

Press Release | 14 June 2023

Citizens and local leaders in Kyenjojo are working together to make change happen

Key priority areas include: water, infrastructure, health services

14 June 2023, Kyenjojo: Twaweza is working with RIDE-Africa, the local government authority and residents in Kyenjojo to strengthen collaboration between citizens and authorities to improve services, enhance local government capacity and strengthen citizen participation.

Using participatory action research, Twaweza and RIDE-Africa worked to identify and train community change agents, conduct participatory research with different groups in the community, and develop and implement joint action plans to address the issues raised. Twaweza also conducted in-depth qualitative and quantitative research to understand the context in Kyenjojo.

Key findings from the research include:

- 6 out of 10 Kyenjojo residents (64%) belong to a community group
- 6 out of 10 of those who are aware of them (63%) have attended meetings once or twice in the past year
- Among those who attend meetings, 80% report that income and expenditure are not read out at these meetings
- Among those who attend meetings, 7 out of 10 (73%) are somewhat or very satisfied with them while 15% are somewhat or very dissatisfied
- Attendees are dissatisfied with meetings for a range of reasons: not all their grievances are addressed, they don't get feedback, decisions are not acted on or because the meetings are long and scheduled inconveniently
- Citizens are slightly more likely to engage with village leaders than MPs or ward officials. However, 72% of Kyenjojo residents have not contacted their local government councilors even when they live in the same communities and 82% have never contacted their MP or her office
- Citizens in Kyenjojo's preferred means for contributing to village development include labour in kind (57%) and paying for materials (49%) but the most popular method (65%) is through paying government taxes and fees
- For the most part, Kyenjojo residents are either dissatisfied with public services or think they are average in quality. The majority of citizens are dissatisfied with electricity (58%) and many are unhappy with their roads and infrastructure (45%) and primary health services (40%)
- There is no public service for which more citizens are satisfied than dissatisfied, and citizens largely rate other services as average including sanitation (47% rate average) and public education (44%).

So far, the participatory research has been completed and key priority areas for communities have been agreed at village level.

Water

- Mahangwe, Mpaha, Kidudu, Rwabaganda, Nyaburungi, Kabirizi, Masese, Karubanju, Kyabagonza, Kyamijumbi or 10 out of the 12 villages in Kyenjojo in which participatory research was conducted are suffering from challenges relating to access to and quality of their water.
- In Kidudu, this is caused by eucalyptus around their water source while residents of Nyaburungi deal with salty water.

Infrastructure

- In Mpaha, Rwabaganda, Nyaburungi, Rwenjaza, Kahombo, Kabirizi, Masese, Karubanju, Kyabagonza, residents are concerned about road infrastructure and identify specific sections of road that need repairs to serve their purpose.
- In Mahangwe and Rwabaganda, residents want their villages to have access to electricity.

Health

- In terms of health, most of the challenges described are around the distance of local health facilities. In Mpaha, Nyaburungi, Rwenjaza, Kabirizi, Karubanju, Kyabagonza, Ugandans complain of the long distances they have to travel to access health services, between 10km and 25km.

Education

- Education issues were identified as community priorities in Rwenjaza where residents are keen to address the issue of not having staff quarters for teachers and in Kahombo they want to rehabilitate their local school to stop their children from travelling 18km to the next closest government school.

Social issues

- In Kidudu and Kyamijumbi, residents are concerned about the rampant theft of domestic animals and food stuffs.
- In Kahombo, a major challenge is around domestic violence.

Violet Alinda, Country Lead – Twaweza Uganda, said *“This intervention is a reminder to us that for development to happen, we need to engage citizens and ensure that they can work together with their leaders. When citizens and leaders trust each other and see each other as allies and collaborators, when information flows freely between the two, and when they are all motivated, able and have opportunities to deliver together, the results are real and rapid. We hope these ideas can infuse the vision of the Parish Development Model and other government interventions to bring real progress to the country.”*

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Notes to Editors

- The briefs and relevant data can be accessed at www.twaweza.org
- Twaweza works through research, evidence and action to demonstrate how citizens can come together to collectively address their problems and make government work better for them; enable citizens' voices, interests and experiences to be heard and taken seriously in decision-making; and to promote enabling conditions for citizen engagement and government response in Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda. Follow us at Twaweza Uganda (Facebook), @Twaweza_Uganda (Twitter), Twaweza East Africa (Instagram).