ABOUT FOWODE

Forum for Women in Democracy (FOWODE) is a women’s rights national non-partisan organisation which was established in 1995. It grew out of the 1994-1995 Constituent Assembly Women’s Caucus which debated and passed the 1995 Ugandan Constitution.

It has continued to be a pacesetter in promoting gender equality and women’s leadership in the country, primarily focusing on women’s issues. FOWODE seeks gender equality and thus involves men in all aspects of its work.

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.

OUR MISSION

To promote gender equality in all areas of decision making through capacity development, community empowerment, policy engagement, and strategic partnerships.
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Cover picture: Veronica Maruk harvesting green gum, Napak district
Welcome to our 2015 Annual report in which we share our remarkable journey that saw our continued pursuit for gender equality and women’s empowerment.

FOWODE turned 20 this year - her story as vibrant as before with renewed passion for gender equality and women’s leadership. We celebrate 20 years of making a clear footprint within gender equality, women’s empowerment, governance, and democracy arenas. We thank everyone that has been part of our journey that has seen the capacities of thousands of women leaders abilities enhanced, appreciation of the vitality of gender responsive budgeting by the government, the emergence of communities of hope that are demanding accountable leadership and gender responsive service delivery, enhanced civic consciousness among the citizens we have engaged, a cadre of young transformed leaders that are contributing to shaping the present and the future, among others.

Our 20th anniversary coincided with global milestones for women including the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the birth of the Sustainable Development Goals, an ambitious agenda that aims at transforming the world whose goals are centred on ending poverty, improving health, reducing inequality and addressing climate change by 2030. 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 and challenging stakeholders to address undesirable social constructs that continue to exclude and discriminate against women.

2015 was a pre-election year and we did not miss a beat in intentions and actions to prepare the grassroots communities - especially the women to influence a leadership and democratic environment that positively shapes the rights and opportunities for women to succeed. We were proud to build on the free and fair elections campaign of 2014 through continued agitation for the passage of constitutional and electoral reforms at the national level. Although the proposed reforms were not passed, we made our mark and ensured women’s voices were integral in the debate and provided thought leadership especially to the citizens on the issue of reforms.

Additionally, we spearheaded the award winning innovation, the Women’s Situation Room, a political process that mobilizes women and youth in order to ensure their active participation in peaceful and democratic electoral processes. As the elections edged closer, it was critical that we properly but most importantly, positively so, educate the whole population on the need for peace. Reports of violence and human rights violations in various parts of the country before and during the kick off of the presidential campaigns were already widespread and being a promoter of women’s participation in leadership it was imperative that we make a clarion call for the respect for promotion of women’s rights during the campaigns. The Women’s Situation Room Uganda was therefore, our contribution to ensuring peaceful elections knowing that women and children stand to lose the most if electoral violence breaks out.

As we look to the future, we continue to be inspired by the many women that have stood up to be counted as they break barriers, shatter glass ceilings and navigate a difficult terrain in order to take up their rightful place in society. We celebrate the male champions who have chosen to walk with us as we advocate for women’s rights, gender equality and women’s empowerment. We reaffirm our commitment to the pursuit of a just and fair society where women and men equally participate in and benefit from decision making processes.

I wish to thank all the partners who have enabled us to achieve so many milestones during the year. Additionally, I thank my fellow board members, the members and the members of staff for ensuring that we continue to set the pace as an organization. As the Board of Directors, we look forward to your continued support and partnership as we ‘Shape the Future’.

A word from the Chairperson

SOLOMÉ NAKAWEESI
Chairperson,
Board of Directors
Forum for Women in Democracy (FOWODE)
Remarks from the Executive Director

It gives me great pleasure to, once again, share with you some of the exciting things that FOWODE was up to in 2015. 2015 marked our 20th birthday, having been born out of the phenomenal Constitution making process in 1995 and internally we took time to reflect on our successes, obstacles that have stood in our way and to re-imagine the future.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank everyone that has been a part of our incredible journey that has been filled with triumphs. In our pursuit of the promotion of the women’s agenda at the district, national and global levels, FOWODE worked to consolidate and build on existing interventions including empowering women for leadership and governance; gender equality and equity in macro economic governance, and the amplification of women’s voices in all spheres.

“If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together”. More than ever before the voices of those agitating for gender equality and good governance needed to raise an alarm for change that could not be ignored. This was owing to the continued corruption as seen through the media and confirmed by the Auditor General; the cosmetic constitutional and electoral reforms that were presented to Parliament; the amendment of the Presidential and Parliamentary election laws that saw a drastic increase in the nomination fees; the increased police brutality; the attempt to introduce a restrictive NGO law that would curtail the work of civil society, among others. In these circumstances it was imperative that we coalesce with other organisations in the endeavour to call on our leaders to respect the rule of law and abide by the principles of good governance while letting them know that the citizens were watching.

During 2015, we continued to be a part of the Black Monday Movement, in the advocacy for constitutional and electoral reforms and a progressive NGO law, among others. Strategically, we reinforced our contribution around issues of macroeconomic governance through the promotion of our gender budget work at the national level. The highlight during the year was the advocacy against the repeal of the provision on the Certificate of Gender and Equity in the Public Finance and Management Act. Through our Gender Responsive Budget champions in Parliament, a spirited fight ensured that the Certificate was retained in the Public Finance and Management Amendment Act 2015.

For women to seriously shape and define their circumstances, they must be well represented in leadership and decision making spaces. It was imperative to provide potential women leaders with the requisite knowledge and skills to succeed in the electoral process, a process that is often brutal and excludes women. We trained up to 1500 women candidates for Parliamentary, district and sub-county seats and contributed to their readiness for the elections. FOWODE will continue to track their progress and hope that we will see many more women in leadership promoting gender equality and good governance.

In order to enhance women’s participation in economic and political processes and to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment, on-going transformation of the environment in which the women operate remains critical. Accordingly, we continued with our consciousness raising work convinced about the need for better appreciation of women’s rights in order for women leaders to succeed and that a conscious citizenry is critical to the advancement of good governance. Our civic and voter education work enhanced our efforts of building citizens’ awareness of their rights and responsibilities with particular focus on women’s rights and the issues related to elections. Key during the voter education was the “no vote buying, no vote selling” campaign and the need for citizens to demand accountability and to focus on issues.
Through our community empowerment work, we continued to deepen and broaden our Village Budget Club model. The VBC model has made a tremendous contribution to building communities of hope that are driving their own change. During the year, together with the citizens in 7 districts, we created 14 new Village Budget Clubs (VBCs) through which community members continued to analyze budgets, hold leaders accountable and demand for gender responsive service delivery. The VBCs have enabled us bring our gender budget work to the ordinary citizen and to create demand for better services and pro-poor allocation of resources which has resulted into significant improvements in service delivery and increased accountability.

We concluded 2015 convinced that the increased inclusion of women’s voice in policy and legislative decision making processes, prioritization of citizens needs particularly those of women in laws and in budgets, and the empowerment of women and men to work in solidarity to advance the women’s agenda are critical for the achievement of gender equality and women’s empowerment.

I would like to thank the board members and staff for their passion, commitment and diligence. You are a great team and with you we have achieved incredible results. I greatly appreciate and value the many partners that we have worked with during the year, thank you for your tenacity, strategic insight, and patient engagement on this journey that is enabling us to advance the women’s agenda as a vehicle to a Uganda that is more just and equitable.

Aluta Continua!

PATRICIA MUNABI BABIIHA
Executive Director
Forum for Women in Democracy (FOWODE)
2015: FOWODE makes 20

In good company as the world celebrated the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action which was pivotal in our foundation, for 20 years FOWODE has been a trailblazer in promoting gender equality and women’s leadership in the country. We are invigorated by the new global goals to pursue our mission and we have learnt that gender equality and women’s empowerment before the law does not always translate into practice. It will take more advocacy, political commitment and responsiveness to empower men and women to shape and fulfill their destinies.

The 20th Anniversary of the Beijing Declaration

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which was adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women in September 1995, initiated the most progressive blueprint ever documented for advancing women’s rights. FOWODE was in attendance during the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in New York which commenced on 10th March 2015; and whose theme was ‘Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action’. CSW addressed opportunities for achieving gender equality and women’s empowerment in the post 2015 development agenda. FOWODE featured specifically at a side event: Role of Women Leaders in the Post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals Agenda.

Launch of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The SDGs were launched on 25th September, 2015. They are an ambitious global agenda aimed at transforming the world.

Goal 5 of the SDGs: To achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

This is a stand-alone goal, an emphasis on why gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, are a critical pre-condition for poverty reduction, economic growth and social development.
3 CORE AREAS FOR CHANGE

We are relentless in our pursuit for a just and fair society where women and men equally participate in and benefit from decision making processes.

1. We work to strengthen women’s voice and promote gender justice in the political and economic arena.

2. We build the leadership of young people to advance women’s rights and foster accountable institutions.

3. We aim to influence economic policy so that it is representative and responsive to women’s rights.

In 2015, we actively worked in 10 districts: Amuru, Napak, Kibaale, Masindi Busia, Rukungiri, Kabale, Mityana, Luweero, and Gulu; and also got cumulative results from closed projects in the districts of Lyantonde, Wakiso and Amuria.

WOMEN HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- **A Voice:** To be heard
- **Power:** To influence change
- **Resources:** To make and control their money
- **Representation:** To be a part of the decisions that matter to them

STRATEGIES THAT GUIDE OUR PRACTICE

- Community Empowerment
- Capacity Development
- Policy Engagement
- Institutional Development
- Strategic Partnerships & Alliances
OUR IMPACT

Awareness & Advocacy

- **7,505** (4,189 females that constitute 56% and 3,316 males that constitute 44%) community members were reached in the 10 districts during 2015.

- **Together with citizens in 7 districts we created 14 new Village Budget Clubs.** A total of 51 vibrant Village Budget Clubs comprised of 1,000 (60% females and 40% males) members in the districts of Amuru, Napak, Kibaale, Masindi, Busia, Rukungiri, Kabaale, Mityana, Luweero, and Gulu were facilitated to influence policies, plans and budgets for improved gender responsive service delivery.

Preparing Future Leaders

- **5 Leadership Advisory Desks were established** in 5 districts of Rukungiri, Kabale, Napak, Kibuku and Gulu to enhance women’s ability to participate in political and governance processes for effective women’s representation. The desks acted as reference and expert points where aspiring leaders were mentored and citizens obtained pertinent legal documents on electoral processes. The Leadership Advisory Desks fostered cooperation between candidates across the political parties.

- **15 mentoring sessions** were conducted under the LADs in the 5 districts, with 3 sessions held in each of the districts. 155 women were mentored (30 in Kabale, 21 in Rukungiri, 40 in Kibuku, 32 in Napak and 32 in Gulu).

- **We trained up to 1500 women candidates** for Parliamentary, district and sub-County seats and contributed to their readiness for the upcoming elections.
Women's Visibility, Actions & Voices Amplified in the 2016 General Elections

- **FOWODE conducted 4 regional launches** of the Women's Manifesto that targeted 240 women aspiring for leadership in the elections at the local level. In attendance were technocrats, representatives of religious and traditional institutions, key opinion leaders, business enterprises and Civil Society Organisations.
- **Support to women’s caucuses in district councils across 20 districts** we worked to support the advancement of women’s priorities within their legislatures.

Pre & Post Budget Dialogues

- **165 (68 females, 97 males)** citizens were mobilised in Busia and Mityana and engaged in the national budget discussions. Participants both listened to and interrogated the budget and assessed the extent to which community needs were prioritised. Focus was on the government’s commitments to promote reproductive health as well as other social and economic development plans.
- **8 community members and health workers** from Busia and Mityana were supported to attend the national level budget advocacy event.

Media Platforms Used

- **Mass Media:** 2750 media articles were published, 64 radio and TV talk shows held and 3012 SMS advocating for enhanced gender equality and equity.
- **Social Media:** We continued to use the influence of social media gaining 10,862 visits and 1,965 new followers.
- **Publications:** 1000 copies of the 2014 annual report and 120 Facebook posts on women’s rights issues.
In perspective: OUR CONTEXT

Key Contextual Issues that Influenced the Gender Equality, Women’s Empowerment and Governance & Democracy Agenda

Constitutional Amendments


Proposals made by the women:

- Article 32: Assure parity in elective politics in accordance with the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Political Governance: 1 woman and 1 man representative for each district.
- Article 63 (3): Support affirmative action for women by increasing funding to women MPs and women councillors to make it proportionate to their area of representation and re-demarcate constituencies according to the population size.

AT STAKE: Four percent (4%) of those who contested directly for elected seats in the 2011 elections were women, (Electoral Commission, 2010). Dismal couldn’t describe how small this number is.

More than ever before, the respective political parties need to revisit how women leaders contesting on their party ticket are supported for success. Investments include knowledge, skills, techniques, and resources to enable more women candidates secure leadership positions in Parliament and local councils.

Presidential and Parliamentary Election (Amendment) Acts


Nomination fees were hiked for Presidential aspirants. Nomination fees were hiked for Presidential and parliamentary candidates.

AT STAKE: If women make up the majority of the low income earners, this amendment creates an outright barrier for women’s participation in the decision making and political arena of their country.

“...it is imperative to make the connection between the work we do on gender equality and women’s leadership, and the democracy and governance environment in which we are operating.

In our purview, the operating environment shapes and defines the rights and spaces that women occupy. Engaging deeply in governance and political discourse is therefore a priority.”

Solome Nakaweesi,
NGO Bill 2015

**ISSUE:** The Non-Governmental Organisations Bill, 2015 was developed aiming to repeal and replace the Non-Governmental Organisations’ Act Cap. 113.

**AT STAKE:** The NGO Bill falls far short of the NGO Policy that government developed in 2010, the Constitution of Uganda and other international best practices.

- Over 12,000 NGOs in Uganda will be required to re-register in 6 months. This is impractical and is suspect of an intentional plan to de-register these organisations for good.
- The definition of NGOs in the Bill is erroneous as it focuses only on charity and service delivery. Categorisation of NGOS is also inaccurate.
- Excessive administration discretion is given to the NGO Board in the bill including the power to dissolve and deregister NGOs and deny NGOs registration with no recourse to independent tribunals or even the court of law. The bill would also give the NGO Board leeway to search NGO offices without notice implying criminality on the part of the NGOs.
- The NGO Bill introduces a Dual Liability principle which punishes an NGO and its staff for the same offence without any corporate veil. This is unprecedented and translates into double jeopardy.

**ACTION:** The Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs tasked by Parliament to review the NGO Bill, including public consultations and benchmarking Uganda’s law against Parliament’s Human Rights Check-list made comprehensive recommendations. The NGO Sector fully supports the Committee Report and urges parliament to take on its recommendations to improve the NGO Bill.

Amendments in the Public Finance and Management Act, 2015 (PFMA)

**ISSUE:** The Public Finance Bill 2012 passed in December 2014, was enacted in March 2015 as the Public Finance and Management Act 2015.

Starting in 2011, FOWODE advocated the need to include a Certificate for Gender and Equity in the Public Finance and Management Act to ensure sector compliance to gender responsive budgeting.

The requirement of a Certificate of Gender and Equity will ensure that all sectors make an effort to develop budgets that equally benefit both men and women.

**AT STAKE:** Barely six months after the Bill was passed by Parliament and assented to by the President, cabinet tabled 8 amendments in the PFMA 2015.

Critical among the amendments was to repeal the Certificate of Gender and Equity under Section 13, subsection (15) (g) which provides for a certificate to be issued by the Minister responsible for Finance in consultation with the Equal Opportunities Commission (i) Certifying that the policy statement is gender and equity responsive and (ii) Specifying measures taken to equalize equal opportunities for men, women, persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups.

**WINS:** A repeal would have been unacceptable, a
direct reversal of milestone commitments to better planning, budgets and services that accounts for women and men alike. It would have erased more than a decade of advocacy and lobbying efforts.

FOWODE through her advocacy lobbied Members of Parliament including Finance and Budget Committees, Gender Responsive Budget champions in parliament to reject the proposed amendments. We used every opportunity including parliamentary engagements with sectoral committees, as well as radio and TV interactive talk shows. This one month campaign was successful. The House rejected the proposal and the CGE was retained in the PFMA 2015.

**National Development Plan**

**ISSUE:** The second National Development Plan [NDP II], 2015/16 to 2019/20 themed ‘Strengthening Uganda’s competitiveness for sustainable wealth creation, employment and inclusive growth’ was launched by the Government of Uganda on 11th June 2015.

This plan is the second in a series of six 5-year plans contributing to Vision 2040. NDP II prioritised agriculture, tourism, infrastructure, mineral, oil and gas, and human capital development.

**AT STAKE:** The NDP is critical because it guides and therefore influences government’s policy decisions. We actively participated in national consultation processes so as to ensure provision of a relatively enabling policy framework and to advocate for the integration of gender in the NDP.

**Operationalisation of the Public Order Management Act (POMA)**

**ISSUE:** Misinterpretation of the POMA by the police leading to increased curtailment of fundamental freedoms of assembly and association.

**AT STAKE:** In practice, operationalisation of this Act brought along unforeseen and unlawful expectations which to an extent, affected organising.

**Violence Against Women in Politics**

**ISSUE:** Women’s participation was severely curtailed and their dignity trampled on by police brutality.

At the beginning of the presidential campaigns, the country witnessed a horrifying incident of police brutality. The police undressed a female supporter of one of the presidential candidates while they were on the way to the opening of a party office.

This action was seen as intended to further increase fear among the populace, thereby undermining their participation in the electoral processes. As a result, women activists among others protested, and called for systems to be put in place to ensure women’s protection during the pre and post-election period.

**AT STAKE:** Violence against women in politics undermines their rights and dignity causing women to shun politics and yet it is critical that they are part of the political space for leadership, voice and agency.

**Internal Factors**

**Governance:** FOWODE holds herself to a high standard of accountability and transparency guided by the organisation’s constitution.

Per its mandate, an Annual General Meeting was held with the members to review progress on the achievement of the organisation’s strategic goals. Led by the board chairperson, the Board of Directors and leadership discussed achievements, challenges and future plans.

**Enhanced Policy Environment:** We are committed to healthy internal policies that help nurture an effective organisation.

The organisation’s board approved the HIV/AIDS workplace policy and developed a Gender Policy and an Anti-Corruption Policy.
STRATEGY 1:
We shall harness the collective voice, foster community participation and stimulate grassroots-led gender justice and women’s rights advocacy.

Chapter 1: BE EMPOWERED

Communities of Hope Demand for Accountability

Since 2008, the Village Budget Clubs have been an outstanding grassroots model advocating for accountable leadership, pro-poor and gender responsive, as well as equitable service delivery.

VBCs are master mobilisers who reach out to their communities to garner further support for improved service delivery; they stress the correct balance between rights and responsibilities.

FOWODE builds the skills, knowledge, competence and capacity of VBCs in transformative leadership, the gender dimensions of planning and budgeting, service delivery plus demanding accountability from local government.

PROMISING RESULTS

51 vibrant village budget clubs comprised of 1,000 (60% females and 40% males) members in 10 districts of Amuru, Napak, Kibale Masindi Busia, Rukungiri, Kabaale, Mityana, Luweero, and Gulu were supported.

VBCs raised awareness on the right to demand better public services. A total of 7,505 (4,189 females and 3,316 males that constitute 44%) community members were reached in the 10 districts during 2015.

Influencing policies and programmes for improved service delivery. Through monitoring of services, community dialogues, interface meetings and radio talk shows, there was increased community participation in demanding for local government accountability.

I felt much empowered when I was equipped with knowledge about my roles as a Ugandan citizen. I did not know that it was my duty to observe and monitor service delivery in our health centres. I pledge to continue to monitor the schools and health centres.
and use all the meetings available to raise the issues I find out.”

Kenyena Serina, Kyaruyenje parish, Buhunga sub-County
A member of Kakamba VBC group.

**Education**

VBCs raised awareness on the importance of girl child education, supporting school lunches to foster a child friendly environment that helps children stay in school.

**PROMISING RESULTS**

67 girls were enrolled during the year compared to 26 girls that enrolled in the previous year (2014) in Kentare Primary School, Kabale district.

50% of parents pack lunch for their children so they can attend afternoon classes. Before the VBCs assessment of school attendance at Maziba and Birambo primary schools of Kabale district, less than 10 parents packed lunch for their children. As a result, pupils in Upper Primary who were mandated to study the whole day, would only study half the day. Through the community dialogues and interface meetings, a resolution was made for all parents at Maziba Primary School to pack lunch for their children.

**Reducing teacher absenteeism.** Parents of Birambo Primary School resolved to each contribute UGX 100,000 per term for the construction of 4 staff quarters to reduce the teacher absenteeism. By the time of the monitoring visit, the first collection had been used to build the foundation and currently, the building is underway.

**Livelihoods**

Close to 4000 families were nearly cheated out of their livelihood when VBC members visited Mpeefu sub-County in Kibaale district to assess how residents were benefiting from the government funded Wealth Creation Project in agriculture.

**PROMISING RESULTS**

The VBCs discovered that many families had not received anything. The LCIII Chairperson claimed the provisions were insufficient; the VBCs reported the matter immediately to the army officers in charge of the programme in the area. The officers acted quickly and distributed potatoes, beans and cows to the families under the supervision of the VBCs.

**Maternal Health**

**PROMISING RESULTS**

When the VBCs in Pakanyi sub-County - Masindi visited Kyatiri Health Centre III in November 2014, they discovered that the maternity section was nonfunctional due to a collapsed ceiling and a partly collapsed roof. Pregnant mothers were not able to deliver at the centre.

The VBCs requested a meeting with the District Health Officer, and the CAO who acquired funds through budget re-allocations for repair of the ceiling and roof.

By the time the VBCs carried out a follow up visit, the number of visits at the maternity ward had increased from an average of 10 women per day to 35 women per day. There was an increase in deliveries. For instance, in March, 67 deliveries were registered; in September, they were 85 and by mid October 2015, when the data was collected they had already registered 79 deliveries.
In Busia, under the Public Financing for Reproductive Health project, VBCs worked to improve service delivery from health workers in Hyusule and Lumino HC IIs by ensuring they kept time and focused on clients during their work hours. The hygiene and sanitation in the maternity ward also improved.

In Mityana a budget line for family planning was introduced as a result of VBC advocacy efforts at sub-County and district level meetings. At Maanyi HC III, UGX 100,000 was allocated per quarter for Family Planning services.

A health worker at Kibengo HC III, Luweero district, was transferred due to charging patients illegal fees and poor client care. This issue was presented during an interface meeting where community members expressed their distress to the district health office representative.

Sanitation & Hygiene
PROMISING RESULTS

If one were getting ready to deliver a baby at Mihembero HC III - Masindi district, access to clean water would be a problem. The water tank was faulty and there was no borehole nearby. As soon as the VBCs discovered this, they ensured that the administration repaired it.

In Rukungiri district, VBCs partnered with community members and the district local government and other civil society partners, to construct 5 pit latrines at Kakamba Primary School.

In Bamunanika sub-County, Luweero district, parents of St. Mugagga Primary School contributed 50% of the required funds towards the construction of a pit latrine at the school. The VBCs were able to identify pit latrine sharing with teachers as a key cause of girls’ absenteeism from school. Parents also helped in the construction of a new facility.
Stepping Up Civic Consciousness

Amidst the election activities in the country, FOWODE increased civic education to enable communities fulfill their roles, rights and responsibilities in electoral democracy, development and governance.

“We need to address the issue of vote rigging squarely. If it is at the ballot box during vote counting that the votes are stolen, I don’t then see why citizens themselves do not engage in Parallel Vote Tallying*,”

Participant, Rukiga sub-County

* Parallel Vote Tabulation (PVT) is a tool to reinforce public confidence in the election process, foster election integrity and contribute to election peace.

Refresher trainings for civic action mentors. 50 civic action mentors in 10 districts were re-oriented on voter education focusing on citizens engagement in the electoral process.

Enhanced community awareness on voting rights in 10 districts. Ahead of the 2016 elections, we raised awareness on the rights and responsibilities of citizens to engage in the electoral processes.

In the communities where we work, this education process was found to be well worth it. The trainings enabled participants realise their capability to lead and contribute to changes in their community. As a result, some civic action mentors joined the race for political office, others signed up to promote and support their candidates of choice for 2016.

Chart 1: FOWODE’s civic education programme’s reach in various communities
“I am not going to accept to be bribed for votes. I am now going to mobilise citizens to reject leaders that seek to buy votes and guide women on the qualities of good leaders and thus make an informed decision on the kinds of leaders to vote for come 2016 elections.”

Namutebi Ruth, Zirobwe sub-County, Luweero district

“I will talk to my fellow women in my saving group that during voting day we should guard our votes against rigging and that votes must be counted and announced at the polling station in the presence of all stakeholders and media should be given certified tabulation and tally sheets.”

Nankya Mary, Bamunanika sub-County, Luweero district

“I am not going to accept to be bribed for votes. I am now going to mobilise citizens to reject leaders that seek to buy votes and guide women on the qualities of good leaders and thus make an informed decision on the kinds of leaders to vote for come 2016 elections.”

Namutebi Ruth, Zirobwe sub-County, Luweero district

“I would go to my polling station; I find that my name did not appear, may be I move on to the next station. Reaching there it would be the same story, and I would end up not voting. I now know my number, I will cast my vote. It’s because of FOWODE that am no longer shy. My vote means a lot.”

Mbabazi Fausta, Muhooro sub-County, Kibaale district

“I will not allow to be taken for granted now that I have the knowledge on the Local Government Legal and Policy Framework. I know how it is supposed to be conducted and how to participate in the budgeting processes. I will make sure that I am a part of the budgeting process in my sub-County now starting from the village budgeting to the sub county budgeting.”

Adong Tereza, Amuru sub-County
Citizens’ Commitments for Electoral Democracy

1. Commitment not to sell their votes in exchange for money and/or handouts.

2. Commitment to use all spaces available to clamour for free and fair elections in general elections.

3. Commitment by majority of the voter education mentees to start and or improve on their income generating activities so as to improve their household incomes. This will reduce on their vulnerability and exposure to manipulation by wealthy politicians who buy votes but cannot be held accountable.

4. Commitment by majority direct beneficiaries of the voter education exercise to educate other non-beneficiary community members so that this effort can have a ripple effect.

Financial Empowerment

Civic education meetings raised awareness on the rights and opportunities to create wealth in Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs).

PROMISING RESULTS

In Butuntumula sub-County - Luweero district, Hope Savings Group emerged. The group has since grown and is planning to register as a cooperative society after the first saving cycle to expand their opportunities. It comprises of 13 farmers and 17 business people with UGX 2.5 million saved, members are now borrowing to boost their business and gardens, purchasing household assets and paying school fees. The group plans to purchase tents and chairs for hire to generate additional income.

Hope Saving Group members balancing books of accounts worth UGX 2.5 million due to FOWODE’s civic education knowledge.
When Emily’s husband travelled to Kampala to find a job, they never heard from him again. This housewife and mother of 3, was desperate.

Prepared for Success

It was around the same time when VBCs approached me to join a FOWODE supported vulnerable women’s group. I didn’t know what the price of participating would be, but I allowed myself the chance to see where the journey would take me. After attending FOWODE’s enterprise development trainings, I began thinking about starting a business I could do.

I saved some money, which I used to pay tuition for my tailoring course; later I bought my own sewing machine. I soon realised that sweaters had ready market. I therefore worked hard and raised some money, which my brother topped up, and I bought another sewing machine to make sweaters. I later joined the FOWODE Village Budget Club and I am now very aware of my rights and responsibilities as a citizen. At the health centre, I no longer allow to be delayed or mistreated because I know where and how to complain. In my community, I am involved in the issues. Whenever we visit schools, I use it as an opportunity to interact with my children’s teachers to find out how my children are performing. I no longer miss school Parents Teachers Association (PTA) general meetings because that is good platform for me to participate in planning for our school.”

Emily Owembabazi
Transforming Lives

My husband used to sell all of the harvest and leave me in the house without enough food and he would then drink all the money away. Whenever I would ask him where the money was, he would beat me up and threaten to send me away from home. This continued even after we returned home from the refugee camp. I eventually confided in my neighbor and she told me about the Village Budget Club (VBC) savings group they were setting up. Her husband was also a member and he talked to my husband and convinced him that it was a good idea that we both joined the Oaa Saving group in 2014, a VBC initiated savings association.

During the VBC meetings, the Chairperson talked about family relations and the importance of working together; and slowly I noticed a change in my husband’s attitude; he started returning home early and he consulted me on issues relating to money which wasn’t the case before. We started planning together and we invested our savings from the crops we sold and in 2014, we bought 2 oxen. With this livestock and another 2 oxen which we borrowed from the savings group, we planted 2 gardens of rice and groundnuts. The proceeds helped us put all our children in school now and we can afford to buy what they need to improve their education. In November 2014, I was elected to become the Chairperson for the Savings group and my husband was really proud of me.”

Grace Amony, Lamogi sub-County

Grace Amony, a 42 year old mother and a former refugee used to grow crops with her husband during their stay in a refugee camp.

Lamogi sub-County VBC Savings Group
The Self-Sustaining Village Budget Club Model

In the spotlight - Kyabuhangwa VBC, Kabale district:

- Kyabuhangwa VBC has a revolving fund, an Irish potato growing project and a savings and credit scheme which still brings them together. The club is legally registered and positioned to engage in other development opportunities.

- Coffee planting: They benefited from the coffee planting project supported by government which donated a spray pump.

- Accountability: They carry out community mobilisation through local theatre and existing structures like churches and community groups. They have collected signatures petitioning Kabale district council to investigate the construction of Kyogo bridge and have received a positive response.

- They hosted the monitors from Transparency International and participated in budget conferences both at the sub-County and district. They have also continued facilitating PTA meetings and carry out regular monitoring of schools and health facilities. The group utilises the FOWODE monitoring tools and they share reports with the sub-County leadership.

Even after the projects have closed we are encouraged that the VBCs have found sustainable ways to support their livelihoods and continue with the agenda of ensuring good governance and accountability among duty bearers.
Chapter 2: BE EQUIPPED

Gender & Economic Policy (GEP) Training
As part of her capacity development initiatives, Forum for Women in Democracy (FOWODE) organised a Gender and Economic Policy (GEP) training for 20 Civil Society Organisations’ representatives and local government officials. The objective of the training was to create a pool of gender budgeting experts that would in turn pass on the information to other stakeholders at the grassroots levels.

TOPICS: Gender and sexuality; Gender responsive budgeting; Unpaid care work; Feminist Economics and Social Justice among others.

THOUGHTS ON TRAINING
Using a gender lens in formulating government policies is essential because these guidelines play a strategic role in shaping social and economic development.

For many participants, the term Feminist Economics was incomprehensible but at the end of the session they realised that mainstream economics ignores the engendered dynamics of many economics systems like labor markets and because men are perceived as bread-winners, this perception hinders women from bargaining for better wages.

Leadership Advisory Desks
5 Leadership Advisory Desks were established in 5 districts of Rukungiri, Kabale, Napak, Kibuku and Gulu to enhance women’s ability to participate in political and governance processes for effective women’s representation. The desks acted as reference and expert points where aspiring leaders were mentored and citizens obtained pertinent information including legal documents on electoral processes.

Relevant publications on leadership were availed at each of the LADs in the 5 districts including; The National Constitution; the Local Government Act, Domestic Violence Act; Domestic Violence Gender & Economic Policy (GEP) Training

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Regulations; the Parliamentary Elections Act, and the Electoral Commission Road Map - highlighting dates for picking nomination papers and what needed to be done before nominations.

**Mentoring Sessions**

155 women were mentored in 15 mentoring sessions conducted under the LADs in the 5 districts, with 3 sessions held in each of the districts.

The sessions were conducted by women trainers who also doubled as the Leadership advisors, providing direct advice throughout the campaign period. Candidates shared major challenges faced including the monetisation of politics; vote rigging; discrimination along religion and marital status; mudslinging; falsehoods; defamation and hate speech; bad weather; bad public impression about women in politics vis-à-vis integrity; betrayal by agents who leak campaign secrets and strategies, as well as interchanging of ballots during tallying (for the primary elections).

**Assessing the Capacity of 661 Women Candidates**

FOWODE conducted a mapping exercise of 661 women candidates in 12 districts. The women were contesting for positions of district councillors, sub-County councillors, mayors, and Members of Parliament. The exercise also involved an assessment of capacity needs for the women on election and campaign management skills.

Key knowledge gaps revealed during the mapping exercise included:
- development of a campaign manifesto,
- formation of a campaign team,
- communication skills,
- organisational skills,
- campaign strategies,
- vote guarding and counting,
- activities for the polling day,
- team building,
- election fundraising,
- community mobilisation skills,
- confidence building,
- assertiveness,
- stress management and public relations.

661 women candidates were reached through mapping and knowledge assessment.

**Trainings on Running an Effective Campaign for Aspiring Women Leaders**

FOWODE enhanced the capacities of 480 (430 at district, 50 at national level) aspiring women leaders in 10 districts. The women aspirants acquired knowledge, skills and strategies for successful engagement in the 2016 general elections.

**TOPICS:**
- Gender and development;
- Women and leadership;
- Women’s role and participation in decision making in Uganda;
- Development of a personal profile and manifesto;
- Developing a campaign team;
- Designing a campaign message;
- Campaign skills and strategies for running a successful campaign;
- Developing a campaign budget and fundraising for campaigns;
- Communication and public speaking skills; and as well as the development of a pro-people and gender sensitive manifesto to convince the electorate of their political agenda once one assumes power.

Trainings enabled women leaders to develop gender sensitive and pro-people manifestos that contributed to their success at the party primaries and they continued to use these as the elections drew closer.

As a result, women aspirants persisted in the race amidst the politically hostile and financially constrained environment.
Women should not sit and relax waiting for the affirmative seats; they should instead push for direct seats; work on personal development by going back to school for further studies and avoid negative attitude towards their opponents after losing elections by working together. Always make your own decision to stand, don’t be pushed by your party to stand against someone.”

Atimango Christine,
Aspiring Member of Parliament,
Gulu Municipality.

I thank FOWODE for training and mentoring women candidates. It has made me firm to compete with men without fear due to skills gained during mentoring sessions. I am positive that I will win men and become District Councillor on direct seat in LUWERO TC. Thank you very much FOWODE and I request for continuous trainings to fellow women for better transformed societies.”

Halima Sonko, District Councillor,
Luweero TC Direct Seat.
20 women leaders were profiled from 15 districts. Through profiling, FOWODE provided technical support and visibility for the aspiring women leaders to highlight the women’s issues they are advocating for; such as promoting girl child education and women’s economic empowerment. 15 of them aimed at direct seats and 5 on affirmative action.

6 of the profiled women contested for political leadership for the very first time, while others moved up the leadership ladder from lower positions to higher positions.

The different positions on which the profiled women contested included 12 for Members of Parliament; 2 district and sub-County chairpersons; 1 for mayoral position and 4 for district councillors.
Chapter 3: BE ENGAGED

Keeping in step with the gender equation in the country means we remain intentional about involvement in policy and political processes on current and emerging women’s issues to promote gender equitable budgets, policies, legislation and programmes.

2015 Engagements

PRE & POST BUDGET DIALOGUES

The dialogues provided a platform for awareness raising and facilitating discussion on government commitments to improving services delivery and family planning in particular, and equipped citizens with the right information when holding government accountable in family planning financing decisions.

The budget listen-in sessions targeted CSOs, grass roots community members, representatives of government, policy makers, private sector as well as citizens who were engaged in monitoring government service delivery. The budget dialogues fostered citizens’ participation in budget processes.

Family planning: A bid to enhance citizens’ participation in budget processes and advocacy for increased financing for family planning.

FOWODE successfully organised pre and post budget dialogues at local level to allow citizens to participate in the national budget processes during the year.

165 (68 females and 97 males) citizens mobilised in Busia and Mityana.

They engaged in the national budget discussions, and were able to comprehend government commitments on promoting reproductive health as well as other social and economic developments in the country.

8 community members and health workers from Busia and Mityana were supported to attend the national level budget advocacy event.

STRATEGY 3: Policy Engagement

We shall maintain our dialogue with the government to ensure that fiscal policies and budgeting processes address gender inequality and promote women’s empowerment.
Parliamentarians Involved in a Debate on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs)

In 2015, FOWODE convened over 50 members of Parliament, CSOs, scientists (animal and plant breeders) and the media to deliberate on issues concerning modern biotechnology.

The meeting was intended to provide information especially to Legislators to appreciate the impact of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) on the lives of Ugandans especially women farmers so that consensus is built around the controversies still surrounding the GMO debate.

This would inform decision making processes when legislating the Biotechnology and Biosafety Bill 2012.

However, the bill was marred with gaps and ambiguities that needed to be addressed before being re-tabled on the floor of Parliament.

Discussions on GMOs demonstrated that generally Ugandans especially farmers had grave fears about the impacts of biotechnology on their lives and on agricultural production which is a way of life for so many.

To demystify the fears and to provide clarity on whether GMO technology should be supported, adopted and a regulatory framework put in place to facilitate the safe development and application of biotechnology, FOWODE hosted 2 senior scientists from the National Research Organisation (NARO) and Makerere University’s College of Agricultural and Environment Sciences who shared their research findings on the subject matter and gave detailed presentations on the impacts modern biotechnology has on farmers, animals and on people generally - consumers of genetically modified products.

Civil Society Recommendations to MPs on the National Biotechnology & Biosafety Bill, 2012

- Ensure the Bill addresses the issue of conflict of interest.
- The Bill should also strengthen the regulation component by focusing more on protection of Ugandan interests than unilateral release of GMOs.
- The Bill should be re-drafted to ensure that GMOs and pesticides are handled together.
- The Bill should adhere to both the legal & technical processes as it is being re-crafted.
- The Bill should have stronger and comprehensive punitive penalties for both individuals and corporate developers of GMOs who go against the law among others.
The Women’s Manifesto

In 2015, the women of Uganda under the Women Democracy Group (WDG) of which FOWODE is a member, launched the women’s manifesto. It is a political document that sets out the concerns of women in Uganda and a useful tool for holding leaders accountable to the advancement of gender equality.

It aims to:

• Contribute to the legacy of good governance by providing a guide for voters, candidates and political actors towards prioritizing women’s concerns, interests and aspirations.

• Persuade government, political parties, organisations and stakeholders to prioritize people-centered democracy and the interests of women in the development process.

• Raise awareness about gender issues among the various political players; as well as mobilizing the electorate to actively participate in all processes that promote national democracy and providing a platform for negotiation between women and the various political candidates, parties and organisations.

The launch of the women’s manifesto laid a platform for women from different backgrounds to share their political views. FOWODE in particular, called for focus on theme five that addresses women, politics and decision-making. Representatives from various political parties pledged to consider what was written in the women’s manifesto.

FOWODE’s launch of the Women’s Manifesto focused on:

- Women’s health
- Women’s land and empowerment
- Women and education
- Women’s economic empowerment
- Women’s political and decision making power regardless of their political affiliations

240 Women in 4 districts participated in the launch of the Women’s manifesto.

I have learnt what a manifesto is and how important it is to the electorate in winning or losing a vote. I can now revise my manifesto to fit in the 5 issues 2016 - 2021 and I will win.”

Hon. Mwanakaro,
Aspiring Woman MP, Mbale district

If proper accountability is done, the women issues will be minimal.”

This statement was made when women leaders pointed out that accountability should be done especially after election and not before elections given that in the last five years (2011-2015) Uganda had lost more than 23 trillion shillings

Many community members always ask for bribes from their political leaders who tell them that if they do not have money, then they would not vote them. Proper accountability should start with the electorates by saying ‘NO’ to commercialisation of elections. Many politicians use a lot of money bribing voters and when they gain power, they jeopardize service delivery.”

Woman Councillor, Butaleja
Advocacy for Increased Resource Allocation for Women

FOWODE engaged legislators in discussions on the importance of integrating gender in the sectors of education, health and agriculture.

**EDUCATION:** 4 out of 5 proposed concerns were adopted by Parliament that included: UPE capitation grants and conflicting enrollment figures; special needs education; high dropout rates and poor quality education.

**HEALTH:** All the proposed concerns were adopted such as: Funding gap for staffing in the sector; Enhancement of primary health care; Prioritisation of the National Health Insurance Scheme and Provision of Mama Kits (delivery kits).

**AGRICULTURE:** 3 out of 5 proposals were adopted by Parliament and these included: Agricultural Financing, Access to Agricultural Extension & Advisory Services (AEAS), see Chart 2.

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**Providing the Evidence**

During 2015, FOWODE ensured that her policy engagement work was evidence based and continued to generate knowledge to support our advocacy work.

An audit on sector adherence to the Budget Call Circular on Gender and Equity Budgeting was conducted.

10 sectors of health, education, accountability, agriculture, energy and mineral development, justice, law and order, social development, tourism, water and environment, works and transport were analyzed. From this audit report, 10 issue briefs were developed and published.

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**Chart 2:** Percentage of recommendations adopted vis-à-vis those rejected by parliament.
## Level of Gender & Equity Adherence per Sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Per sector level of gender &amp; equity performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Health</td>
<td>Total sector adherence was 62.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Education</td>
<td>Adherence rose to 62.5% for 2013/14 from 50% for FY2011/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Agriculture</td>
<td>Total sector adherence was 75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Accountability</td>
<td>Null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Energy &amp; Mineral Development</td>
<td>Low compliance of 50% to the BCC guidelines with no budgets and output indicators for gender, equity and HIV/AIDS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Justice, Law &amp; Order (JLOS)</td>
<td>Adherence increased 62.5% in 2013/14 from 50% in previous years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Social Development</td>
<td>High level of adherence at 87.5% to the BCC guidelines for gender, equity and HIV/AIDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Tourism &amp; Trade</td>
<td>Adherence levels were low at 25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Water &amp; Environment</td>
<td>Adherence levels were at 75% in all financial years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Works &amp; Transport</td>
<td>Adherence levels were low at 25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 3: Level of gender and equity adherence per sector.
Chapter 4: BE PROGRESSIVE

‘Women Positioning for 2016’: FOWODE’S Annual General Meeting

The FOWODE Annual General Meeting (AGM) that was held in 2015 brought together members of the FOWODE family and staff. The theme for the annual general meeting was ‘Women Positioning for 2016’.

The keynote speech provided the opportunity for reflection and strategising towards strengthening FOWODE’s positioning in advocating for women’s rights in 2016. Different generations of women’s rights activists were represented: the old, the middle aged and the young.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT: A Skewed National Budget

Capitation grant is only UGX 10,000 per child  |  Health Centre III gets only UGX 450,000 per quarter  |  State House spends UGX 665,000,000 every day

Increased Visibility for FOWODE

In order to increase visibility of the organisation and her results, FOWODE continued to ensure that her work at the district, national and international level is communicated broadly.

MASS MEDIA: 2750 media articles were published, 64 radio and TV talk shows held and 3012 SMS were disseminated for enhanced gender equality and equity.

SOCIAL MEDIA: We continued to use the influence of social media gaining 10,862 visits and 1,965 new followers this year.

PUBLICATIONS: 1000 copies of the 2014 annual report and 120 Facebook posts on women’s rights issues.

TRANSFORM FOWODE into a centre of women, power, voice, learning, innovation and excellence.
We renewed and nurtured partnerships with like-minded organisations, increased visibility to attract partners to directly engage in our work. This also increased interaction among stakeholders, development partners & policy makers.

FOWODE gained over 1800 Facebook ‘Likes’ in 2015, see chart 4 below.

**Events**

**Womens Leadership and Participation in the Post 2015 Development Agenda.**

In March 2015, two FOWODE staff participated in the development agenda discourse at the the Commission on the Status of Women, United Nations Headquarters in New York.

FOWODE was joined by over 70 women activists, feminists human rights, defenders, philanthropists and actors on gender at the Armenian Centre in the V hall on 12th March 2015 in New York to deliberate on the 20 year Beijing Journey and to look into the future in view of the post 2015 Sustainable development Goals.

The conversations were steered by reknown Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda and Ann Kate, a UN Women Country Representative in Tanzania and moderated by FOWODE’s Executive Director, Patricia Munabi. The session was intended to reflect on the Women’s journey since the 1994 Beijing Platform for Action, the Millennium summit and discuss gains, shortfalls and what could have been done better to leverage accountability to women.

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**Chart 4:** FOWODE’s Facebook ‘Likes’ in 2015

FOWODE Side Event at Convention on the Status of Women (CSW)
Celebrating the Gains of Women and Girls’ Empowerment

FOWODE in partnership with GIZ Uganda held a dialogue in Kampala to reflect on progress made towards achieving MDG 3 (Gender equality). The key note speaker, Dr. Maggie Kigozi along with panelists; Florence Kata and Victoria Sekitoleko recognized the strides that have been made in Uganda and the world for women and girls.

KEY ISSUES:

> Health Gaps: Dr. Kigozi pointed out the deplorable state of maternal health, limited access to family planning, information and barriers to women’s participation in the economy.

> Financing Change: Florence Kaata emphasised the urgency for women’s economic empowerment to enable more women gain the finances they need to maximize development opportunities and ably fulfil their aspirations.

> Dream Big: The conference celebrated the growing number of women role models. Victoria Sekitoleko encouraged young women to reach for the highest possible positions no matter the sector. She noted that only one bank,

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS: Although the positioning of women in politics has improved, women must look beyond politics as they continue to remain in low ranking positions in other sectors

> Women in political parties were encouraged to position themselves as drivers of change internally and externally.

> Legislatures need to be used as platforms to hold leaders accountable to the commitments at the global level such as the Beijing declaration and now the Sustainable Development Goals.

> Economic empowerment is critical to transformation and thus mechanisms for empowering women economically and politically are critical.

> Strategic focus should target young people as an integral part of building the momentum for change.

> Civil society must maintain a keen eye on indicators for implementation of the SDGs if the agenda is to deliver transformation for women.

> Leaders must be held accountable to the commitments made to the post 2015 development agenda with strong focus on the means of implementation.

> The Role of the UN and other development partners in delivering a transformative post 2015 Development Agenda has to be shaped around the need to invest more in women’s rights interventions that address structural barriers, social imbalances and discrimination.

Sharing Successes and Lessons in Gender Responsive Budgeting

FOWODE Executive Director - Patricia Munabi Babiiha, was invited by the UN Women Fund for Gender Equality (UNFGE) as keynote speaker at their donor roundtable meeting that took place in New York on 8th July 2015.

FOWODE was one of the first beneficiaries of the UNFGE in 2010 and received a catalytic grant to support her gender budget work. The Executive Director shared the organisation’s Village Budget Club (VBC) model that has gained popularity for its ability to awaken citizen’s consciousness and to spur them to demand for accountable leadership and improved gender responsive service delivery.

Additionally, she shared the gain of the Certificate of Gender and Equity that was integrated in the Public Finance and Management Act 2015. The advocacy for this certificate started during the implementation of the FGE grant. Prior to the roundtable meeting, Patricia shared the project results, good practices and lessons that have enabled FOWODE sustain this work since 2010 with the UNFGE team at a ‘brown bag’ event.
Uganda Development Bank is led by a woman.

> **Gender Matters:** Men must not be left out. Women and men need to work together with children and youth to break down persistent gender stereotypes that impede an inclusive development process.

**Women’s Expert Dialogue on Identity Justice: Innovations and Change**

Last year, the Ford Foundation reviewed its strategy, developed and launched a new programmatic framework. The Foundation will be working in six programme areas: Civic Engagement and Government; Creativity and Free Expression; Gender, Ethnic, and Racial Justice; Inclusive Economies; Internet Freedom and Youth Opportunity and Learning. FOWODE was privileged to be a part of this as one of the co-hosts of the Women’s Expert Dialogue on Identity Justice.

The event was attended by the Ford Foundation Vice President for Education, Creativity and Free Expression - Hilary Pennington; the Representative for Eastern Africa - Maurice Makoloo, and all the programme officers from the Eastern Africa office. Some of the grantees that have benefitted from the Women’s Rights Programme were also in attendance. The Expert dialogue enabled the identification of opportunities, allies, innovative issues and strategies to advance inclusive identity social justice in the medium and long term.

At the dialogue, the Executive Director of FOWODE - Patricia Munabi shared some of the organisation’s models of work that have enabled her to contribute to the advancement of the Women’s Agenda in Uganda, including the Women’s Caucus model and the Village Budget Club model.

She also emphasised the need to address the critical issues in the governance context to empower transformation in the lives of women. The FOWODE Executive Director also noted that strong partnerships, as well as general operating support, can enable organisations focus on long-term organisational strategies and effectiveness rather than on incremental outputs.

Through the dialogue, we were able to position ourselves as a critical actor in the women’s movement and to demonstrate that investing in women’s rights organisations is the right thing to do.
Chapter 5: BE CONNECTED

FOWODE partners with various institutions and other actors to build a collective voice for national, regional and global advocacy. In order to enhance collective voice on issues of gender, governance and democracy, FOWODE engaged in 108 networking events at local, national, regional and international levels. The meetings provided an opportunity to share the work that we do to enhance our visibility and improve solidarity among development actors.

**Financing for Development Conference, Addis Ababa**

FOWODE together with other African Women’s Groups participated in this timely discourse on financing which was feeding into the conversation on the SDGs. Unless women’s needs are resourced, the transformation of their lives will remain a far cry.

Central to this discourse, were concerns that despite the growing rhetoric on ‘Africa Rising’ based on the current growth performance of African countries, many Africans especially women and youth were not experiencing the implied progress.

For instance, they still confront severe political and socio-economic challenges that prevent and exclude them from participating fully in the labour market. The fulfilment of fundamental rights of women such as sexual and reproductive rights lags behind in many countries and further prevents women from realising their fullest potential and contributing to development efficiently.

**KEY RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- As Africa seeks to shape its future through the African Union’s Agenda 2063, development programmes on the continent aiming at ‘reducing poverty’ need to be assessed for their gendered outcomes especially for women.
- Additionally, women’s human rights need to be included in the ‘shaping and making’ of new development policy initiatives and not just as a residual category.

**STRATEGY 5: Strategic Partnerships & Alliances**

We shall expand the space and opportunities for innovation, learning and influence, on gender responsive economic policy and transformative leadership.
by law enforcement officers and some government officials. During the year our field officers had to continuously explain who we are as an organisation and the link between our work and democracy and good governance.

For instance, in one extreme case where the continuation of our work was at stake, a representative of the board met with the Regional Police Commander in Butaleja district to explain that FOWODE’s engagements were aimed at building women’s leadership and the promotion of accountability by leaders; rather than the misconception that we intended to cause havoc and destruction.

Increased Harassment from the Police Force:

During the campaigns, many of the opposing parties, their employees, and supporters were brutally harassed by the Uganda Police Force under the pretext of keeping the law. While human rights were being violated, the police claimed they were preventing a catastrophe from happening.

Throughout this time, the ruling party was favoured above the other political parties. Because of this, some candidates abandoned their campaign trails; those that persisted did not get to reach all the districts because of the terrible road network and constant interference from the police.
and the army. This was a great blow to the citizenry, they missed out on information that could have guided their decisions on which candidate to elect.

**Shrinking Donor Funding:**
Continued shrinking of donor funds during the year that strained meaningful and sustainable work for the women of Uganda. The Women’s movement like other Non-Governmental Organisations, continues to be challenged by the lack of funds that allow them flexibility for sustainable engagement on critical issues as they emerge.

**Lessons Learned**

**Consistent Strategic Engagement is Critical for Advocacy:** Advocating for gender equality and women’s empowerment requires patience. It entails challenging the status quo; changing mindsets, and getting buy-in from a range of stakeholders.

We have confirmed that high level strategic alliances are critical for advocacy and that once key stakeholders are involved they play a critical role in advancing the women’s agenda.

**Community Structures:** Working through smart or strategic community structures (such as VBCs and CAMs) as well as forming partnerships (with women caucuses) is key to effective project implementation and sustainable initiatives.

No one agency can effectively impact the challenges and complexities involved when fighting or pushing for gender equality and women’s empowerment.

**Clarity of the Mission is Critical:**
Over the years, we have learnt that clarity of our mission is critical as we implement our activities. Our staff and all the people that support us in achieving our mission have had to learn the importance of remaining non-partisan in order to effectively meet our mandate.

**Importance of Collective Voice:**
Together we achieve more. Our collective advocacy enabled us together with other like minded actors to make significant gains in shaping policies that promote women’s rights. The African saying applies to us, ‘If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.’
### Income for the year 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Jewish World Service</td>
<td>480,200,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Urgent Action Fund</td>
<td>18,543,750</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women Democracy Group</td>
<td>367,761,716</td>
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<td>UN Women Uganda</td>
<td>315,912,547</td>
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<td>Research Triangle Institute</td>
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<td>Ford Foundation</td>
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<td>Democratic Governance Facility</td>
<td>369,723,718</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN Women South Sudan</td>
<td>673,842,332</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planned Parenthood Global</td>
<td>300,621,744</td>
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<tr>
<td>GIZ</td>
<td>16,158,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other income (Membership Fees, Speak FM, Interest, Consultancy Fees)</td>
<td>87,685,504</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL GRANTS (Restricted)**: 2,862,150,092

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### Financial Performance: 2015

**Source**: FOWODE Audited financial statements 2015

### Expenditure for the year 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Objectives</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capacity Development</td>
<td>357,201,927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Empowerment</td>
<td>996,888,662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Engagement</td>
<td>163,257,060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Partnerships and Alliances</td>
<td>54,300,791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Development</td>
<td>1,030,004,586</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,601,653,026</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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*Chart 5 (L): Income for the year 2015 in Ugandan Shillings*

*Chart 6 (R): Expenditure for the year 2015 in Ugandan Shillings*
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Solome Nakaweesi
CHAIRPERSON

Lina Zedriga
VICE CHAIRPERSON

Sylvia Namabidde Ssinabulya
TREASURER

Tezira Jamwa
BOARD MEMBER

Beth Mwebaze
BOARD MEMBER

Patricia Munabi Babiha
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND EX-OFFICIO