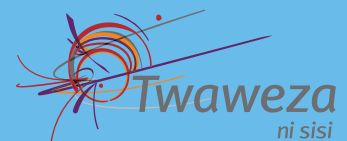




#MbungeLive

FINDINGS FROM AN EVALUATION STUDY





Introduction and methodology

The #MbungeLive screenings involved a public display of a 45-minute documentary on an MP's role and performance, conducted from April to September 2019 before local government elections. The documentaries were produced in 17 constituencies, and included a balance of MPs from all major political parties with representation in Parliament and a balance of male and female MPs. Each show focused on the local MP's accountability to their constituency by describing the issues prevalent in the constituency, the promises made by the MP during the previous (2015) elections, and the extent to which the MP has fulfilled these promises. They also described MP's constitutional roles and responsibilities and included interviews with residents of the constituency and the MP. The show was publicly displayed in selected wards in each constituency.

The purpose of the shows was to promote dialogue and understanding between citizens and their MPs and to encourage citizens to hold their MPs to account for their performance. But the major objective was to influence MP behaviour – to make MPs more accessible and responsive to their constituents, through the accountability pressure of a public show and consequent changes in expectations among citizens. It was partly prompted by the decision taken in 2016 to stop live broadcasts of parliamentary proceedings.

This brief presents findings from a survey of citizens' knowledge and attitude towards their MP before and after watching the documentary. How did the experience alter citizens' understanding of their MP's actions or attitude towards the MP's performance? And more generally, how did citizens perceive the role of MPs and their performance? Did they feel like their MP listens to their concerns?

The shows were produced by Maa Media Production, in collaboration with Twaweza East Africa



The survey was conducted by Bumaco Ltd and Ideas in Action, in collaboration with Twaweza East Africa

From April to September 2019, the survey was conducted in 10 purposively selected constituencies to ensure a balance of party affiliation, MPs' gender & longevity in service. It comprised both qualitative and quantitative methods.

Qualitative tools used include focus group discussions (FDGs) conducted with randomly selected residents before and after the show and semi-structured interviews with key informants and observations around the constituency. A total of 81 pre-screening and 72 post-screening group discussions were held, and the total number of participants was 616.

The quantitative survey comprised a short questionnaire administered to residents before and after watching the show. A total of 1,034 people participated, though the number was slightly lower for the post-screening survey due to factors such as bad weather.

Unfortunately, significantly fewer women participated in both the group discussions and questionnaire due to social norms and family responsibilities. It was also learnt that the timing of the survey (during the evening) clashed with some household chores; hence—fewer women participated.

Key findings include:

- After watching the documentary, constituents felt much better informed about the promises made by their MP prior to the 2015 election
- After watching the documentary, constituents are more likely to say their MP is willing to fulfil these promises
- After watching the documentary, constituents are more likely to say their MP listens to citizens' opinions and concerns
- After watching the documentary, constituents are more optimistic about whether their MP has fulfilled their promises



- Most constituents have never contacted their MP either in person or through the phone
- Constituents like to see their MP representing their interests in Parliament but are unsure how much this happens
- Constituents don't distinguish between the MP and the government generally; MPs are seen as responsible for implementation of service delivery
- Constituents expect their MPs to collaborate more with other local stakeholders
- Constituents feel that their MPs are largely absent from the constituency
- Constituents would like to hear more from their MP directly on the work they have been doing

Bukoba Rural, Bunda Rural, Handeni Rural, Kaliua, Kavuu, Mbogwe, Mbulu Rural, Mlalo, Ndanda and Vunjo.





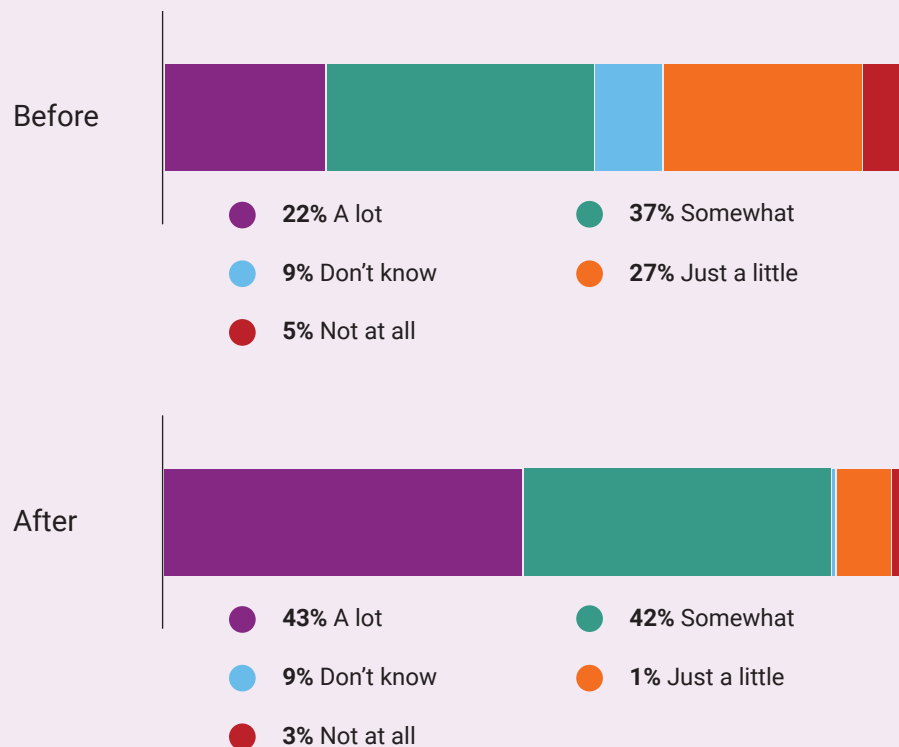
Findings:

Ten insights about constituents' views and experiences of their local MP

Insight 1: After watching the documentary, constituents felt much better informed about the promises made by their MP prior to the 2015 election

Few constituents (22%) felt well-informed about the promises made by their MP at the previous election, though a further four out of ten (37%) felt somewhat informed. However, after watching #MbungeLive, almost all respondents (91%) feel either that they know a lot (49%) or feel somewhat informed (42%) about their MPs' campaign promises.

Figure 1: Constituents who feel informed about promises made by their MP



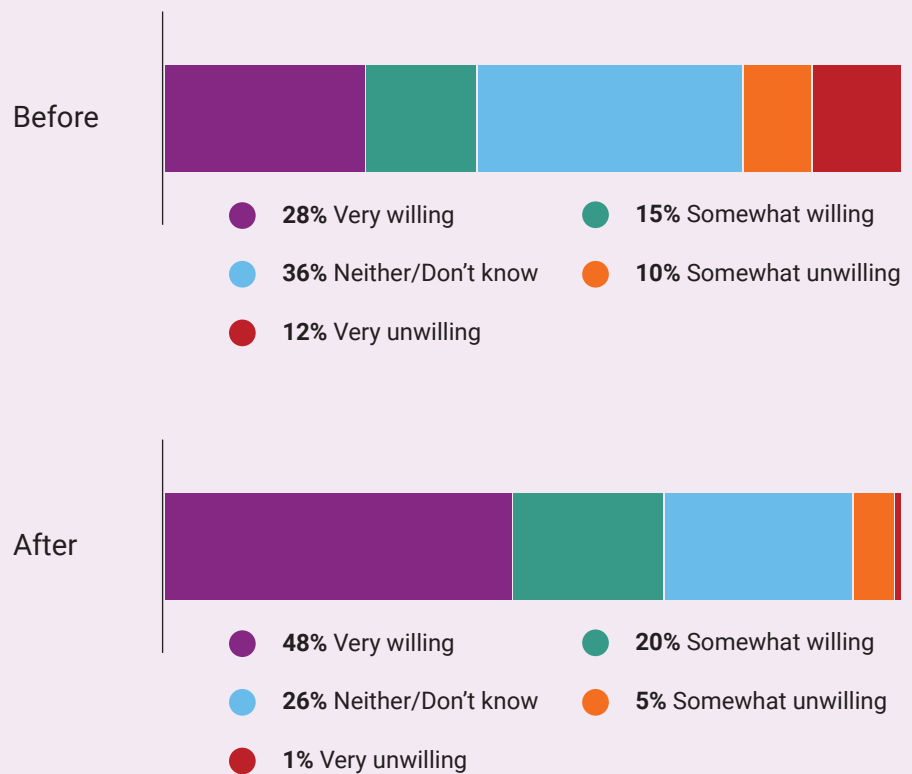
Source of Data: MbungeLive 2.0 Evaluation Survey



Insight 2: After watching the documentary, constituents were more likely to say their MP is committed to fulfilling their promises

Similarly, after watching #MbungeLive, constituents were more likely to say their local MP is committed to fulfilling their election promises. Before watching the video, four out of ten constituents (43%) felt that their MP was either very or somewhat committed to this, compared to seven out of ten (68%) who felt this way afterward.

Figure 2: Citizens' views on MP's willingness to fulfill promises



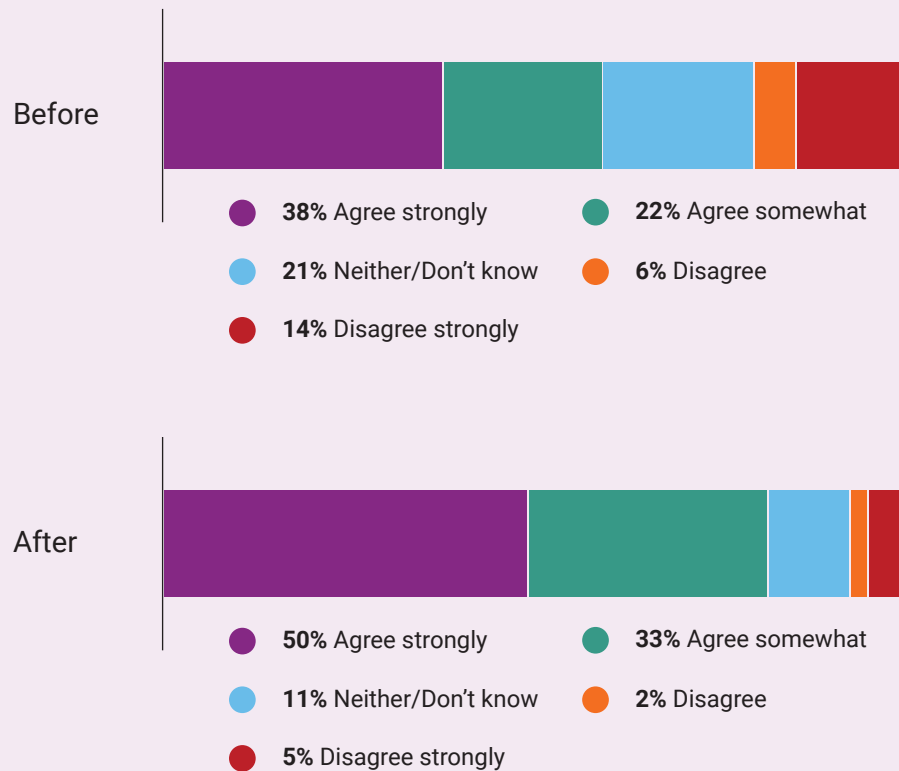
Source of Data: MbungeLive 2.0 Evaluation Survey



Insight 3: After watching the documentary, constituents were more likely to say their MP listens to citizens' opinions and concerns

Before watching #MbungeLive, six out of ten constituents (60%) agreed that their MP listens to the opinions and concerns of citizens. After watching, this rose to eight out of ten (83%). After watching the documentary, the number who disagreed with this view fell from 20% to 7%.

Figure 3: Agree or disagree: your MP listens to the opinions and concerns of citizens:



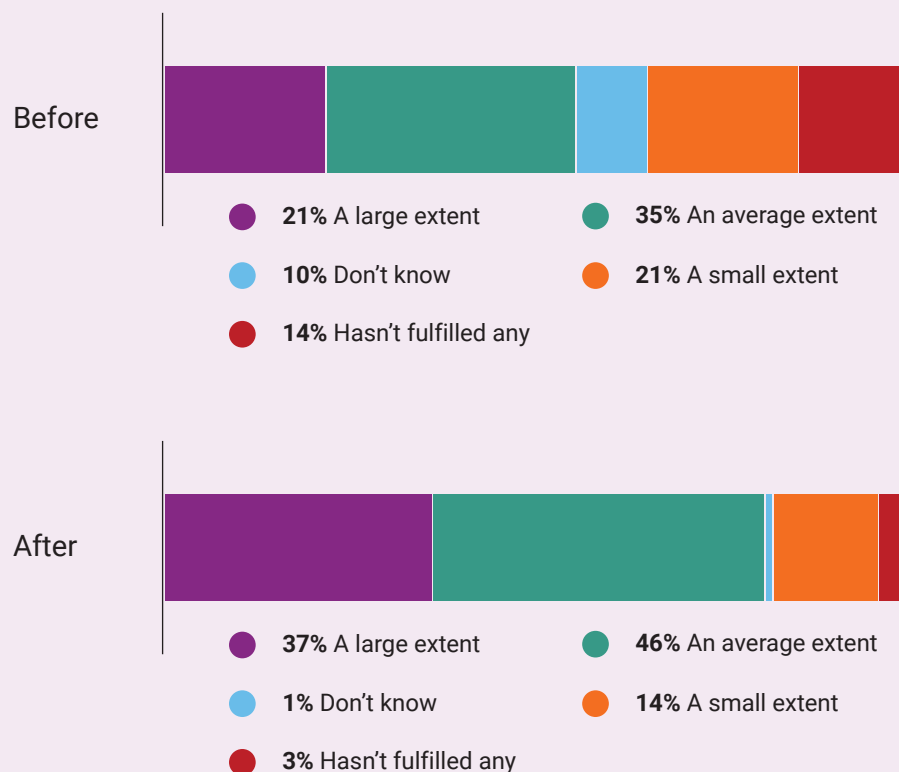
Source of Data: MbungeLive 2.0 Evaluation Survey



Insight 4: After watching the documentary, constituents were more optimistic about whether their MP has fulfilled their promises

Before watching #MbungeLive, slightly over half (56%) of constituents felt that their MP had fulfilled their promises either to a large extent (21%) or an average extent (35%). In comparison, 35% felt their MP has either fulfilled their promises to a small extent or not at all. After watching the documentary, the proportion who were positive about their MP's fulfillment of promises rose to a large majority (83%), and the proportion who are negative fell from 35% to 17%.

Figure 4: Citizens' views on the extent to which their MP has fulfilled their promises



Source of Data: MbungeLive 2.0 Evaluation Survey

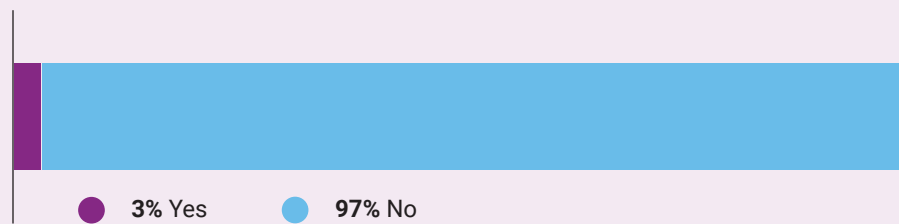


Insight 5: Most constituents have never contacted their MP

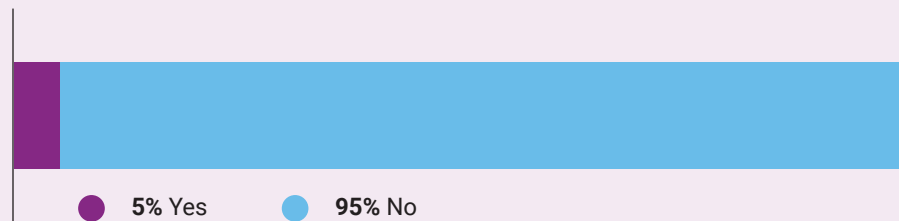
Most constituents have never contacted their MP on a personal matter (97%) or a community issue (95%).

Figure 5: Have you ever contacted your MP ...?

On a personal matter



On a community issue



Source of Data: MbungeLive 2.0 Evaluation Survey

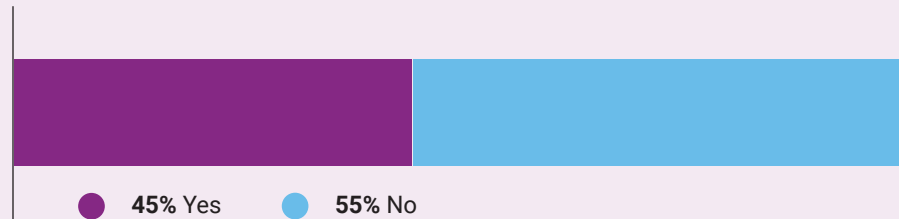
A little under half of the constituents (45%) are aware of at least one public meeting conducted by the MP (or their secretary - katibu) in their community, but most (80%) have never attended such a meeting.



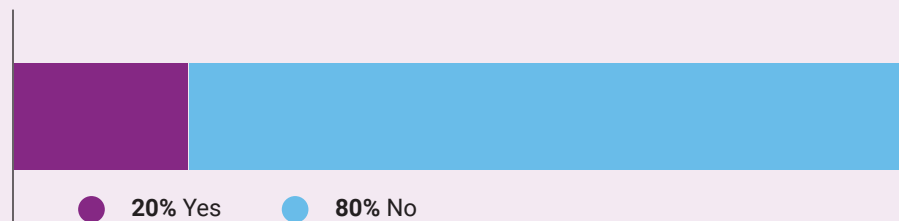
Figure 6: Has your MP/secretary ever held a public meeting in your community?

Have you ever attended such a meeting?

MP/Karibu has held a meeting



Have attended such a meeting



Source of Data: MbungeLive 2.0 Evaluation Survey

Insight 6: Constituents like to see their MP representing their interests in Parliament but are unsure how much this happens

Through the focus group discussions, citizens report that they appreciate seeing their MP representing their issues in Parliament.

However, they also say that they are not well-informed about the extent to which their MP represents their views and concerns in Parliament.



They also say that they are not well-informed about the roles of MPs in Parliament: how much they should be focused on constituency matters and how much on national affairs.

Insight 7: Constituents don't distinguish between the MP and the government generally; MPs are seen as responsible for the actual delivery of public services

From the focus group discussions, it is clear that their MP is as much a part of the Executive as the Legislature for many or most citizens: the distinction is not widely recognized or understood. Citizens assess their MP's performance based on campaign promises about public services and don't distinguish MPs from the Local Government Authority (LGA) that generally has responsibility for delivering such services.

There is room here for MPs to communicate better about their responsibilities. They could, for example, try to clarify their role in service delivery to their constituents and work more closely with citizens to hold LGAs and other actors accountable to citizens

Insight 8: Constituents expect more from their MPs in terms of collaboration with other local stakeholders

Constituents report mixed views on the extent of collaboration between their local MP and other actors (such as the LGA and the local private sector). They see room for improvement, particularly where such collaboration can directly improve constituents' lives.



Insight 9: Constituents feel that their MPs are largely absent from the constituency

Citizens miss their MP! It is a constant and widespread complaint from citizens that their MP is absent from their constituency for long periods and that they only visit during elections.

Many MPs do not have an active presence or representation in their constituencies. But where they have good offices and an active secretary, citizens are generally more satisfied with the interactions and engagement they see from the MP and their office.

Insight 10: Constituents would like to hear more from their MP on the work they have been doing

Through the focus group discussions, citizens are clear in their call for MPs to stay connected with their constituency.

MPs could invest more in interacting with their constituencies by, for example, providing regular updates on their work in the constituency and Parliament, seeking regular feedback from citizens on their performance, and listening to citizens' views on the national issues and laws that MPs are working on in Parliament.



Conclusions

The findings of this brief include thoughts on how MPs could better connect with their constituency and constituents and more general ideas in terms of the policy.

For MPs, it is clear that their presence matters to citizens: MPs should make more effort to visit and participate in their constituents' affairs throughout their term in office. They could do more to ensure a well-functioning office with an active and competent secretary who can represent the MP effectively within their constituency when they are unavoidably elsewhere. And MPs could be more innovative in finding means to listen to citizens, such as through door-to-door visits and conversations, disseminating their contact details, and being active on social media.

For more general policy, it is clear that the absence of TV coverage of Parliamentary proceedings was keenly felt. It was as essential to resume such broadcasts as this would also respect citizens' right to information. Further, civic education should be promoted at various levels – including in school and at the community level – to facilitate citizens' understanding of the constitution, such as the different branches of government and the role of each branch.

