



THE PARISH DEVELOPMENT MODEL AND HUMAN RIGHTS

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CEFROHT's HRBA Interventions.

With support from GIZ, CEFROHT is currently implementing a project towards integrating a HRBA for women in implementing the Parish Development Model in Kaliro and Mukono districts in Uganda.

Under this project we are conducting a community baseline survey in the 2 sub counties to establish whether communities understand their rights within the PDM and whether parish committees, subcounty and district leaders understand their legal obligations within the PDM implementation. The baseline survey involves 864 women in the 8 parishes in the two districts. (18 women per day per parish per district). The Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) have targeted women. They were eight (8) FGDs bringing together Women in their different categories (Youths, Elderly, PLHIV and PWDs). Making it 16 for the two districts.

Then, a validation meeting will be held involving 30 participants will then be organized with different key stakeholders to validate the report. This will include officials from the National Planning Authority, The Uganda Human Rights Commission, The ministry of local government, and members from the PDM secretariat. After the validation exercise, the report will be launched. 200 copies will be printed for dissemination. This report will be publicized by media strategists through both main and social media. A publication of these findings will also be made in a journal.

And lastly, CEFROHT will carry out 2 (two) capacity building sessions with 50 participants on human rights and the Parish Development Model, and hold (one) interactive dialogues with 25 leaders selected from the eight Parish Development Committees for each district; and conduct a project monitoring session.

Is the Parish Development Model for the vulnerable persons-the furthest behind?

Uganda is currently implementing the PDM under its National Development Plan III, as a Strategy of Government of Uganda for accelerating wealth creation and improving the quality of life of Ugandans **by delivering services closer to all the citizens.**

The minimum package of services to be delivered under the PDM should enable every citizen in Uganda to have access to the basic human needs of: food, clothes, shelter, medicines, security, physical infrastructure (electricity, roads, rail, ICT), health, education and spirituality.

Why a Human Rights Based Approach is a magic bullet for PDM success?

Unequal power relations, economic and social exclusion for women, youths and other vulnerable persons cause human rights violations and poverty. There is a widening income inequality, particularly between women and men, limited access to and high cost of capital and a weakness in systems and gaps in law that do not foster efficiency in public service. Women remain the breadwinners in many of the families and the bead lock for development; and there is an increasing number of females headed families in Uganda.

Women and youths in Uganda are disproportionately affected by covid-19 distortions and economic exclusion. They are not legally empowered to challenge and demand for accountability. ⁵As indicated in the JLSO report above, 90% of the women in Uganda are not legally empowered. Government developments ought therefore to embrace the Human Rights Based Approach with its principles, including, participation, accountability, transparency, equality and non-discrimination, dignity, and rule of law.

The NDP III and the Parish Development Model have been reprioritized due to disruptions of Covid-19 for the suitable socioeconomic transformation with a goal to Increase Average Household Incomes and Improve the Quality of Life of Ugandans. This plan is welcome at a time when the country will be recovering from the COVID-19 Pandemic and set to deliver many Ugandans including the vulnerable especially women from the trap of extreme poverty. For this to happen however, there is need to pursue a human rights-based approach in this implementation. This is because a HRBA empowers rights-holders to claim their rights, and supports duty-bearers to meet their obligations. There is therefore, need to have a paradigm shift towards an enabling legal framework for economic, land and livelihood rights especially in implementing the Parish Development Model.

This situation is more pronounced for women as more households are recently headed by women- whether expressly or impliedly. For example, the Uganda Bureau of Statistics report of 2020 shows that, about one in every ten female children (15-17 years) have ever been married while the corresponding proportion for their male counterparts was less one percent implying the big sex differentials of age at marriage.

There is therefore an urgent need to engage duty bearers at parish/ward level and women on critical principles of human rights ie Participation, accountability, non-discrimination, transparency, human dignity, empowerment, and rule of law in the implementation of the Parish Development Model.

CEFROHT's Preliminary findings.

- (a) Conflicting roles between the Parish Development Committee and the Local Council II: In almost all parishes, the members serving on Local Council II committees are the same people serving on the Parish Development Committees. This is against the human rights principles of transparency, accountability, rule of law and empowerment. There is conflict of interest and it will eventually lead to conflicts and fail the PDM. This is because the Local Council II are supposed to pass policy and do monitoring over the PDC. They can be one and the same. There needs to be checks and balances.
- (b) Minimum requirements to qualify as a beneficiary: what we are finding out is quiet disturbing. The roll out is already discriminatory and it is deeply affecting women. Those who find themselves at the bottom of the pyramid are discriminated. For example, we found out that for one to be considered they need to have land, constructing poultry structures or cattle and yet they cant afford and they will be left out.

- (c) Legal frameworks upon which PDM is hinged not known at all: it is disturbing to learn that although PDM has a legal framework under which it is being implemented, this is not known to the leaders generally and the beneficiaries. So, it is clear that beneficiaries may fail to hold each other and leaders accountable. They may also fail to see and uptake opportunities because the law was not explained to the people and the revolving fund may fail as may beneficiaries may think that the money is a gift.
- (d) Roles and responsibilities not yet understood: duty bearers and rights holders especially women do not yet understand their roles and responsibilities under the PDM.

Recommendations

- (a) Both leaders at parish, subcounty and district level and beneficiaries need to urgently understand the legal obligations of leaders under the parish development model, such that they can hold them accountable. This investigation is critical as it is important that both the beneficiaries(women) and the leaders are engaged jointly to cause social accountability. it always becomes easy for accountability when both parties, that is- the leaders and the rights holders understand their rights and obligations.
- (b) There is therefore an urgent need to engage duty bearers at parish/ward level and women on critical principles of human rights ie Participation, accountability, non-discrimination, transparence, human dignity, empowerment, and rule of law in the implementation of the Parish Development Model.
- (c) This is key because a human rights-based approach helps frame entitlements and rights holders other than beggar recipients. The duty bearers (as implementers (districts, sub counties, municipal councils, town councils and parish level leaders) and women should be capacitated to understand the connection between a human rights-based approach and effective implementation.