

Summary preliminary feedback for Geographical Focus Investigation (GFI) and Training Needs Assessment (TNA) - Holding [Local Governments Accountable Programme](#)

Conducted by: Forum Syd and MS-TCDC, Arusha
Period: 21st - 29th October 2008
Location: Lake Zone – Ukerewe, Magu Districts in Mwanza Region and Karagwe District in Kagera Region.

Purpose of Geographical Focus Investigation and TNA

The purpose of the geographical focus investigation and training needs assessment (TNA) is to inform the programme's pilot training intervention(s) in terms of identification of potential districts for pilot intervention; and relevance of training to local needs and realities in terms of content and scope of training; practicality and usability of training; desired training outcomes; establish key strategic focus areas; identify potential partners and participants as well as register interest and commitment to social accountability and monitoring.

Relevance of training to local needs and realities:

- Enable local communities understand and appreciate the relationship between poverty and bad governance;
- Popular demand for more transparency and accountability;
- Empower marginalized and vulnerable groups to lobby relevant authorities and local institutions to prioritise their needs i.e. reflected in the district budgets and actually reach the marginalized groups

Practicality and usability of training:

- Generate debate on economic rights and plight of local producers
- Build civic literacy; enhance awareness on rights and responsibilities, obligations and entitlements, especially at the grassroots local community levels;
- Bridging the gap between the local authorities / policy-makers and local community members;
- Designing workable outreach mechanisms using existing organisational structures;

Curriculum content and scope of training:

- Rights, roles and responsibilities (including civic engagement approaches and tools)
- Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys (PETS)

- Public Service Delivery Assessment
- Gender Analysis and budgeting tools
- Access to information, advocacy and lobbying techniques (related to social accountability)
- Community-based participatory research and monitoring

Other suggested training areas by respondents:

- Economic rights
- Techniques of Investigative journalism (specific to media persons)
- Entrepreneurship

Note: Pending ranking on training preference

Scope:

- Practical political engagement approaches;
- Communication skills in relation to introducing governance issues at various levels (e.g. persuasion, acceptance and building ownership of project interventions);
- Process facilitation techniques (emphasis on the “how to do” – guidelines / checklists);
- Basic understanding of governance structures, systems and procedures – related bureaucracy at local government level.

Desired training outcomes:

- Citizens have built confidence and started to voice their concerns to relevant authorities and other actors at local level in issues affecting their life;
- Citizens assert influence in demanding for their civic and political, social and economic rights;
- Citizens demand for their right to freedom of access to information; prior-informed consent and transparency;
- Citizens actively engage in local development planning and implementations processes, and participate in monitoring the uses of public resource.

Strategic focus areas:

- In terms of specified project operational areas; ward and village level are suggested. Argument: proximity to majority community members;
- In terms of thematic focus areas, economic rights, land rights; and plight of marginalized groups. Argument: access to market and decision in pricing, ownership rights and land use (land economy); and need of the marginalized groups to be prioritized in planning / budgeting processes

Potential training participants:

At project level:

- Project Coordinator, Project / Program Officer

At community level:

- Paralegals
- Women and Youth leaders (not governmental);
- Community animators or facilitators (present at ward / village level)
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Local Government officials:

- Village Chairperson
- Ward Executive Officer (WEO) and Village Executive Officer (VEO)
- District Planning Officer (DPO) and/or Community Development Officer (CDO)
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Organisations / institutions visited and/or interviewed:

Ukerewe:

- ELCT / BAKWATA
- Chama Cha Walimu Tanzania – CWT (Tanzania Teachers Union)
- CHAWATA
- Media person – (Kajjage – male)
- District Council – DED and DCDO

Magu:

- ELCT
- BAKWATA
- MACSONET
- CHAWATA / SHIVYAWATA
- IHUSHI
- ELVD (also serving on the Community Services Committee)
- Media (two local media persons – male)
- District Council – District Commissioner (DC), DED and DCDO

Karagwe:

- CHEMA
- TCRS – Tanganyika Centre for Refugee Services
- KADERES (community bank network)
- MAVUNO
- Karagwe Rehabilitation Centre (People with Disabilities)
- KARUPOA (CBO)
- Media – Radio Karagwe FM and Radio Fadeco FM
- District Council – DC, DED and DCDO

Note:

- Specific organisations' interest areas in training / programme are pending comprehensive report.
- Suggestions on potential programme partners to be incorporated in comprehensive report.

Identified challenges to capacity building intervention:

- Capacity to implement HLGA project varies widely from organization to organization;
- CSO networks are still very weak in all districts;
- CBOs are invisible and largely subsumed by intermediary community development organisations;
- In Karagwe, there is no functional network for PWDs;

Commitment to issues social accountability and monitoring

- Enthusiasm over proposed training areas
- All community development organisations and FBOs expressed willingness to collaborate on proposed programme interventions; except in Karagwe where BAKWATA is not involved in any mainstream development activities;
- Explicit interest by all interviewed district leaders;

Sustainability of programme outputs (as suggested by respondents)

- Systematic follow-up including mentoring and/or coaching visits;
- Strong consideration for training to be done in respective project operational areas. Argument: More trainees benefiting from first-hand training, and increases chances for a multiplier effect.
- Need for a second level consultation at grassroots community level to assess needs, interests (conducted through community development organisations' network). Argument: establish ownership of project intervention(s).
- Incentives for conducting outreach exercises (i.e. catering, transport, stationary);
- Involvement of local government officials especially, Village chairpersons, WEO and VEO in training

Key observations:

- Concept of social accountability and related public service monitoring is still very new and requires popularizing
- Apparently, expectations for direct Forum Syd funding are rife, despite clarifications about nature of programme intervention;

- Media, though limited in all aspects, remain underutilized. Level of engagement by CSOs is limited to publicity stunts;
- Public information still perceived as a preserve of the local government officials / authorities (for instance, public notice boards at local government offices thought of as being property of local leaders;
- Citizens still largely ignorant of their rights and responsibilities, obligations and entitlements;
- Moderate expectations and outputs given the pilot nature of the intervention(s);
- Women participation during GFI / TNA exercise was very limited (it could be a reflection of gender disparities in the interviewed organisations / districts
- Community Development organisations visited are largely male-dominated in leadership positions. This implies weak internal governance system. There is need for CSOs to institute democratic practice.