have made a mark in leadership both at the national and local level.

The seminal work of mentoring young women and men in alternative and transformative leadership that we begun in 2004 has contributed to increased youth participation in governance. To date we have built a cadre of 511 young women and men who espouse our values of, respect for women’s rights, tolerance, and respect for diversity, gender equality and equity. The young leaders are doing such amazing work challenging the status quo so as to transform their communities and the varied institutions they are part of, educating citizens about women and girls’ rights, empowering and inspiring young girls to reach their full potential and implementing economic empowerment projects in their communities.

In 1999, we began our gender budget work. We are proud to have contributed to the reform of the budget process and to have introduced in it gender budgeting principles and approaches. As a result of our consistent and strategic engagement with a range of stakeholders in the executive, legislative and technical arms, the government adopted
gender and equity budgeting. Uganda is the first country in the world to have a requirement of a Certificate of Gender and Equity for all sectors prior to budget approval in law.

In 2008, having worked with bureaucrats on gender budgeting and strengthening the “supply” side, the organization decided to strategically focus on the “demand” side. Since then, rigorously and consistently we have built an active and informed constituency across 14 districts, able to use the power of their numbers to hold governments and decision makers accountable for ensuring equitable distribution of resources. To date we have worked with close to 3,000 women and men that are at the forefront of driving their own change in their communities and demanding accountability. Through our work, we have shifted power to the communities and demonstrated that once citizens are empowered, corruption is harder to sustain, service delivery improves and there is enhanced accountability.

Over the years, we have continued to be a part of the gender equality equation in the country by ensuring the amplification of women’s voices in the governance, political and macroeconomic discourse. We consider it vital to make a connection between the work we do on gender equality and women’s empowerment, and the democracy and governance environment in which we operate, thus continually make a mark within human rights organizations.

We are glad that over the past 21 years we have been able to make a clear footprint within the gender equality, women’s empowerment and democracy and governance arenas. As we look to the future, we know that a lot more needs to be done to transform the lives of women. Therefore, we will remain steadfast in our endeavor to make a contribution in ensuring that all women are free.

I would like to thank our development partners, sister organisations, allies at national level and in our districts of implementation, the Board, and staff for walking the journey with us and for contributing to our success. We will continue to count on you, our friends and partners, for your support, counsel and partnership so that together we can “shape the future” in the next phase of our life.

I wish you good reading.

Patricia Munabi Babiiha
Executive Director

Figure 3: Elected Women MPs in the 10th Parliament
GENERAL ELECTIONS AND INAUGURATION OF THE 10TH PARLIAMENT

Prior to the 2016 general elections, Uganda experienced the pleasure of a Presidential debate and with it came the exposure of other potential candidates that citizens had not had the opportunity to focus on. The debate erased the notion that the country, despite regular contenders over the years, always had only two rival power houses to choose from. Shining a light on diverse approaches and solutions to the country’s challenges from all eight candidates, democracy and transparency was felt.

The general elections held earlier this year ushered in new leadership in many areas especially at the local level. With an attrition rate of up to 70% in some of our districts of operation, it implied that FOWODE would mainly be working with a fresh group. This had both positive and negative impact on our work as new leaders meant that FOWODE had to embark on capacity building efforts afresh. However, it also meant getting and working with a team more adaptable to change. The election of new office bearers also brought hope to communities where service delivery was poor, that new leaders could hopefully positively affect service delivery.

Of the 345 directly elected MPs in the Ninth Parliament, only slightly over 100 managed to retain their seats and approximately 10 MPs voluntarily retired from elective politics. The turnover in the 2016 elections was so brutal that even the longest serving and seemingly most entrenched MPs were not spared. More than 15 of the longest serving MPs, some of whom have been in Parliament for more than 20 years, were trounced. Out of 231 legislators who held direct seats in the 9th Parliament, only 96 were re-elected and the rest were replaced by 121 first timers while 14 politicians who were once in Parliament but were defeated rebounded to the house. This translates into 58.4% attrition rate for direct seats.

Of the 112 female MPs in the out-going Parliament, only 43% retained their seats as 64 fresh women made it to the 10th Parliament. Five politicians who had been out in the cold having been to Parliament and lost rebounded, giving an attrition rate of 61.6% for women MPs. The high attrition rates for MPs have a direct implication on the capacity building done for the national and local legislators. It is also worrying that women are giving up on the direct seats which can be partly attributed to the high political violence that was displayed in the last elections.

![Pie chart showing distribution of seats in the 10th Parliament]

- **Affirmative Action Seats**: 80%
- **Direct Seats**: 14%
- **Groups**: 6%
- **Special Interest**:

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EXTERNAL
UGANDA BIDS FOR AFRICAN UNION CHAIRPERSON SEAT

During 2016, the former Ugandan vice president Dr. Specioza Wandira Kazibwe officially launched her bid for chairperson of the African Union (AU). She was endorsed by the Ugandan cabinet and the Eastern African region as their candidate for the position. The AU Commission is a key organ that plays a central role in the day-to-day management of the African Union. Dr. Kazibwe was then nominated for the African Union Chairperson bid by His Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda. It was a great milestone for women and the country at large as this position carries with it opportunities for a country that would lead to its social, political and economic growth.

BRITAIN’S EXIT FROM THE EU (BREXIT)

Britain’s decision to exit from the European Union (EU) shocked the world. Since the outcome of the EU referendum to leave the European Union, there have been varying views on what the impact of Brexit will be on the economy and future of the UK. It’s clear though that whatever the views presented there is continued uncertainty as to how this will affect us all. It also remains unclear for charities across the UK, from social welfare voluntary organizations to international aid agencies, as to whether they can still apply for EU funding, despite the fact that the government has not yet started to negotiate the terms of its exit from the EU. Short term charities and charitable trusts may experience an impact on their invested income, which will affect the resources available to support services to clients. Therefore, as an organization that receives some of her support from Britain this poses a major concern.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND THE AFRICAN UNION’S AGENDA 2063

At the continental and global level, Uganda was a leader in developing the Sustainable Development Goals. The High Level Political Forum 2016 Ministerial Declaration highlights the importance of participatory and inclusive implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda at all levels. It acknowledges the primary responsibilities of Governments in this regard, the contribution of parliaments, sub-national governments and all other relevant stakeholders, including the private sector, civil society, academia and philanthropic organizations. It underscores the fact that their participation supports accountability to all citizens and enhances the effectiveness of Government action, fostering synergies, multi-stakeholder partnerships, international cooperation, the exchange of best practices and mutual learning. Through leadership of the Uganda National NGO Forum, civil society contributed to the Uganda National Voluntary Reporting in 2016. NGO Forum initiated the ‘Leave-No-One-Behind’ Campaign under which civil society continues to pursue the route of ensuring that every citizen’s voice matters and is heard. In pursuance of the SDG mantra of “Leaving no one behind”, FOWODE spearheaded the development of “Voice to Action” a foundational document that lays the basis for advancing gender equality in the SDGs in Uganda. Through the Uganda Gender Consortium on SDGs, which FOWODE will coordinate, we foresee meaningful engagement on critical issues which if dealt with would transform the lives of women in Uganda.

THREATS TO PEACE AND STABILITY

2016 was also characterized with increasing radicalization of young men in Kampala city and other urban centres like Gulu with reports of heightened threats by iron-bar murderous groups at the end of 2016. The year ended on a sad note with the Kasese attacks where many were killed and hundreds arrested including female royal guards. The huge impact of the attacks on women and children cannot be over emphasised. Growing unemployment of the youth is further pushing young people into desperation. There is need for deep thought on constructive involvement of the youth in the country’s political and economic development so as to curb their possible manipulation which can escalate political instability in the country.

SQUANDER OF PUBLIC RESOURCES BECOMING THE NORM

It is starting to sound like “a broken record”, a system that squanders public resources and individuals that steal taxpayer’s money is unacceptable. Runaway corruption as witnessed in the oil, roads, and public sector and failure by the government as a whole to take serious and convincing actions is a concern to everyone in this country. The recent case of ‘big’ people sharing public resources like loot after the Tullow Oil case in London in which the country lost huge sums of money to bogus negotiators comes to mind. Elite collusion to rob Uganda through bailouts, payments in the court cases and losses of court cases as the Auditor General’s report mentions are grave concerns. The MPs decision to remove tax on their allowances consequently denoting that other Ugandans carry the unfair burden are all part of a larger scheme that seems to treat citizens as subjects
in their own country while wanton plunder of public resources continues unabated. Our leaders, especially elected leaders are custodians of public trust. When leaders become the front runners in collusion to rob citizens and plunder the country, it leads to breakdown in trust and erosion of legitimacy of leaders.

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP FUND

In 2016, the Government of Uganda unveiled the Shs. 53billion Women Entrepreneurship Programme (UWEP) intended to increase women’s competitive edge in the business sector. This initiative followed the presidential pledge to establish a special fund to cater for women’s business projects to improve their betterment and emancipation. The initiative was formulated based on a number of key statistical indicators where women comprised the majority (86.2%) of actors in the informal sector. The programme is anticipated to support women within the age bracket of 18-65 years in the micro, small and medium enterprise sub-sector through provision of interest-free credit, technical advice for appropriate technologies, value addition and market information. The funds were planned to be rolled out in the financial year 2016/1017 and would be accessed through women groups with a membership ranging from 10 to 15 members, with the major focus on unemployed women and vulnerable groups such as single young mothers, widows, disabled, women living with HIV/Aids and slum dwellers. Women’s economic empowerment is critical if women are to engage in the social, economic and political arenas. It is our hope that the funds will reach the targeted beneficiaries and will transform their lives meaningfully.

AFRICAN SCORE CARD ON DOMESTIC FINANCING

During 2016, the African Union Assembly adopted the Africa Scorecard on Domestic Financing to help plan and monitor health spending. According to the Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, Strategic Framework; 2015, “The dwindling and unpredictability of development assistance compels Africa to look inwards for domestic resources for the care of her people. Africa will need to mobilize internal resources for the promotion of her health.” This was an important milestone in promoting accountability, financial performance monitoring and accountability. Only 4 out of 54 African Union Member States are meeting the Abuja target of 15% of government expenditure to health. Uganda is one of the countries that has not met the Abuja target and yet the health sector in the country is ailing. Women are disproportionately affected by a health system that is dysfunctional because of their gender roles. The UDHS 2016 tells us that Uganda’s sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) indicators are poor, as evidenced by a maternal mortality rate of 336 deaths per 100,000 live births, 25% of adolescent girls having already began childbearing. 29.8% girls aged 15-24 having experienced sexual and gender based violence and an un-met need for family planning of 30%, among others. It is critical that the government prioritizes the health sector.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CERTIFICATE FOR GENDER AND EQUITY (CGE)

FOWODE is proud to have been at the forefront of the advocacy for the inclusion of a Certificate of Gender and Equity in the Public Finance and Management Act (PFMA) of 2015. The Act requires planners as drivers of planning and budgeting to comply with the Gender and Equity Certificate (CGE). The 2016/17 financial year planning cycle was the beginning of MDAs being evaluated by the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) for gender compliance using the CGE guidelines. Many MDAs had very poor scores on their BFPs despite the pass mark for CGE being at a bare 40%. This indicated that many technocrats in charge of planning and budgeting still lacked the capacity to develop fully Gender and Equity compliant plans and budgets. It is therefore essential for CSOs with expertise in Gender and Equity to continuously engage with Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) to improve the capacities of technocrats to better plan for gender & equity. In 2016 FOWODE incorporated the CGE in capacity building initiatives for technocrats and councillors.

SWITCH FROM OUTPUT BASED TO PROGRAMME BASED BUDGETING

In a bid to improve efficiency of government interventions, government is replacing Output Based Budgeting (OBB) with a new system “Program Based Budgeting”. OBB had exhibited weaknesses including instances of mix-up of outputs and processes as illustrated in various Ministries Departments and Agencies’ budget documents and absence of a well-defined system to enforce accountability. The change in strategy begun with FY 2016/17. There is however evidence that many government MDAs still lack capacity in effectively using the new system which led to delays in the release of the Indicative Planning
Figures by the Ministry of Finance and consequently delays by all local governments in submitting their draft BFPs to central government. We are however positive that the move to PBB will make a huge contribution to ensuring that gender and equity issues that have been budgeted for translate into changing the lives of women.

UNSTABLE CLIMATIC CONDITIONS

Climatic change continues to be a global concern with Uganda among other countries already experiencing its adverse consequences. This is due to uncertain weather patterns such as long spells of drought and heavy flooding across the country. Women bear the brunt of climatic change as they are the primary caretakers of the family especially since during these times resources become scarce affecting their livelihood and the very sustenance of their families. Such harsh conditions make it more difficult to mobilize communities (especially women) around accountability work at a time when they are fending for their families.

INTERNAL ELECTION OF A NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

As part of practicing internal democracy, FOWODE held her Annual General meeting to account to the members on progress made towards achieving our strategy’s goal of “Women with Voice, Power and Resources engaging effectively in governance”. This year’s AGM was an elective one which brought on board a new Board of Directors. The new board shall continue to chaperon FOWODE towards achievement of its strategic goals, centering on its growth and living up to its vision and mission, while also initiating the process for the development of a new strategic plan.

Incoming board members

Outgoing Board members
FOWODE BECOMES OF AGE

In 2016 FOWODE celebrated 21 years of uninterrupted service, an important milestone for the organization. FOWODE has made a clear footprint within the gender equality, women’s empowerment and democracy and governance arenas not only nationally but in Africa through various capacity building activities. The celebration was an opportune time to reflect, reenergize and revel in the footprints FOWODE has left in the lives of many in Uganda, the continent and the International scene.

INTERNAL POLICY ENVIRONMENT

The ever changing context in which we operate demands that we continually enhance the organization’s policy environment. During the year the Board approved the Risk Management Policy, the Reserve Fund Policy, the Anti-Corruption Policy and the Membership Policy. Whereas the first two policies are critical for cushioning the organization from the impromptu shocks that may emerge in the operating environment and contributing to financial and program sustainability, the latter two are vital to transparency, accountability and ownership in the organization. We believe that the enhanced policy environment within the organization will boost her credibility, strength and growth.

ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ON-LINE MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM

During the year, FOWODE established an online monitoring and evaluation system capable of tracking qualitative and quantitative indicators as well as budget expenditure monitoring. The system allows efficient documentation of the project implementation process as well as reporting through strict approval levels that check on project effectiveness and efficiency. It also provides for analysis of the project performance in relation to the organizational strategic objective and programmes.
Snapshot of Achievements
Increased ability to promote gender responsive service delivery and accountability

In 2010, FOWODE rolled out the Village Budget club model, a community empowerment structure through which citizens are able to demand for gender responsive service delivery and accountable leadership. Through the VBC model, we have been able to do our gender budget work at the grassroots level and to link grassroots programming to local, national and global advocacy and policy making. Through this model we see harnessed collective voice, community participation and stimulated grassroots-led gender justice and women’s rights advocacy.

During the year, the organization supported the formation of 120 Village Budget Clubs (VBC) comprising of 4,262 citizens i.e. (2,538 females – 60% and 1,724 males – 40%) in the 14 districts of Kibuku, Kibaale, Kabale, Mityana, Wakiso, Napak, Gulu, Amuru, Amuria, Busia, Lyantonde, Rukungiri, Luweero and Masindi who actively participated in monitoring service delivery and held their leaders accountable for gender responsive service delivery.

Some of our VBC accountability work

In Lyantonde, the health workers conducted family planning outreaches and created awareness at the community on the utilization of family planning services. This has enabled community members to access services from nearby health centres and men are supporting their wives in making informed choices and decisions on the methods of family planning to use. More women are enrolling for family planning services.

In Busia, mothers have access to maternal health services at the health centre at night as a result of recruitment of a new night guard at Buteba Health centre III replacing the previous one who used to deny women access to the health facility at night. This has also enabled the health workers effectively attend to mothers and their children regularly and deliveries have increased from 24 to 47 unlike before when mothers would prefer delivering from the traditional birth attendants or in their homes.

In Mityana district, at Namungo Church of Uganda primary school, VBCs effectively planned and budgeted for Universal Primary Education (UPE) funds after a new school finance committee was instituted. In Wakiso, 4 teachers were reinstated on the government payroll at Sentema Quran primary school where teachers had spent 4 months without getting their salary. In Masindi, at Budongo health centre II, absenteeism has stopped after the VBCs found only one health worker was reporting on duty. This affected service delivery and duty bearers took charge in monitoring health worker attendance.

In Kibuku district, 112 young women in Kagumasub county established savings and credit groups through which resources were mobilized to support their village structures for economic empowerment.
Engaging men for the promotion of gender equality

80 spouses of female legislators from Amuria and Napak districts were trained on masculinities, gender stereotypes and how to combat negative practices in both the home and communities within which they live and interact. Additionally, eight mock parliaments on gender equality were conducted and as a result, 80 women and men were enlightened to appreciate gender equality.

The trainings not only led to men’s enhanced knowledge and understanding of gender and women’s rights, but they have also created a change of attitudes and men’s behavior towards gender issues. The men have become male change agents advocating for gender equality unlike before. This can be seen from their feedback and commitments after the sensitizations as quoted below.
Lokiru Geoffrey from Iriiri sub county Tepeth parish had this to say “this interactive meeting has opened my mind to realize that old attitudes and traditions are no longer valid in this situation, the consequences are greater these days for our actions like widow inheritance, forced marriage of young girls to wealthy men, no land ownership for women. This is clearly violation of women’s and girls’ rights and this is what has kept women from getting their fair share of resources which has kept women economically poor in Karamoja compared to other regions.” I promise to start changes with my family as well as sensitizing other community members.”

Ejoku Denis from Ogolai

“We men have always given little attention to issues of supporting girls and protecting their rights. We always leave it to their mothers and this is one of the causes of early marriages. This meeting has set for us men a challenge which I believe we shall try our best to work on”

Okello Peter, Amuria

“I have not been all that minding about the rights of women but in this sensitization meeting, I have learnt a lot and it has really changed my perception. Am going to be one of the advocates for girls’ rights”

In a bid to improve efficiency of government interventions, government is replacing Output Based Budgeting (OBB) with a new system “Program Based Budgeting”. OBB had exhibited weaknesses including instances of mix-up of outputs and processes as illustrated in various Ministries Departments and Agencies budget documents and absence of a well-defined system to enforce accountability.
Involvement of men in the promotion of rights of girls has been evidenced. For example in Akore Primary School, men spearheaded giving support to the School in terms of construction of houses for teachers in order to aid their stay at school. According to the community, the District hasn’t in any way supported the school with staff houses and this makes the pupils miss a lot since teachers stay far.

In the picture are bricks made by men for the construction of teachers’ houses. They believe that provision of accommodation to teachers will aid the learning and reduce drop outs because teachers will be near to easily perform their duties and improve on school performance for both boys and girls.

During the awareness meetings that were conducted by the male champions in Churches, being part of the community and as well as parents, church leaders got interested and gave support to the exercise.

A church leader from Akore Catholic Church putting more emphasis on parents being responsible when it comes to protecting the rights of the children especially girls. He said that if parents stay back and don’t demand from the local authorities on issues affecting their children at School they shouldn’t expect any instant change. He encouraged the parents to be proactive and asked men to act responsively to support the girl child. He said that in most cases parents don’t mind so much about providing their girls with their needs resulting into drop out and early marriage.
The model men from Ogolai Sub County, Amuria district, led by Odulai Charles intervened in 12 cases of domestic violence. Through their door-to-door outreaches, the model men counselled men and women from 11 homes that were experiencing violence that was often caused by financial misunderstandings and alcoholism. After the sensitizations by the model men, the family relations have greatly improved and partners testify of improved relationships in their homes.

Additionally, the model men in Amuria district intervened in 3 cases of early marriages, an example is where Alio Rebecca (16 years) had dropped out of school owing to an arranged “marriage” by her parents. Rebecca’s parents were secretly marrying off their daughter and when the model men got this information, they continuously visited Rebecca’s parents educating them on the importance of girl child education as well as the dangers and legal implications of early marriage. Through the continuous awareness by the model men, Alio was taken back to school by her parents.

Speaker Matany Elia Lokit has taken his gender equality actions to a very commendable level by giving first priority to women to speak during council sessions. This has enhanced the opportunities for women who strategize who will speak first considering that they have been given first priority. To a great extent, the women councilors are very active and articulate matters well, they seek clarification on all matters that are not clear, and their attendance is also improving. Currently all the women councilors are closely following up a case of misappropriated funds by the former sub county chief Matany without fear of intimidation.
Civic Consciousness among Citizens

FOWODE continued to stir civic consciousness among citizens on their roles, rights and responsibilities in electoral democracy, development and governance. During the year a total of 25,762 (15,457 - 60% females and 10,305 - 40% males) people were reached from the 10 districts of Lyantonde, Busia, Wakiso, Mityana, Masindi, Kibuku, Napak, Kabale, Rukungiri and Gulu.

Figure 1: Trends of Populations reached from 2013 - 2016

Examples of Citizen Civic Consciousness

The community of Katuugo 1 village in Masindi district accesses clean and safe water after the community resolved that each community member pays 1500/= per month for maintaining and repairing the borehole. The decision was made after the community learnt about their rights and obligations to protect and manage government resources.

In Lyantonde, communities are active in electing potential leaders who are capable of developing their communities. They support children mostly girls to stay in school and complete studying through provision of mid-day meals at schools. The men support their wives to join leadership which used to be a problem before.

“I have been one of the community members who used to think women are meant to remain in their homes taking care of their children not knowing that if they attend meetings, join leadership can cause positive change mostly economically and socially, thank you FOWODE for this meeting. From today my wife is set free to attend meetings like any other woman and next elections I encourage her to contest on the village level. I have always denied her the opportunity however much she liked it so much. I will give her my full support and I will take the information got from this meeting to my fellow men who had the same thing like mine. You have changed my negative attitude towards women participation in leadership. Please we need these meetings in all our villages as we are still backward”

Mr. Matovu George Kyewanula Parish Lyantonde
STRATEGY 2: CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Developing and or enhancing the capacities of critical stakeholders has been one of FOWODE’s foundational pieces. In order for women to participate more effectively in political and economic processes and to influence strategic governance decisions; for men to understand gender equality and women and girl’s empowerment and the vitality of women’s participation in leadership; for young women to master leadership and prepare to take on the mantle; and for civil society to engage effectively on macroeconomic policy, capacity development is a must.

Men for Gender Equality and Women and Girl’s Empowerment

Working with spouses of female politicians

To further support women in leadership, FOWODE embarked on a pilot activity of working with spouses of female politicians. FOWODE built capacities of 80 spouses of female leaders from Napak and Amuria to actively promote women’s and girls’ rights at the local level. The engagement entailed gender awareness, discussions about power and how they could support their female spouses who were in leadership.

As a result, 70% of these demonstrated increased knowledge and understanding of gender, positive masculinities and women and girls’ rights. 54% (43) men of the 80 spouses of female leaders we reached are actively promoting women and girls rights at the local level. This has been evidenced through their holding of sensitization and awareness meetings on gender and women rights; intervening and following up on cases of gender based violence as well as supporting the women councilors in their leadership. The men have also held community meetings, meetings with church members as well as clan leaders to promote gender equality. So far, 1,789 people (195 males that constitute 60% and 140 females that constitute 40%) have been reached by the 43 men.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>No. of activities</th>
<th>Target reached</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sensitization meetings</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Door to door households</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community groups outreaches</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1789</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2: Actions undertaken by men and boys in promotion of gender equality
Ekot Moses held a meeting at church attended by 34 (12f, 22m) people where he sensitized them on basic gender and women’s rights. He also utilized the opportunity of belonging to the clan leadership and sensitized the clan leaders in Ogolai village on gender. He hopes to deepen this outreach with time.

Teachers for gender equality in schools

Girl child drop out is one of the issues that continue to plague the education sector. Data shows that gender parity in enrollment is only at primary level and that challenges still exist in retention and completion at all levels. The presence of female and male teachers in schools can impact positively or negatively on girl child education. However, female and male teachers are not necessarily always supportive of girls in schools or do not make the school environment any more girl-friendly. This is because they are not very aware of gender equality concepts, and are often subject to the same gender assumptions, discrimination and even sexual harassment and abuse that girls face in schools. Frequently, this makes it very difficult for them to acknowledge and act on gender inequalities affecting girl pupils and students and other women teachers. It is this situation that challenged us to think about supporting girls to stay in and enjoy school and thus the capacity building of female and male teachers on gender equality.

50 (25 men and 25 women) primary school teachers’ skills in gender awareness were enhanced to uphold girls’ rights education. As a result, the teachers revived the gender clubs to protect and promote girls’ rights and followed up on cases of early marriages and school drop outs. The teachers further engaged the inspector of schools on lack of adequate, separate sanitary facilities which increased girls’ vulnerability to sexual assault and violence. As such, the district local governments of Amuria and Napak committed to ensure funds were allocated to construction of girls separate latrines in the schools.
Some voices from teachers on what they’ve done as a result of the training

“I have regrouped two clubs which were dormant and abandoned into one girls club who I have continuously engaged on girls’ issues. Through our active administration and work with clubs and associations, Lodoi Primary school was recognized as the school with the most active school clubs one of which being the Gender Equality Club (GEC). Ms. Along with the senior woman and senior male teachers spearheaded capacity building of the GEC such as training the girls and boys in making of sanitary pads”. Ms. Alupo Grace, Head teacher, Lodoi primary school

“I have since the training on gender ensured that girls equally participate in class as the boys do. Additionally, every Friday, we hold debates so I have made sure that gender issues and girls’ rights are among the debate topics.” Ms. Gulit Rose Loma female teacher at Pilas P/S

Grooming Transformative Leaders

As part of replenishing women’s leadership, FOWODE continues to mentor young women for alternative and transformative leadership. To date we have trained 511 young women and men who are impacting their communities and the spaces they occupy in amazing ways. This year, FOWODE trained 30 young women in transformational leadership. As a result of the training, the young women have embarked on different projects including: Sensitization of school girls on girl child education, Community sensitization on Gender Based Violence, sensitization of girls on reproductive health rights, following up of cases of girl-child school drop outs and sensitization meetings for PLWHIV/A.

Below is an example of an initiative undertaken by one of the alumni: Daisy Aratun

An assessment was done prior to the actual activity through the use of questionnaires to interview pupils (girls & boys) between the ages of 9-19 and in P4-P7 and teachers in the village schools of Agule primary school, Opadoi primary school, and Akisim P/S in Agule sub-county. The assessment was administered to determine the rate of female school dropouts and the circumstances leading to this. It was found that the girls’ dropout rate was significantly higher than that of the boys. In addition, the lack of pads for girls to use during their monthly menstrual periods as well as a general lack of menstrual hygiene knowledge was identified as a major challenge faced by the schoolgirls.
Based on my findings, I developed a concept note to raise funds in order to address the issue of lack of pads by providing the girls with re-usable sanitary pads and to conduct a training session on menstrual hygiene management. I received a donation of 300 pieces of reusable Afripads (100 from Afripads Company and 200 from well-wishers after fundraising).

I then conducted a Menstrual Hygiene Management activity at Canan Nursery & Junior Academy School in Agule County (Pallisa district) as a pilot. It mainly targeted young girls ages 9-19 in classes P4 to P7. The day begun with a keynote speech that emphasized the importance of education and women and girls empowerment. It was noted that girls were often disadvantaged because of their families’ lack of funds to provide them with sanitary pads and other necessary school materials. Issues of discipline among the children was also underscored noting that education provides a good foundation for the future.

The highlight of the day’s activities was the menstrual hygiene management training that was provided. Key issues of general hygiene, puberty and the accompanying developmental changes, pregnancy and methods of contraception, and menstrual hygiene were discussed. Emphasis was laid on the risks of unsafe menstrual health practices and unprotected sexual intercourse. Discussions on the perception about menstruation as a “dirty” or “impure” event, bullying of the girls by the boys were also held. The activity ended with the organisers handing out the Afripads as well as a few pairs of knickers to every school girl falling under the age range of the target population. These were mostly received with gratitude and enthusiasm, and many girls could be seen beaming with satisfaction.

CSOs Capacities Enhanced in Gender Responsive Budgeting

FOWODE believes that collective voice is critical in advocacy and that in order to build this voice actors need to be capacitated. In a bid to build a collective CSO voice for gender responsive plans, budgets, services and programmes, FOWODE enhanced the capacities of 75 members of CSOs from Busia, Wakiso, Lyantonde, Mityana and Masindi districts in gender responsive planning and budgeting. The training enabled them to appreciate the need for integrating gender issues in their budget advocacy work.
Supporting women leaders for effective legislative engagement

Since inception, FOWODE has built the leadership capacities of women in decision making to enable them engage effectively in the legislative space and other spaces that they occupy. The capacity enhancement has made a big contribution to enhanced accountability to women and to the passage of gender responsive legislation.

This year, through our capacity enhancement activities, 600 elected women leaders at national level and in 50 districts acquired knowledge and skills to influence the legislature for inclusion of at least 30% recommendations in the Women’s Manifesto 2016-2021 in laws, policies and budgets. To actualize their advocacy, the councilors formed women’s caucuses and developed action plans. In addition, 189 councilors from Rukungiri, Kabale, Gulu, Kibuku, and Napak benefitted from engagement meetings aimed at enhancing knowledge of women leaders in transformational leadership.

During the year, FOWODE also built the capacities of 30 Legislators at national level to prioritize and allocate funds for Family Planning and Sexual and Reproductive Health (FP/SRH) services. As a result, the legislators were able to advocate for increased budget allocations to Family Planning /Youth Friendly Services in their different spaces of engagement.

Enhancing capacities of technocrats

Technocrats are an important stakeholder in the budget process as they are responsible for the formulation of plans and budgets. FOWODE has continually enhanced their capacities in view of their turnover in our districts of operation and the new legislative and operational developments in the budget making arena. In the course of the year, the organization conducted Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) trainings for 20 district technocrats (16 males and 4 females) to enhance their knowledge and skills in gender, budget analysis, and the legal and policy framework for GRB among others. The technocrats trained demonstrated increased knowledge in gender budgeting which will enable them to better integrate gender issues in district plans and budgets.
Voices for Technocrats Training in Gender Responsive Budgeting

“I used not to know that the Certificate of Gender and Equity (CGE) was the most effective mechanism through which we can guarantee that Government of Uganda plans and allocates resources to address gender and equity challenges within the various sectors. I thank FOWODE for the knowledge enhancement in Gender Responsive Budgeting.” Doreen Nabbosa, District Community Development Officer, Mityana

“Before I used to think gender budgeting favoured women only; little did I know that men too benefitted from it. When I return to my workplace, I will ensure that gender concerns in my district are integrated into the plans and budgets for improved service delivery.” Tony Wabwire District Health Inspector, Busia.

“I intend to apply the knowledge and skills acquired during this training in preparation of the education budget for FY2017/18.”
Medard Byarugaba Ag. District Education Officer - Lyantonde
FOWODE continues to maintain her dialogue with the different arms of government and Ministries, Departments and Agencies to ensure policy and budget making processes address gender inequality and promote women’s empowerment. In order to ensure that we remain part of the gender equation in the country, we endeavor to remain relevant in the policy and political arena and keep abreast of and engage with the current contextual issues that relate to gender and equity.

**Gender and Equity Guidelines for Members of Parliament**

FOWODE completed the development of Certificate for Gender and Equity guidelines for Members of Parliament. Gender and Equity guidelines provide easy-to-use information that will facilitate Members of Parliament (MPs) to make their own independent assessment as to whether Ministries, Agencies and Local governments meet the requirements of inclusion of gender and equity issues in their plans and budgets. The guidelines were disseminated to 80 Members of Parliament from different Parliamentary committees including: Finance, Budget, Education, Health, Gender, HIV, Human Rights, Public Accounts, Local Government, Equal Opportunities and National Economy.

**Audit of the National Budget Framework Paper**

FOWODE conducted a gender and equity audit of the FY 2017/18 National Budget Framework with specific focus on six sectors: Education, Health, Agriculture, Governance, Energy & Infrastructure and Social
development. The findings revealed that sector performance towards gender and equity varied with a perceptible decline in sector performance in regard to gender responsive budgeting. The findings of the audit were used to engagements with legislators and technocrats in a bid to share the identified gaps and together strategise on how to enhance the integration of gender and equity into Budget Framework papers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>FY 2016/17</th>
<th>FY 2017/18</th>
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<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>36%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
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<td>64%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Development</td>
<td>94%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance/Accountability</td>
<td>66%</td>
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</table>


Assessment of the Family Planning Costed Implementation Plan

As part of our work aimed at ensuring increased financing for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, FOWODE conducted a gender assessment of the Costed Implementation Plan for Family Planning (CIP-FP) and the Adolescent Health Policy Guidelines and Service Standards. The Uganda Family Planning Costed Implementation Plan, 2015-2020 (FP-CIP) is an overarching document to provide national guidance for increased knowledge of and access to family planning interventions whereas the Adolescent Health Policy Guidelines and Service Standards are intended to guide Stakeholders, Program officers and service providers on the criteria to follow as they set up or scale up these services. The assessment revealed that the priorities of the CIP-FP and funding gap for FP for the period 2015-2020 matched with coherent financing and strategies to address the FP unmet needs. The assessment of the Adolescent Health Policy Guidelines and Service Standards revealed the implementation gaps of the National Adolescent Health Strategy and made policy recommendations to support FOWODE’s evidence based policy advocacy to influence SRH and FP financing in Uganda.

Provision of Youth/Adolescent health services in all health facilities

Uganda’s demographics in the health sector remain alarming and unless serious attention is paid to them women and girls will continue to die. Teenage pregnancy in Uganda is the second highest in the world standing at 25%, unsafe abortion is at an alarming rate of 11%, and the unmet need for family planning is still very high at 28% due to the low uptake of family planning by adolescents and youth. This speaks to the fact that more needs to be done to ensure that women and girls are better able to make decisions about their sexual activity and reproduction free from discrimination. Improving access to SRHR services and information is vital because it is a low cost high dividend investment for improved access to: health, quality of education, welfare of children, men and women and ultimately will contribute to the development of the nation. During the year, FOWODE analyzed the Health sector NBFP FY 2016/17 and made recommendations to the sector in bid to improve FP services. The analysis recommends that Ministry of Health should ensure that all health facilities integrate the component of youth/adolescent health services; specifically, a focal person in-charge of the youth/adolescents to provide youth friendly services and information targeting young people/adolescents.

Parliament is a strategic space as through it we are able to engage with the Members of Parliament on critical issues that need to be discussed in the national legislature. A strategic meeting was held with 61 Members of Parliament (56 females and 5 males) to map out Gender Responsive Budgeting champions. These are the individuals with whom we work to advance gender responsive budgeting in Parliament. The mapped out champions will influence other legislators to promote GRB within the legislature.

Strategic Meeting with the legislators on GRB

Parliament is a strategic space because through it we are able to engage with the Members of Parliament
on critical issues that need to be discussed in the national legislature. A strategic meeting was held with 61 Members of Parliament (56 females and 5 males) to map out Gender Responsive Budgeting champions. These are the individuals with whom we work to advance gender responsive budgeting in Parliament. The GRB champions pledged to continually do a gender sensitive analysis that would aide in strengthening parliamentary budget oversight and scrutiny. The champions will influence other legislators to promote GRB within the legislature.

**Enhanced visibility of our work**

In the year under review, FOWODE used electronic, print and social media to share information and generate debate on democracy and governance, women’s leadership and gender responsive budgeting across wider audiences. This informed and influenced citizens debates and dialogues as well as enhanced visibility of FOWODE’s work. Below we share some of our media engagements:
FORUM FOR WOMEN IN DEMOCRACY

OPEN LETTER TO H.E PRESIDENT YOWERI KAGUTA MUSEVENI

[Text discussing the need for gender-responsive budgeting and the role of women in decision-making processes.]

Women groups demand gender responsive budget

Flumin, Uganda - Women's groups in Uganda have called for a gender-responsive budget in the country. The call comes ahead of the annual budget that is expected to be presented in February. The groups have expressed concerns that past budgets have not adequately addressed the needs of women and girls. They have called for a budget that takes into account the unique challenges faced by women in different sectors, including health, education, and economic empowerment.

10,000 sign petition against MPs

Kampala, Uganda - Thousands of Ugandans have signed a petition calling for the removal of Members of Parliament (MPs) who have been accused of corruption and mismanagement of public funds. The petition, which was launched by the National Unity Platform (NUP), has gained significant traction in recent weeks, with thousands of people expressing their dissatisfaction with the current Parliament.

New physical planning Act aims to promote urbanisation - Musumba

[Musumba, Uganda - The new Physical Planning Act aims to promote urbanisation in the country. The Act is designed to streamline the process of urban development and ensure that new developments are environmentally sustainable and meet the needs of the population. The Act also includes provisions to ensure that the rights of people living in informal settlements are protected.]
Figure 4: 2016 Monthly History of Website Access Statistics

<table>
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<th>Month</th>
<th>Unique visitors</th>
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<th>Pages</th>
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</table>

Figure 5: Samples of 2016 Trending Tweets

- Kicking off day 2 of senior women and headteachers training with a recap of yesterday. The difference between gender & sex is clear to them.
- Talking gender and its difference from sex with senior women and headteachers.
STRATEGY 4: INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

FOWODE is a key player in the women’s movement and is acknowledged for having impacted women’s leadership. Through our work we have tended and nurtured the flame in others, created a broad base for participation beyond NGOs, worked with communities, government ministries, rural districts, and schools. We can confidently say that we are a symbol of action, uniting, enabling and driving change. We have negotiated and worked alongside others, and yet we are rooted and flexible while ensuring that our values are not compromised at the same time. As we do all this sustainability of the organisation and of our work is critical. It is therefore imperative that attention is paid to institutional development.

Feminist Space: A place for Convening, Dialogue and Show-casing Creative Enterprises

As part of our reflection and projection into the future, FOWODE in 2016 launched her ambitious plan of a “HOME” to ensure future sustainability. This was launched during the FOWODE celebrations marking 21 years of age. It is envisaged that the modern, multi-storey building once completed will provide a women’s space for incubation, learning, innovation and engagement. Income generated from the building would be used to leverage more funds for FOWODE’s work.
Establishment of a monitoring, evaluation and learning system

In order to improve our knowledge and information management, FOWODE developed a robust monitoring and evaluation system. The system allows tracking qualitative and quantitative indicators as well as project budget expenditure monitoring and enables an expedited process of obtaining information, generation of analytical reports and measurement of organizational performance to inform decision making.

During the year, the organization continued to build the capacities of her staff so as to enhance efficiency and effectiveness. FOWODE enhanced staff capacities in Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL), specifically on monitoring and evaluation methodologies relating with formulation of indicators at output, outcome and impact level that show the incremental change process. The staff will utilize the knowledge and skills to sharpen on-going project output indicators, immediate and intermediate result indicators, and how each of these indicators contribute to the ultimate goal. The staff were also trained on the utilization of the M&E system.

Development of benchmarks to assess impact

FOWODE conducted baseline surveys for the Voice, Accountability and Leadership (VAL) and the Voice, Inclusion and Gender Accountability (VIGA) Projects. Data gathered will enable the setting of benchmarks against which we will evaluate change and impact resulting from project implementation. Development of a benchmark against which to measure results is critical for any project.

Reaching the Community through Radio

FOWODE opened a radio in 2012. SPEAK FM, “Voices Unlimited” is the second women’s radio in Uganda and the first in Northern Uganda. SPEAK FM aims to advance the participation of women and men in good governance and development and promote gender equality, through information sharing, advocacy and public debate. Strategically located in the heart of Gulu town, SPEAK FM commands a large market that covers the Acholi sub-region; Lango sub-region; Adjumani, Nebbi in West Nile; Moroto in Karamoja sub-region, and Nimule in South Sudan.

In 2016, Speak FM radio conducted community outreaches on issues of gender, leadership, business entrepreneurship, agriculture, health, education, culture, religion and climate change among others. The outreaches created community awareness on the various subjects and provided an opportunity to challenge the citizens, particularly women, to be a part of these discussions to enable them transform their lives and to be a part of the conversations that link to national development.

© FOWODE. A Community member making a submission during the community outreach organized by Speak FM in Gulu district

During the year, Reproductive Health Uganda (RHU) and the United Nations acknowledged Speak FM programmes and the radio was awarded a certificate for broadcasting reproductive health issues that promoted maternal and child health in the region. In addition, the radio provided specialized community programs to amplify the voices of groups whose voices are often not heard; such as Women’s Magazine program, Bulu Maneno Anyim (Youth with a Vision) and for the Persons with Disability (An Bene Atwero – meaning I can also do that). The involvement of these groups provided a voice to tell their story and this resulted into change in attitude amongst the population.
FOWODE continues to engage at national, regional and international levels for shared learning, policy influence and to contribute to enhanced collective voice on democracy, leadership and macroeconomic governance. In 2016, we continued to build strategic partnerships in order to advance the agenda of gender equality and women’s empowerment. Our varied engagements continued to confirm the organisation’s place as part of the gender equation in the country and also created space for us to provide thought leadership in the political and economic arenas.

**Convening the Women Situation Room (WSR) during elections**

FOWODE spearheaded the renowned Women’s Situation Room in Uganda and co-convened the space with ISIS-WICCE and Institute for Social Transformation. The Women’s Situation Room is a platform for women in collaboration with the youth to play an active and direct role in peace and conflict prevention processes in accordance with UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 before, during and after the elections.

The Uganda Women Situation Room brought together 10 eminent women from Uganda, a group of four elders and five women from African countries where similar projects had successful impact towards peaceful elections, including: Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana and Liberia. The women shared knowledge and experience from other parts of the continent, held consultative meetings and dialogued with key stakeholders to ensure a peaceful election. Consultations were conducted with the Ugandan Inspector General of Police, candidates of political parties, the Electoral Commission, youth organizations and women’s groups.
The Women’s Situation Room trained more than 500 women observers who were deployed to 15 districts considered to be “hotspots” during the elections. Observers reported on any incidents that disrupted the peace during the elections and after polling. Reports were analyzed by a technical team and passed on for appropriate response. Beyond the observers, citizens were encouraged to call and report incidents that led to conflict. Serious incidents were verified and passed on to the Uganda Police Force and the Electoral Commission for further action. The WSR therefore, provided a platform for women’s groups to strategize, plan and respond rapidly to election related violence in a coordinated manner.

The WSR played a key role in ensuring effective participation of women and men as peace mongers, and in brokering peace between various parties soon after the elections. The WSR enabled us to build partnerships with Ambassadors, leaders of political parties, the Uganda Police and the army, religious leaders, among others. In addition, a network of peace activists was built and equipped with the requisite skills and knowledge for preventing and responding to political and electoral violence before, during and after the elections.

**Advancing Gender Equality in the SDGs.**

The globe is focusing on the Sustainable Development Agenda that was officially adopted by 193 Member States of the United Nations in September 2015 and is aimed at transforming the world through its 17 goals and 169 targets by 2030. The SDGs provide an opportunity for women and girls to position themselves as key actors in influencing prioritization of their issues in the implementation phases of the SDGs. In order to take advantage of this opportunity, FOWODE spearheaded a process that will ensure that the gender targets in the SDGs are met and that the SDGs speak to the majority of the women of Uganda who have been left behind. The process involved ideation meetings to brainstorm on the critical issues for engagement, consultation meetings with stakeholders at national and local level, technical cluster meetings to validate key issues, building partnerships with key players and advocacy engagements aimed at popularizing the SDG initiative.

During the year, 13 strategic meetings were held with various partners aimed at creating awareness and cementing collaboration on the SDG intervention. To further crystallize the Uganda Gender Consortium through which the SDG intervention that FOWODE is spearheading will be realised, several meetings were held with leaders of a range of civil society organizations that are working on the intervention areas that the women’s engagement will focus on.

Representatives of the organisations under the Uganda Gender Consortium on SDGs.
60th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW 60)

As part of FOWODE’s mandate to engage and influence policy at all levels, we participate in regional and international spaces that shape commitments, frameworks and policies aimed at achieving gender equality / equity.

In 2016, FOWODE with support from UN-WOMEN Uganda participated in and organized a side event at the 60th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW 60) in New York, hosted by the United Nations. FOWODE’s session titled “For Better or Worse: An Inclusive macro-economic policy regime, a pre-requisite for Sustainable development” aimed at highlighting the need for inclusiveness in economic policy to foster equitable development, as only equitable development can ensure sustainable development.

The FOWODE Executive Director (Ms. Patricia Munabi Babiha), while opening the session highlighted FOWODE’s leadership role in advocacy efforts for gender inclusion in policies in Uganda, community empowerment and capacity building initiatives. Attendees were taken through FOWODE’s story to achievement of inclusion of a “Certificate of Gender and Equity” in the Public Finance Management Act (Uganda’s public financing and accountability law).
Sharing Our Knowledge

FOWODE continues to be a reference point on issues of gender responsive economic policy and transformative leadership. FOWODE hosted 8 women parliamentarians from Zimbabwe in 2016 who came to learn about the strategies we have employed while working with Parliamentarians for the passage of gender responsive laws and budgets. The MPs took interest in the gender and equity budget advocacy work we do at the national and local levels. They were particularly impressed by the Gender Budget work at the local level and the VBC model in particular and achievement of the certificate of gender equity.

Synergies with Like-Minded Organizations

FOWODE continues to be a part of the Women’s Democracy Group (WDG), a consortium of women’s organizations that are working on issues of women’s leadership, democracy and governance. 2016 was a critical year for the group in view of the elections. Issues of violence against women during elections, commercialization of politics, women’s dignity and peace and justice formed the core of the conversations in the build up to the elections. Several joint statements were issued all in a bid to plead for sanity before, during and after the elections. Following the elections strategies were discussed and agreed to jointly ensure the effective participation of women who had been elected.
Challenges

- There was uncertainty in the operating environment before, during and after the elections owing to the fact that the 2016 election was a high stake election. This caused fear among the citizens with whom we work and in some instances led to self-censorship and minimal engagement on critical issues related to the elections such as commercialization of politics, violence against women among others.

- Competing priorities with some of our stakeholders over which we had no control dictated the time for interventions causing delays in implementation of activities in the districts.

- The media shut down and the ban on taking pictures at polling stations during the elections hampered the work of the Women’s Situation room to an extent as the operations of the WSR are dependent on the receipt of information from polling stations in real time. However this was mitigated with the sending of text messages and use of phone calls to derive all the requisite information from the callers.

- Unfavourable climatic conditions hampered some of our activities in the districts owing to the impassable roads.
Collective voice in budget advocacy is key. Allying with civil society actors contributed significantly to the achievement of results. The example of the formation of the Family Planning network in Mityana and the subsequent development and passing of the Costed Implementation Plan for Family Planning in Mityana, the first of its kind at district level in Uganda, is a demonstration of the vitality of collective voice.

Coordination of efforts in the different areas of implementation is key in order to avoid duplication. Working closely with the Community Development Officers has enabled us to identify virgin areas for engagement thus spreading our work and circumventing duplication of efforts with other organisations.

The high attrition rate of legislators at both national and local levels denotes to an extent the enhanced demand for accountability by the citizens. There is need for adequate preparation for the high attrition rate scenario so as to ensure sustained advocacy for the advancement of gender equality and women’s empowerment through the legislatures.

The operating context in the areas of intervention is critical in aiding effective planning and implementation of activities with limited postponement and cancellation of activities. Consultation with the technical teams in the districts is vital in aiding identification of appropriate timeframes for implementation of activities.

Sustainability of interventions beyond project funding is critical in order for the true transformation of citizens lives and the empowerment of communities. It is important that this is inbuilt into project interventions.
Financial Performance 2016

Expenditure

OROGANISATIONAL EXPENDITURE

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES ACTUAL
Capacity Development 1,042,317,900
Community Empowerment 840,819,648
Policy Engagement 717,741,452
Strategic Partnerships and Alliances 132,448,610
Institutional Development 1,675,524,125
TOTAL 4,408,851,735
Board of Directors

Solome Nakweesi K  
Board Chairperson

Sylvia Namabidde Ssinabulya  
Finance Secretary

Tezira Jamwa  
Board member

Beth MwebazeJuna,  
Board member

Lina ZedrigaWaru  
Vice Chairperson

Patricia Munabi Babiha,  
Ex Officio/Board Secretary
Incoming Board of Directors (2016 – 2019)

Joyce Namirimo Tamale
Board Chairperson

Solome Mukisa
Finance Secretary

Beth Mwebaze Juna
Board member

Lina Zedriga Waru
Vice Chairperson

Tezira Jamwa
Board member

Patricia Munabi Babiha,
Ex Officio/Board Secretary