



TWaweZA 2023: ANNUAL REPORT

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Highlights: Annual Report 2023

Citizens: ***mobilizing, acting and solving problems***

- Tanzania:
 - 31,600 (52% women) attended 276 meetings in 5 districts
 - 61 community problems solved in 4 districts (built satellite schools, more health workers, recovered stolen funds and assets, etc)
- Uganda:
 - Almost 19,000 (50% women) attended 688 meetings in 4 districts
 - 64 cumulative action plans (22 developed in 2023), progress on 39 (e.g., roads repaired, water wells drilled, food and property theft reduced, higher local budget allocations)
- Insights:
 - Faster local government response to community needs
 - Uganda meetings build confidence and elicit official response
 - But, national level inertia despite local successes

Local government officials and MPs: ***participate, endorse, embed citizen agency***

- Some participation at events/processes
- Uganda: MPs used citizen feedback on water, sanitation and health matters, and Emergency Medical Services to inform policy discussions.
- Kenya: Citizen opinions on Finance Bill 2023 cited in parliamentary debate
- Insights:
 - Parliament has limited ability to compel executive action
 - Converting local officials into citizen participation champions must consider their constraints and incentives

Media: ***expands coverage of civic space, citizen voices & agency***

- Some coverage in Kenya on citizen opposition to Finance Bill 2023
- Uganda public broadcaster (UBC TV) aired 14 stories of citizen agency in 2 districts
- BUT

- 30-60% decline in coverage of civic space, citizen agency across the 3 countries compared to 2022 and 2021
- Insights:
 - Were our activities less visible and efforts less effective?
 - More benign context in Tanzania meant less contentious civic space issues?

National level government officials: ***seek, endorse and use citizen input***

- Kenya Council of Governors endorses Sauti findings on devolution and health services improvement
- Uganda Ministry of Health includes Sauti findings on emergency medical services as they roll out new policy across the country
- Uganda Revenue Authority used Sauti report to inform their tax education
- Kenya National Bureau of Statistics and Uganda Bureau of Statistics embedding citizen-generated data (incl. Sauti) in SDG performance monitoring
- Tanzania's new Media Policy (being developed) includes findings from Sauti za Waandishi
- Sauti za Wananchi invited to inform Vision 2050 in Tanzania

Civil society: ***mobilize and deepen citizen trust***

- Strengthened strategic partners (TheChanzo, Equality for Growth, Tanzania Center for Democracy)
- Contributed to growing influence of annual CSO Week in Tanzania
- Tanzania survey of citizens views on CSOs shows:
 - Majority (84% in 2023, 89% in 2021) have not directly interacted with CSOs
 - 44% think CSOs address citizens priorities (46% in 2019)
 - 30% think CSOs make a significant contribution to community development (44% in 2019)

A five-year overview

- Problems:
 - Weak citizen agency
 - Shrinking civic space
- Our Mission (2019-2023):
 - Demonstrate citizen agency to address their problems and make government work better for them

- Enable citizen voices to be heard and taken seriously in decision-making
- Promote and protect open civic space
- Our Assessment:
 - We have shown that our approaches are effective, solutions work (Animation, Sauti za Wananchi, KiuFunza, legislative advocacy)
- Our Next Frontiers (the new strategy):
 - Scaling up by embedding these approaches in institutions (local government, ministries, parliament)
 - Systems change through sustained transformation of public institutions to serve citizens better

The background of the entire page is a collage of various illustrations. At the top, there are three distinct groups of people: on the left, a group of people in orange and purple tones; in the center, a family of three (two adults and a child) in purple; on the right, a man and a woman in blue and orange. Below these, there are larger, more faded figures of people in purple and orange. At the bottom, there are several data-related illustrations: a stack of books on the left, a line graph with three peaks in the center, a 3D bar chart on the right, and a pie chart with a person sitting on it in the bottom left corner. The overall color palette is dominated by purple, orange, and blue tones.

ANNUAL REPORT

PART 1: STORIES

TWAVEZA ANNUAL REPORT 2023

PART ONE

Stories of Progress and Lessons

Intermediation: the key to building bridges between government and citizens

When Twaweza adapted the animation approach to suit the contexts in which we work, we were careful to pay attention to government buy in and the potential for the critical elements that make the intervention successful to be taken up by government. We wanted to avoid past mistakes by others whereby non-state actors would usually introduce community projects that ultimately collapsed because the government did not adopt or continue beyond the pilot phase. Although we did not fully co-design the intervention with government counterparts, we embedded key moments into existing participation and feedback processes mandated by government to create linkages between the formal existing structures and animation.

Moreover, we paid attention to the decentralization policies and processes in Tanzania and Uganda to have greater alignment with existing government initiatives. From the outset, we recognised that the only way that the successes of animation could approach meaningful scale would be if we were able to distil the essential ingredients for success and infuse those into government's own public participation mechanisms.

As we implemented and reflected on this work, we focused on ensuring that we were emphasising the relationships to government officials and focusing on sustainability and scale through government engagement. So we engaged with change agents, communities and local government to try to create more space for dialogue and mutual understanding.

We emphasised immediate introductions of the project to multiple levels of local government, through and with our partners. We made sure we were engaging more actors than was strictly required to help us gain positive references and some wider awareness of and interest in the ideas behind the intervention. We asked local partners to keep district officials and others regularly informed and whenever we travelled to districts, we tried to do the same.

In Uganda, given the lack of statutory village meetings (one per year) and the lack of structured feedback mechanisms from communities to leaders and up the chain; we developed the idea of ensuring the LCI (village) Chair joined the citizen follow up committee in every village. This way they can engage first hand with community problems and potentially move them through the system as required.

We taught change agents about many government processes and ways of working: the access to information act, service delivery standards, the planning process at local and national level. We connected them to their local MPs and in some cases to national politicians and bureaucrats. We supported them to engage media and other civil society organisations as well.

And most importantly, we brought change agents, citizens' follow up committees and local government leaders together for numerous convenings. They learned to engage and interact more constructively, and to build relationships. By bringing together actors who do not always engage with each other openly, we help to create space for new ideas and new ways of working.

Convening and dialogue are at the heart of the participatory action research intervention; open conversation creates empathy, trust and understanding which can ultimately lead to action.

In Kamuli District, during the access to information training, journalists and local government officials marvelled that they had been viewing each other as enemies: journalists complained that they were never granted interviews or other information while local leaders describe being called for on-the-spot live interviews, or approached by journalists aggressively or inappropriately. By bringing these two sides together, they were able to be honest about their perceptions of each other and agree on how to move forward together.

The core of making this bridge-building work is the intermediation role played by Twaweza and our local partners. Our partners are deeply rooted in their own contexts and knowledgeable, with existing relationships and legitimacy with the local government. However the explicit connection with an outside national level partner also brings a certain level of accountability to the equation. Local government officials are aware that national level networks in government and media are at play. Twaweza, with a reasonably strong brand in terms of ideas, capacity and networks also enables the local government to feel connected to national and international spaces, and they can view us as a thought partner in a way in which they might not want to see local organisations. And for change agents and committee members, the presence of a national organisation and journalists elevates their experiences and ideas and can boost their own self-confidence and efficacy.

The critical issue is power dynamics. The national weight and presence of Twaweza can help to address some of the deep structural imbalances of power that exist in districts; the connectedness of the local partners helps bring legitimacy to a national organisation working at community level.

However, there is also power inequity between Twaweza and the local partners; we largely resource the entire intervention and bring significantly more influence and connection to political power than many of our district level colleagues. We try to build in regular moments of open honest feedback and dialogue between us and our partners to address this challenge, we invite and encourage criticism and are constantly conscious of the nature and tone of our interactions. We have made a number of changes to the implementation on the basis of partner

feedback including significantly decreasing activities and supporting greater organisational resilience. Nonetheless this remains an important issue to be aware of.

Moving forward into our new strategy, we will continue to try play the interlocutor role alongside our district partners. We will also seek to equip government facilitators of citizen participation processes with the essential skills of this intermediation so that we can institutionalise it in government processes.

Iterating our way to success: new approaches and lessons from participatory work in communities

As we take stock of implementing participatory action research work in ten districts in Tanzania and Uganda spread over five years, we are proud to reflect on the adaptation we have been able to do along the way.

Even as iterative adaptation, learning from failure, and feedback loops are widely acknowledged as key ingredients for good intervention design and impact, living these ideas in practice can be deeply challenging.

Implementation is often governed by tight logistical and management requirements which mean even small changes can result in a significant volume of extra work and have substantive budget implications.

Nonetheless, we managed to make a number of important changes to our animation work over these past five years based on the lessons we were learning.

Age and characteristics of animators: we began with a clear sense that we would engage young people as animators. They would be more ready to try something new, potentially have more free time, be more willing to travel a lot. We were also aware that young people in rural areas express deep disconnection with their communities where they feel they are not given space to express themselves and used only as free labour. But as we implemented, we have found that young people can also be more transient – they are more likely to leave the intervention areas and they sometimes struggle with the formality and bureaucracy of government engagement. Although we still retain a preference for working with and uplifting young people, in some communities we have engaged older change agents. Although the majority of change agents are older than 35 years old, we ensure meaningful youth participation by separating the participatory action research meetings according to age and gender.

Citizen follow up committees: initially, the animation approach relied on two change agents per community for subsequent follow up on the priority issues identified by the community. There were early indications that some of the change agents or animators were turning into

community elites who faced some resistance (e.g. being ignored or threatened) by some of the local leaders hence affecting the process of resolving the identified community problems. Although by design the members of the Citizen Follow Up Committees were doing a large part of the actual follow up work, they had not received the same level of training and orientation to the PAR process compared to the change agents. The Citizen Follow Up Committees were a key part of the learning from Tamasha's (the partner who introduced Twaweza to animation work) experience; they provided important support and back up to animators. Therefore as we came to see the challenges faced by the change agents or animators, we elevated the role of these committees. We included representatives from every committee in all sessions with change agents including refresher trainings, reflection sessions and forward planning meetings; we started calling them all animators; and our narrative around the intervention emphasised their importance. And we have seen critical benefits. In following up with local leaders, the addition of the citizens' committees provided the all-important entourage to reinforce the demands of the change agents and pressure the official. When animators drop out, they have been replaced by committee members given their close involvement with the process; and these 'replacements' have hit the ground running and are often more committed than the animator who dropped out. And ownership of the successes and actions required are spread across the community more often and effectively.

Coming together: As communities advanced with their action plans, we observed significant variations in levels of success, within and between districts. So, we designed a program of learning exchanges in which animators and district partners can observe each other's work, tactics and approaches. This also became a means to answer the demand for our intervention in the communities surrounding those we were working in. We cannot introduce new communities ad-hoc but animators can visit these areas and offer some insights and ideas. We also designed and hosted a national convening of animators from Twaweza's work as well as other organisations working with animation. Over 250 animators from communities all over rural Tanzania came together for three days of inspiration and exchange. To this day, they remain actively connected (those with smart phones), some have organised their own version of the Animators' Festival in their own district, and all of them inspire, console and provide each other with ideas for their work.

Moving forward into our new strategy, we are emphasising the influencing and uptake to government aspect of this work which will most likely mean further changes to how we model the work and ensure we are offering impactful and implementable ideas to local governments. We will continue to learn and evolve as we explore means to institutionalise the approaches and successes of animation so far.

A long road to light: citizens' voices go official

Part of Twaweza's global advocacy and engagement agenda, since our foundation, has been to seek acceptance of independent or citizen-generated data in governments' monitoring of

progress towards global and national development targets. At the international level we have used our engagement in the Open Government Partnership and the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data to be part of this movement.

In 2023, in Kenya, we were part of a unique opportunity to influence this agenda at the national level. We have always maintained good relationships with the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) and we regularly engage with them through the permit and compliance process. Our 2020-21 engagement with the ministry of health on Covid-19 and our membership of two committees for the Covid-19 taskforce: Advocacy and Communication, Community Engagement and Monitoring and Evaluation provided an additional government stamp of approval for our data and methodology.

The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) approached us to engage in their process to develop guidelines for validating independent data with a particular view to using these data for monitoring progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. Our input featured substantively in the guidelines. We are in further discussions about which specific datasets they might be able to validate for use through this process.

We further engaged KNBS to support us by endorsing our collaboration with them to the Tanzanian National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) which they have done in closed door meetings and more publicly through virtual participation in the 2023 Data Tamasha session on independent data.

In Tanzania, we have, with a few bright spots, largely been unable to carry out citizen polling in a regular way since 2018. And we have creatively adapted to the restrictive environment through surveying special groups (journalists, informal sector workers, artists), collecting local data, and using pre-existing databases to collect data for internal use and closed door meetings.

At the same time we have been testing waters and exploring means to revive Sauti za Wananchi largely through the Commission for Science and Technology and line ministries, as the National Bureau of Statistics were gearing up for the census. And we did manage one successful public event on mobile money levies which contributed to changes in their application and cost.

In early 2023, through informal channels, we were given to understand that it was likely that even after the census, NBS would only be willing to support Sauti za Wananchi if there was strong demand from within government. So we explored a number of avenues and engaged a number of entities and individuals to understand whether there was demand for our data. In late 2023, Executive Director Aidan Eyakuze, was appointed to the Core Technical Team to draft the Tanzania Development Vision 2050. Sauti za Wananchi can bring important insights to this process.

In Uganda, we have had good collaboration with the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) including long-standing discussions on working together to produce an index on livelihoods for Uganda. UBOS also participated in a session on independent data during the Data Tamasha

event in Tanzania whereby they interacted with their counterparts in Kenya and Tanzania to demonstrate the importance of independent data and efforts by the national statistics bureaus in formalizing independent data. Because we maintain good relationships with a wide range of government institutions, we continue to be a reliable partner for them.

In 2023, we advanced discussions on including specific Sauti za Wananchi datasets in official monitoring data for the Sustainable Development Goals.

As we move into a new strategy and seek to work more closely with government, we will increasingly make use of co-creation approaches and ensure our data speaks to their needs while continuing to feed wider public discourse. Allianceship with national statistics offices will be an important part of making this journey productive.

Open government from local to global

At its core, Twaweza's current strategy is promoting open government. In communities and among sub-national leaders, at national level and internationally, we are working to spark constituent agency and responsiveness in authorities.

Our animation work in Tanzania and Uganda seeks to model and demonstrate this at granular level practically, and synthesise insights for wider application. Our county level work in Kenya operates with similar principles of dialogue between citizens and government to improve transparency, accountability and inclusive participation. Internationally we are deeply embedded in the global community around open government.

In 2023, we were excited to co-host with Afrobarometer a global webinar during #OpenGov Week, Making Democracy Work In and For Africa featuring H.E. Ernest Bai Koroma, former President of Sierra Leone.

This discussion was widely followed across the continent with 150 attendees and 72,000 impressions on X. For Twaweza, the panellists provided insight as we were embarking on our new strategy development process. In particular the stark disconnect between democracy promotion and enhancing states' capacity to deliver (services) was a formative element in our new approach for 2024.

The webinar was one of the highlights of our global engagement as our Executive Director ended his term on the Open Government Partnership Steering Committee. Twaweza is the only organisation to produce two Civil Society Co-Chairs.

We also continue to engage actively in national and local level OGP processes in Kenya. For Twaweza, this work connects to our participatory action research intervention in Tanzania and

Uganda, and provides a powerful entry point to integrate Sauti za Wananchi into county governments.

Nationally we continued to engage with our OGP civil society peers but there was limited movement on the part of government in 2023 given the electoral transition in late 2022. We initiated a multimedia success stories project as an advocacy tool for open government more broadly and for the OGP specifically. The stories demonstrate the value to people's daily lives of initiatives to make government more transparent, inclusive and accountable to citizens more directly.

The success story project also provided an important opportunity for us to engage affirmatively with our government peers at county level. We visited them to highlight their success stories.

Given the strong imperative of decentralisation in Kenya, OGP Local continues to be a vibrant space for reformers and cross-sectoral interventions that put the citizen at the centre. Our own data demonstrate stronger levels of support and trust among citizens for county government actions in Elgeyo Marakwet and Makueni (long-standing OGP Local members) compared to other counties.

In 2023, we were well represented in the Devolution Conference where we shared a booth with Mzalendo Trust and provided a space for two OGP counties (Nandi and Elgeyo Marakwet) to showcase their work on open government. We had our Sauti za Wananchi data on health included in a celebratory publication on the success of devolution in the health sector that was published by the Council of Governors. And we co-created a session on health and devolution as a side event.

Through our strong presence and visibility at this event, our collaboration with existing OGP Local counties excited a number of other counties who have expressed interest in engaging with Twaweza on localised citizen polling, and potentially joining OGP Local. These counties include Laikipia, Nakuru and Homa Bay.

Moving forward, we will continue to be part of the thought leadership and hands on implementation of the OGP from local to global. In Kenya, we have deliberately connected our deployment of localised Sauti za Wananchi samples to OGP Local counties current and future. In Tanzania we will continue to advocate for the country to rejoin and in Uganda we will continue to promote open government more locally, in practice.

Using the future as a new space to engage

The future is a less contested space than the present. Thus began a new journey for Twaweza into the world of futures thinking. We had been exploring the idea for some time and finally decided to jump into a scenarios process in 2022.

In the same way that many of the critical elements on which the success of animation rests are process driven, so the world of futures thinking leans heavily on process. In this case, the outcomes are necessarily much less concrete; the idea is not to be predictive but rather cognisant. But the core idea is that it is the process that drives any potential outcomes that are by nature more distant and much harder to anticipate. Creating a safe space, bringing together diverse perspectives, and discussing a topic on which no one is an expert are critical starting points onto which that process is built.

We brought together influential artists, lawyers, private sector professionals, activists, politicians, technologists and journalists and invited them to participate in their individual rather than institutional capacities so that they could be at greater intellectual liberty. We began with a group of 42 and ended the process with a total of 36 participants.

We came together for four three-day sessions over the course of a year and a half. Each session was engaging, a mixture of sombre discussion and light irreverence. Most importantly there was a shared sense of journey, of uncovering new perspectives, putting new pieces together. We began with a detailed analysis of now, the situations we find ourselves in and the driving forces behind them. We injected wide-ranging research on six critical topics identified collectively. We thought about where the trends would take us and developed system diagrams for this future state. And finally we crafted stories of three plausible future scenarios.

We started with the end state, Tanzania in 2050 and worked through the decades. Those futures that had seemed somehow surreal and implausible became clearer and more defined, they suddenly became possible as we charted the pathways that could take us there from the present.

In the literature around scenarios, the most significant effects of the process are on the participants themselves. They are able to open their minds to new ideas and new ways of thinking and they form strong bonds amongst themselves. We saw this happen in practice; over the time spent together, we were able to form close connections. Informal conversations around the core sessions sometimes continued into the night and the dedicated WhatsApp group continues to be active.

One of the major completed outputs from this project is what is known as the Picture of Now; a qualitative analysis of Tanzania today based on the discussions during the workshops. This is one of the most powerful and thought-provoking presentations that Twaweza has ever given if we are to judge by the reactions of the audience. We have shared this with different audiences including a group of about 200 CSO leaders, 25 journalists and editors at an event organized by the Institute for Media Support (IMS), a meeting with 4 Nordic Ambassadors, 16 young leaders representing CSOs, media and five major political parties as part of a leadership training

program organized by the Maalim Seif Sharif Hamad Foundation, about 40 youth as part of the Fanisi Youth program and at the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA). In all of these cases, people were shocked at the picture we painted: each individual piece of information was known but weaving them all together provided rich insight.

We were able to share preliminary drafts of the scenarios themselves to an audience of NGOs, technologists and the private sector at Civil Society Week. They were well received. We are finalising the form of the more public versions of these stories before beginning dissemination and engagement in earnest.

As a means to continue engaging in this space, we partnered with the South African Institute of International Affairs and MIET Africa in 2023 on series of a youth-driven participatory futures workshops in six countries in Africa including Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda. Although this was more of a research exercise, the impact on the participants was again clear to see.

As we move forward into a new strategy anchored on our ability to persuade and influence government, futures thinking can be an important tool through which we can find common ground to engage and learn together with our government counterparts.

Stronger together: collaborative civil society strengthening

We continue to invest in working more closely and collaboratively with our fellow civil society organisations. We value the power of solidarity and the lessons we learn from and with our colleagues in the sector.

This strand of work is strongest in Tanzania where, during the fifth phase administration when it became difficult to gain traction with government, we shifted some of our focus to civil society strengthening. We amplified the emphasis we place on collaborative working and partnerships through a series of outcomes focused on the strength of the sector and citizens' perceptions of it. We largely approached this work through three main routes:

- Capacity exchange and development workshops with groups of civil society organisations
- Strategic structural sector-level support
- Customised engagement through individual strategic partnerships with complementary organisations

Exchanging capacities

Over the strategy, we ran workshops in Dar es Salaam, Arusha and Mtwara for sub-national organisations. We covered fundraising; communications and digital; learning, monitoring and evaluation; participatory community engagement and received positive feedback from these as well as invitations to return for more workshops. We have also run a clinic session on almost

every day of Civil Society Week for the last three years. In 2023, with the tech and society theme, we ran session on use of AI, and face-to-face community engagement (because analogue dialogue matters too!).

Sector advocacy

During the fifth phase administration, the restrictive regulatory environment for NGOs was stark. Since that time, we have engaged in joint action with the sector to address these constraints including the first ever sector-wide engagement with our regulators, the first ever attempt to quantify NGOs' contribution to the country, the first ever elections for regional representatives for the National Council of NGOs (NACONGO).

In 2023, our sectoral strengthening rested largely on our first concerted effort to engage constructively with the Annual NGO Forum – a joint product of NACONGO, the NGO Registrar and the ministry of community development. We worked with the NACONGO secretariat to develop a dashboard progress report of previous agreements between government and NGOs around sector regulation. This was due to be presented in a session and shared with participants in their conference packs. Unfortunately, at the last minute the session was removed from the agenda and only a small number of the packs included the dashboard.

And we continued to play a leadership role in the Steering Committee for CSO Week 2023.

Strategic partnerships

We provided close support to a selection of complementary ally organisations, alongside the extensive program of support to district partners working on animation. In 2023, we worked with:

- The Chanzo – a journalist-owned, digital first, people-driven platform. We supported them with human resources, finance procedures and training, strategy development, exploring revenue models
- Tanzania Centre for Democracy (TCD) – a forum on democracy for all political parties in Tanzania. We supported them with the development of their annual plan and their financial, human resources and monitoring systems.
- Tanzania Bora Initiative (TBI) – a youth-led organisation focused on governance, arts and livelihoods. We introduced them to new methods for community engagement and supported them to reconceptualise their monitoring to move away from donor demands to tell their own stories.
- The Creative Industry Network Tanzania (CINT) – the first network of artists in Tanzania focused on regulatory challenges in the sector. We supported their initial establishment and continue to support their systems and running costs. We also provided them with a space to produce a joint analysis on the creative industry budget for 2023/4 and convened a session to validate the strategy we had helped them develop.
- Uganda Radio Network (URN) – we supported them through part of a strategy development process and in attempting to diversify their revenue models in a period of crisis.

- During this strategy period, we also worked with Equality for Growth and Tanzania Editors' Forum.

As we move into our new strategy, we have experienced and learned a lot about civil society collaboration. One of the core tenets of systemic change is the recognition that you are a link in the chain, you can only achieve a part of the work that needs to be done. But to achieve truly transformative change, we must think deliberately and actively work to ensure that the rest of the chain is also strong and playing its part. For Twaweza, this will mean exploring new models of partnerships with new types of actors inside and outside government. We will carry the lessons we have learned and approach this work with humility, empathy and agility.



ANNUAL REPORT 2023:

Part 2 – Details

TWaweza Annual Report 2023

PART TWO

Reporting progress towards achieving our strategic outcomes

Corresponding to the two related problems we want to contribute to addressing as guided by our three-part mission statement, we articulate three broad strategic goals to be achieved by the end of the strategic period in 2023. Each year, we hope to make progress towards attaining these three goals:

- 1. Citizens have the ability, willingness and opportunity to articulate their problems, come together to discuss them, express their views in the public sphere and take civic actions to address these challenges. They are acting, organizing for change, and they use multiple strategies to do so.*
- 2. Local and national government agencies operate in ways that take account of citizen concerns, voices and civic action, and are able and driven to act in response.*
- 3. Civic space is less restricted in regard to basic respect for free expression, association and assembly; access to information; and established rule of law.*

To give our strategic goals measurable metrics, we have articulated twenty-four (24) outcome statements. These outcomes mark our direction of travel, inform the activities we do and provide an indication of progress towards our wider goals and ultimate vision. We report against our strategy outcomes to show what we have achieved in 2023 and how we did so. Across all our initiatives, we are working to achieve outcomes at two levels namely a) specific targeted actors, and b) the wider societal level.

1. Actors - Local change agents in selected geographies

Local change agents or community animators are local residents who display a spirit of service, are respected within their community, and are driven to reimagine their world. In selecting the animators, we target young individuals and ensure gender diversity. Equipped with role-specific skills, they focus on facilitation, consensus-building, and active listening. Two animators per community use participatory action research (PAR) methods to identify and prioritize underlying community issues, and develop action plans to address them. Citizens committees comprising six to ten elected members per village are created to ensure the identified issues are indeed addressed.

In Tanzania and Uganda, 2023 was a year of reviewing the experience of the previous four years of implementing the animation approach, refining it based on the insights and lessons learned, and, in some areas, expanding its reach to more communities and citizens.

In Tanzania, we have partnered with local organizations to implement the animation program in five districts: a) Mbogwe (MBODANET - Mbogwe District Animators Network), b) Kigoma-Ujiji (UWAMKU - Umoja wa Waraghibishi Manispaa ya Kigoma-Ujiji – Union of

Kigoma Animators), c) Maswa (KASODEFO - Kawiye Social Development Foundation), Pangani (PACOPA - Pangani Coast Paralegals) and Mtama (LANGO - Lindi Association of Non-Governmental Organizations).

Mbogwe: Animation initiatives have been done in Mbogwe since 2018 starting in a few locations. By 2021, in partnership with Tamasha and MBODANET, we covered all wards of the Mbogwe district. In 2023, we reviewed progress and used the lessons and insights to refresh change agent skills and mobilize more citizens to update their priority action plans.

Kigoma Ujiji: Implementation in Kigoma-Ujiji began in 2018 but faced challenges from authorities in late 2019, leading to a two-year suspension of overt organizing. However, 16 of the 33 trained animators continued to mobilize citizens, and registered an association called UWAMKU (Umoja wa Waraghbishi Manispaa ya Kigoma-Ujiji). Following a resumption of conducive relations with local government officials in 2022, we partnered with UWAMKU in 2023 to expand their activities to all 19 wards in the district.

Maswa and Pangani: Our work in Maswa and Pangani commenced in 2020. In Pangani, a successful pilot in three villages of a modified animation approach (a combination of film for development and Participatory Action Research) inspired us to expand it to ten villages in ten wards. Following a 2023 mid-line evaluation in Maswa, we focused our activities on ten wards instead of 18 for improved effectiveness.

Mtama: Mtama is our newest animation district where, working with LANGO and 20 animators, we started with ten villages in 2023.

Our efforts to promote the value of the animation approach more widely included showcasing it at the CSO Week in Arusha and the Southern Zone CSO Convening.

In Uganda, we partnered with local organizations to implement the animation work across four districts: Kamuli (AEGY – AIDS Education Group for Youth), Kole (AMACOD – AMA Cradle for Development), Kyenjojo (RIDE Africa – Human Rights and Democracy Link Africa), and Rubanda (LADA – Literacy Action and Development Agency). Our efforts in 2023 included nurturing collaboration between citizens and their local leaders, connecting change agents, improving their public engagement skills, and disseminating their documented success stories to wider audiences. The following specific initiatives were carried out:

Peer-to-Peer Learning: Within each district, we collaborated with implementing partners to facilitate peer learning opportunities among change agents, citizen follow-up committees, and village leaders in intervention villages. Villages that demonstrated significant progress in implementing their action plans hosted exchange visits to inspire those villages that we were struggling. Additionally, we conducted 19 trainings, including 5 on access to information, attended by 633 participants (384 men and 249 women), including village leaders, selected public officials, and journalists. In partnership with AFIC and the Ministry of ICT and National Guidance, four trainings were held (two in Rubanda and two in Kyenjojo) on the access to information law, aimed at equipping participants with knowledge and skills to access information effectively. Leaders were also trained to enhance proactive disclosure of information and promote citizens' demand for public information.

Organizing public feedback meetings: Working with local organizations, animators facilitated 13 community dialogues across all levels – village (1), sub-county (9), and district (3). These discussions, attended by 475 people (308 men and 167 women), provided a platform for citizens to raise concerns, receive information from public officials, and secure commitments to address issues.

Strengthening local partner organizations: We actively addressed challenges identified through partner reports and external reviews. Reflection workshops and refresher trainings on PAR enhanced change agent skills and collaboration with local authorities. We ensured change agents understood service delivery standards and local government planning processes.

Supporting Change Agents in Preparing Petitions: Change agents, supported by implementing partners, continued submitting petitions and raising concerns with local leaders. Additionally, 12 sub-county dialogues were organized and facilitated by partners in Kyenjojo and Rubanda, and district dialogues were held in all three districts of Kamuli, Kole, and Rubanda. These dialogues focused on community-driven agendas, with officials responding to concerns and making new commitments.

Documenting and Disseminating Success Stories: We documented the program's impact including exploring the effects of the animation work on individual change agents, communities, and partners through outcome mapping, and longitudinal and midline studies conducted in Kamuli, Kole, and Namutumba. We engaged local media to amplify change agent stories. This resulted in 20 media pieces showcasing successful interventions, sparking further interest from local outlets.

Outcome 1: Animators and people's representatives mobilise citizen accountability actions and participation, problem-solving (Tanzania and Uganda)

TANZANIA

Mobilising citizen participation: 31,609 people (16,511 women and 15,098 men) attended and participated in 276 participatory action research (PAR) related meetings. Of these 162 meetings (an increase by 90 meetings from 2022) were those organised by village leaders (the mandated quarterly village meetings) and village feedback meetings organised by change agents in collaboration with village leaders as part of implementing the PAR exercise.

Other meetings included 73 participatory action research group discussions separated according to age and gender to create space for women and youth to freely air their views; 55 follow-up meetings organised by change agents and citizen follow up committees to monitor progress on specific issues prioritised by citizens; 4 public sector meetings that were organised by different public agencies such as the Ward Development Committee where change agents were invited to share community challenges; and one district level meeting for the launch of the animation program that was attended by all district officials and Ward Councillors.

More quarterly village meetings: Across the board, village councils are organising the quarterly village meetings on a regular basis compared to before introduction of the animation program. Moreover, village councils are increasingly sharing village revenues and expenditure reports and more citizens are feeling free to ask questions during these meetings and are satisfied with the responses provided by the leaders. Examples in Funika, Msaraza, Bweni, Darajani, Bulugala and Matumbwe illustrate that animation gives communities tools and skills to engage with their leaders hence motivating their leaders to respond and provide accountability. However, these successes remain isolated and are not even consistently spread across all the intervention villages.

More citizen participation: There is an increase in community contributions in the form of labor, money, and in-kind resources, such as cement and bricks, towards village infrastructure projects. Five villages repaired eight main roads and several minor roads leading to sub-villages. In Maswa, each household in Zabazaba village contributed \$11.8 (30,000 Tanzanian shillings) towards the construction of a dispensary, and people offered to dig and lay down the pipes for the water project.

Better relationships between leaders and citizens: After the 2019-2020 elections, many infrastructure projects stalled after communities withdrew their support because they were unhappy with how elections were conducted. Many infrastructure projects have been revived across the intervention districts; for example, the community in-kind contribution (bricks and cement) towards the construction of a dispensary in Funika village, Maswa district, and the commitment of the Mandawa community to provide labor in-kind to build a school in Mtama district. The more regular village meetings are better attended by Pangani district in the villages of Kimang'a, Madanga, Ushongo, and Stahabu. In Mbogwe district, the relationship between the leaders and citizens in Mubamba, Iboya, and Kakumbi villages has also improved.

Improved government responsiveness in solving public service problems: In 2023, 61 community problems were solved in four districts (Pangani (21), Maswa (15), Mbogwe (22) and Mtama (4)). These issues covered important sectors such as water, education, health, security and safety, roads and transportation and other social issues such as violence against women and children. Mtama reports the lowest number of cases solved because implementation began in 2023.

As a result of PAR, local government leaders collaborated with citizens to construct the road from Darajani to Matakani sub-village in Msaraza Pangani district, in Maswa, two culverts were constructed in Mwatumbwe village; again, the leaders of Funika village improved how they shared the revenue vs. expenditure reports by including names of all contributors and amounts received during the public meetings. In Sulu village, the local leaders are paying back the resources they misused. While in Bulugala village in Mbogwe, animators followed up and recovered two machines that had been stolen by some village government leaders.

Satellite schools have been opened in areas where schools are distant, especially the early-grade schools like in Msaraza, Mwatumbwe, and Muungano of Pangani, Maswa, and Mbogwe districts, respectively. There is an improvement in healthcare services through the posting

of more health workers in Bweni, Pangani district, halting the sale of free clinic cards, and observing better patient/client care in Gula village, Maswa.

UGANDA

Mobilising citizen participation: 18,951 (9,446 women and 9,483 men) attended and participated in 688 meetings related to the results of the process. These included 618 participatory action research meetings at the village level (separated by age and gender) to identify and prioritize community issues and develop action plans; 14 village feedback meetings convened by change agents to share the PAR action plans with village leaders; 2 district launches – organized by the district partner in collaboration with Twaweza; 15 public sector meetings organised by local government for specific sectors to which change agents or the local partner were invited, 25 follow-up meetings/visits to check in on progress against issues raised through the community research and any commitments made in response. There were also a number of (14) dialogue meetings convened by change agents and the local partner, inviting relevant sector officials and stakeholders from the community to discuss specific challenges.

In Uganda, the only statutorily mandated village meeting happens once a year to discuss the budget. The PAR meetings provide an important platform for citizens to more frequently contribute to their community's plans.

Improved government responsiveness: There has been a notable improvement in the response to community needs by leaders at both the sub-county and district levels. Change agents, citizen follow up committees and staff from partner organizations conducted about 40 follow-up visits and meetings with local leaders to work on addressing the community problems identified through the participatory action research. The cumulative number of action plans reached 64, with 22 community action plans developed in 2023, addressing a total of 79 issues. Throughout the year, progress was made on 39 issues, while 25 were partially resolved, leaving 33 pending.

Over 15 villages across the intervention districts have shown progress, with the government reallocating budget resources, deploying equipment, and incorporating some community concerns into existing plans. Government officials have recommended these villages to other partners for urgent action. For instance, in Rubanda district, the Habuhinga-Mugyera road in Habuhinga village was rehabilitated. Additionally, seven community access roads, four in Kamuli, two in Kyenjojo, and one in Kole, were rehabilitated. Several pledges to repair roads were made during council meetings in Kyenjojo, Kamuli, and Kole.

Five water wells were drilled in the villages of Bwase, Busongole, Bulinda, Busuyi, and Nabirama. A latrine was constructed at Butaaga Primary School in Butaaga, Kamuli district, fulfilling commitments made by public officials in 2022. In Kole, the district council resolved to extend piped water to intervention villages in Alito S/C and Aboke T/C. Another pledge was made to address the lack of a toilet facility at Bufundi Health Centre II in Rubanda sub-county. In Namutumba, nine communities reported that their concerns had been addressed by the local government, even without direct support from implementing partners.

Resolutions to pass by-laws aimed at motivating parents to keep children in school, combating gender-based violence (GBV), and discouraging deforestation were passed during council meetings following presentations by change agents and members of the Citizen Follow-up Committees.

In Rubanda, by-laws passed at the village level in Atek (school dropout), Baramola (GBV), Arwot Lango (deforestation), and Baliro (community participation in communal work) aimed to address theft of food and property and enforce communal work for soil and water conservation.

In Kamuli, parish chiefs reported feeling more confident, enabling them to present and defend community issues convincingly. In Kyenjojo, at least two communities had their road concerns prioritized, budget allocations made, and 13 village meetings were convened by village chairpersons in Rubanda district, showcasing improved engagement despite initial challenges.

Outcome 2: Animators and people's representatives request public information and engage in local government processes (Tanzania and Uganda)

TANZANIA

Ten meetings were held with government officials in which 60 change agents (36 male and 24 females) participated. Change agents and citizens follow up committees organized 55 follow up visits to local governments at the village, ward and district level including interacting with representatives of national level public agencies responsible for roads, water and electricity (TARURA, TANESCO, RUWASA).

UGANDA

About 16 meetings were held with various local government officials. These were face to face sub county councils and budget conferences in which 68 change agents (40 males and 28 females) participated. The change agents also conducted 47 follow up visits. Change agents and members of the community in Namutumba proactively followed up on nine issues that were all resolved while in Kole, change agents in 11 villages followed up on their unresolved issues and provided feedback to the community.

Lessons and Insights from demonstrating citizens agency at the local level

Faster Government Response: In both Tanzania and Uganda, our interventions demonstrably improved government reaction times to community needs.

Uganda's Village Strategy: Since statutory village meetings aren't mandatory, village chairpersons are included in citizens' follow-up committees. This creates a direct channel for community concerns to reach decision-makers. Leaders used this access to secure budget allocations and direct responses from officials. For example, in Tekworo B (Kole), residents negotiated with the water officer to install a reservoir tank in a neighboring village – Tekworo A - thus maximizing water access for both villages. This highlights the program's impact on community empowerment and problem-solving skills.

Future Steps in Uganda: Encouraging regular village meetings and incentivizing leaders to hold them is crucial for sustained community participation.

Local Success, National Hurdle: Change agents secured some local policy changes, but national integration remains a challenge. Our new strategy targets specific policy areas in each country. We're adapting our approach, recognizing the need to move beyond direct implementation and focus more on engagement and influencing national conversations. This involves refining what works at the community level while fostering institutionalization within government and civil society.

Amplifying Impact: To influence national media, we'll invest in targeted dissemination and reframe our narrative. We'll also adopt a more flexible approach with governments, tailoring our offerings to their specific needs.

2. Actors - MPs and DEDs and village government (in selected geographic areas)

Our strategy aims to unblock factors that constrain effective governance on both the demand side (citizens) and supply side (government). As a result, we proactively engage Local Government authorities at the Village (LC1 in Uganda), Ward (Sub-County in Uganda) and District level, and people's political representatives such as Members of Parliament and Councillors. Below is a summary report from our various engagement with MPs and higher local government authorities.

Parliamentary Engagement: Partnering with the Centre for Policy Analysis (CEPA), an advocacy group, allows us to track Ugandan parliamentary activity and represent citizen needs in policy discussions. We've met with key committees and engaged on issues including access to information, water, and sanitation.

We presented MbungeLive's successes to a ruling party caucus of 300 MPs, encouraging citizen engagement through radio and media openness. Despite positive reception, co-production efforts with parliament stalled due to elections and resource limitations. We're reevaluating our approach.

In Kenya, we partnered with Centre for Fiscal Affairs (CFA) and 15 CSOs to conduct a public survey on the Finance Bill, attracting over 23,000 responses and significant media coverage. These findings influenced National Assembly discussions.

Local collaboration: In Mbarara (Uganda), we launched our program with the local MP and held courtesy visits with key officials like the hospital director, regional police, and mayor. These visits build relationships and overcome distrust towards NGOs, which is crucial for successful collaboration.

In Tanzania, we launched the animation program in partnership with local MPs and officials in Lindi district, and our partners have maintained relationships and participated in district events.

We collaborated with Kenyan counties to showcase successes and foster interest in the OGP Local program. Laikipia County is a potential new partner, seeking our support in joining and developing an action plan to be more open, inclusive of and responsive to its citizens.

OUTCOMES

Outcome 3: MPs, councillors and local government officials participate in, endorse and institutionalize Twaweza / partner citizen agency processes and evidence collected

UGANDA

Policymaker engagement: 2023 saw success engaging policymakers through participatory action research and Sauti za Wananchi. At the Kyenjojo animation launch, 90% of district leaders attended, including the Woman MP. The LC V chairperson immediately addressed a citizen-prioritized project, confirming its inclusion in the 2023/4 budget.

Multi-District collaboration: The emergency medical services data launch in Mbarara brought together officials from multiple districts to share experiences and plans. This highlighted critical issues like ambulance shortages and lack of a regional emergency hotline.

Parliamentary committee engagement: The Parliament's Health Committee chair invited data presentations on emergency services and road infrastructure. This led to discussions on a "Good Samaritan" law and exploring medicine stockouts with a wider stakeholder group. We presented Sauti za Wananchi data to the access to information committee, pushing for amendments to the access to information law. We also held media briefings with an MP on rainwater harvesting and the Uganda Parliamentary WASH forum to share data insights.

Outcome 4: MPs, councillors and local government officials escalate and/or respond to citizens' voices and challenges, entrench them in decision-making

In Uganda, Sauti za Wananchi findings continue to encourage policy makers to incorporate citizens' views as the following examples show:

1. The Executive Secretary to the Speaker of the Parliament of Uganda asked for a follow-up call round to gauge citizens' views on the role of parliament, intended for a briefing in Parliament.
2. Twaweza presented citizens views at the Parliamentary Wash Forum on Climate Change and Environmental Health and we were among the stakeholders involved in drafting Uganda's position paper on WASH ahead of the UN Water Conference 2023. Sauti za Wananchi data was referenced in the comprehensive paper on water for climate resilience.
3. The Emergency Medical Services (EMS) team at the Ministry of Health pledged to include citizens' views on EMS in various regional meetings with their teams as they implement the EMS policy.

In Kenya, the findings from the Twaweza-led public survey on the Finance Bill 2023 were quoted by two members of parliament including the Minority Leader during the debate on the Finance Bill on June 15, 2023. We amplified the voices of citizens, sparked a public conversation and informed Kenyan legislators about citizens' views on key proposals on the Finance Bill 2023.

Lessons and Insights from influencing parliamentarians and higher local government authorities.

Parliament's limitations: While parliaments play a role, deeper impact requires engaging them in multi-stakeholder forums to hold the executive accountable. This is a long-term strategy for leveraging our data for sustainable change.

Work needed to converting officials into champions: Converting local officials into champions for deeper citizen engagement requires a more nuanced approach that considers their constraints and incentives.

Kenya's OGP opening: The Open Government Partnership offers a promising entry point in Kenya. Counties are enthusiastic about joining, seeing the benefits exemplified by Makueni and Elgeyo Marakwet's citizen engagement through OGP action plans. Nandi County's internationally recognized OGP call center underscores the program's potential.

3. Actors - Traditional (national and local) and online media

We work with media in all three countries, serving both a more instrumentalist content-driven agenda as well as the broader aims of protecting civic space. Through the media we are able to offer new approaches to old problems, new evidence on what is really going on and to reframe and reshape contemporary debates. We can reach many different target audiences at once and we can give wings to our agendas. We do this through media partnerships, inviting media to our events, participating in talk shows and interviews, promoting data points to media electronically, providing micro-grants for citizen-centric and data-driven reporting, supporting early-stage independent digital platforms with a shared agenda and writing opinion pieces on newspapers which we know are still read by almost all government officials.

Kenya: We contracted a community radio in Makueni County (Ene FM) and held regular meetings with the radio journalist. This way, we emphasised the need for evidence-based shows. We also ensured we engaged with media around all our data from Sauti za Wananchi and trialled working more closely with a few journalists whose network is wide enough to spread word about Twaweza's work and data.

Tanzania: In Tanzania we continued working with media, invitations to media houses and working directly with some journalists. We provided strategic support to *The Chanzo* to enhance their operational capacity especially on strengthening the finance and administrative systems, resource mobilisation and monitoring and evaluation. We are

currently working on developing a business plan to help sustain their business while staying independent and free.

Uganda: We engage sub-national journalists to report on actions of both the leaders and change agents' success stories as a way to inspire others. We persuaded UBC TV, a public broadcaster, to profile stories of citizens making things work. We also continued our support to the Uganda Radio Network through a challenging time through strategy development sessions, operational support and resource mobilization ideas.

Outcome 5: Individual journalists and outlets have increased and improved coverage of civic space issues, citizen voices and agency

We engage with journalists and media outlets to promote data journalism on civic space issues, citizen voices and agency. Despite our internal assessment of our specific media partnerships, we monitor the broader media landscape to assess the extent to which they cover these topics using credible evidence.

Kenya:

- 2023: 91 media pieces (7 Print, 10 TV, 40 Radio, 7 Reference in Media, 20 Online and 7 Talk Shows)
- 2022: 200 media pieces (181 Online, 13 Radio, 4 TV and 2 Print)

Uganda:

- 2023: 229 media pieces (170 Radio, 84 Online, 32 TV, 18 Digital and 9 Print)
- 2022: 326 media futures (176 Online, 78 Radio, 45 TV, 27 Print)

Tanzania:

- 2023: 122 media pieces (23 Print, 73 Online, 15 TV and 11 Radio)
- 2022: 341 media pieces: (179 Online, 72 Radio, 47-TV, 43-print)

Although there is a big decline in the number of media pieces on civic space issues, citizen voices and agency in 2023 compared to 2022, this does not imply that our efforts and those of other actors are less impactful. Perhaps, we have deployed tactics and strategies that were less publicly visible. However, in 2024 we will make efforts to increase visibility of our work so as to ensure the public is well informed and engaged.

Outcome 6: New outlets arise which are independent, investigative, digital, evidence based, and popular (Tanzania)

Tanzania: We continue to have a strategic partnership with TheChanzo. By December 2023 they had an average of 68,882 visits per month (and 4.9 million hits to their website) compared to 40,000 in 2022. This growth has also been supported by their investigative journalism and infographic stories which have strengthened TheChanzo's reputation for in-depth and analytical storytelling. They continue to expand their network of correspondents to have wider coverage across the country.

Outcome 7: In selected geographic areas, community media facilitate citizen-government interaction and highlight local collective action and response

In **Uganda**, we held two talk shows in Mbarara on Radio West and TV West on the health sector *Sauti za Wananchi* data in which the District Health Officers, a representative from the Red Cross and an opinion leader participated. In Rubanda and Kyenjojo, radio talk shows were held inviting local leaders, local partners and change agents to discuss how participatory action research (animation) is solving development problems in communities. Following these discussions, callers into the radio stations were asking for change agents to be introduced in their communities because the challenges change agents were addressing were similar to their own. In Kole, Kamuli, Rubanda and Kyenjojo, we also engaged the local journalists to follow up on the success stories of the change agents and as a result a total of 20 stories aired.

In **Kenya**, Ene FM are continuing with a version of the citizen-focused program we supported them to produce and broadcast due to its popularity.

Outcome 8: National media hold meaningful (informed and participatory) debates and dialogues on civic space and service delivery

Kenya: Around the 2023 finance bill and our rapid response non-representative opinion poll on the same generated sustained debate as part of the broader coverage of the bill.

Uganda: UBC TV aired 14 success stories from the animation work in Namutumba and Kamuli.

4. Actors - Specific ministries and institutions (including ministries of information, legal affairs, local government, communications regulators)

Twaweza uses its creative and credible communications capacity to channel the views and voices collected through our community-based work vertically through different levels of government.

In **Tanzania**, we collaborated with UTPC (Union of Tanzania Press Clubs), TAMWA (Tanzania Media Women Association), JamiiForums and MISA Tan (Media Institute of Southern Africa – Tanzania Chapter) to conduct a special *Sauti za Waandishi* where we surveyed a total of 1,200 journalists. We completed data analysis and presented the findings UTPC members in December 2023 and scheduled public launch in February 2024.

In Uganda, we completed three *Sauti za Wananchi* call rounds in Uganda on a) livelihoods and business environment, b) climate change adaptation and environmental health, and c) citizen participation. We had an additional face to face field data collection exercise during the panel revisit. We conducted two regular launches, disseminated findings through the Uganda parliamentary forum on WASH (water sanitation and hygiene) and at two events organized by the Editors' Guild and another by the Ministry of ICT.

In Kenya, we intensified our efforts to incorporate citizen-generated data into official statistics in a process led by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS). We also completed two out of the

three planned call rounds with a nationally representative panel of 3,600 individuals. The resulting data was published in the Council of Governors' book on progress in the health sector post-devolution, launched during the Devolution Conference. A research brief on the State of Devolution, reflecting citizens' experiences after a decade of devolution, was produced.

Outcome 9: Government officials seek citizen views on policy and laws, have better insights about citizen challenges.

Kenya

Officials from Kenya institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) endorsed the Twaweza report on CBC terming it critical in helping them to understand the concerns of the citizens. The KICD CEO also indicated that the report would form part of the weekly update they would share with the Presidential Working Party.

The fact sheet on the 'Devolution and Health Services' from the national Sauti za Wananchi survey was published in the Council of Governors (COG)'s published book titled 'Celebrating a Decade of County-Led Health Service Delivery for Economic Growth in Kenya'. This was a powerful acknowledgement of the value of citizen input by high-level leadership (COG) in Kenya.

In a closed-door pre-engagement with the Principal Secretary for the State Department for Devolution in the office of the Deputy President and her heads of departments, Twaweza shared the "State of Devolution" report. The officials indicated that the report would help them to deliver on their mandate through citizen-generated evidence. The Twaweza report will be used as a baseline for the next phase of devolution. They added that the report will support evidence-based planning for the next ten years.

Tanzania

Our Sauti za Waandishi (Voices of Journalists) call round to provided unique, direct input to the government team drafting a Media Policy. They were enthused about the data and perspective provided, often missing in policy discussions. As the engagement progressed, each element of the policy was sense-tested against the issues raised by journalists and their own experiences.

In December 2023, the Executive Director was appointed by government to the Steering Committee for the Vision 2050 development process to make use of his expertise on citizen engagement.

Uganda

The emergency medical services team at the ministry of health has sought to have the citizen's views on the issues included in the different regional meetings with their teams as they roll out the new emergency medical services policy.

We co-authored a paper titled, "Advancing evidence generation, dissemination and utilization to support transformations in the African context" with the Directorate of Research at the Parliament of Uganda which was presented at the Canadian evaluation conference.

Outcome 10: Government officials endorse, participate in and create spaces in which they interact directly with citizens

Uganda

Ministry of Health officials at the launch of the citizens survey on emergency medical services in Mbarara gave an account of what they were undertaking in that department and pledged to continue working to improve the emergency medical services.

The Red Cross acknowledged the shortcomings highlighted in the Twaweza report and shared how they had initiated citizen training around accident black spots, supplemented by a toll-free hotline. (The Red Cross is a statutory body enacted by the Red Cross Act, Cap 57 of the laws of Uganda in 1964)

Outcome 11: Government officials make decisions informed by citizen input

Uganda:

Uganda Revenue Authority research and innovations team requested for the taxation call round dataset as a source of information to aid them in their planning within the department. Additionally, URA utilised the Twaweza report to inform their tax education planning as quoted on their website, *"the drive in Western Uganda was informed by the recently released Twaweza report on citizen's awareness on tax matters that revealed Western Uganda as the least sensitised region."*

Uganda Bureau of Statistics requested to review the Sauti za Wananchi data collection tool on livelihoods mentioning that they would like to utilise this in future. This was during a discussion on making the Sauti za Wananchi data official statistics. UBOS has requested access to the panel two call round data collection tools to pick out indicators to run analysis for the directorate of social economic surveys.

Special Initiative: Starting the scaling-up phase of a teacher incentive initiative in Tanzania

In 2023, Twaweza started the implementation of its new KiuFunza 4 program. KiuFunza provides cash incentives to public school teachers in Tanzania conditional on the learning outcomes of students in their class. The program goal is to improve foundational reading and numeracy skills in grades 1, 2 and 3. KiuFunza directly supports teaching effort and contributes to an education system that is aligned around learning commitments.

KiuFunza 4 is the first scaled-up implementation of Twaweza's teacher incentive model, and the first of its kind in Africa. This phase implements the program in 265 of the academically worst performing schools in 10 regions across Tanzania, with dedicated support from the Hempel Foundation.

The KiuFunza school level implementation in 2023 was successful, with its three standard phases proceeding as planned: baseline to communicate the incentive offer and enlist teachers; midline calls to teaching teams to remind them and clarify questions; and endline

to assess the students as a basis for the incentive payments. Compared with previous phases KiuFunza 4 intentionally invests little on survey research, as it achieved its proof of concept based on the findings of three previous large, randomized evaluations. Nevertheless, as part of the Monitoring and Evaluation component a baseline survey was conducted by the implementation teams at the start of the program, in March 2023. In addition, the endline assessments in November were conducted in all 265 program schools but also in a random sample of 60 control schools that do not receive the program treatment.

KiuFunza 4 is the result of a unique *Evidence to Scale* process that started with KiuFunza I in 2013. In a series of three randomized impact evaluations, led by independent researchers affiliated with the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL), impact evidence was generated on many dimensions of the program. An important set of early findings on the effectiveness of our incentive model was published in 2023, in the highly respected *Economic Journal*. Twaweza has used this and other evidence to refine the incentive design over time but also gained practical and cost-saving implementation experience. This cumulative knowledge resulted in the current scalable incentive design, that is very close to the KiuFunza III model.

Based on the KiuFunza III impact evaluation, we learned in 2023 that this KiuFunza model is globally among the most effective interventions to improve learning; that it has comparatively very low per-student costs; and therefore, is among the most cost-effective learning interventions in the RCT learning literature. In addition, based on 2023 endline data we find that, compared to the results in control schools, student learning in KiuFunza schools again increased across all grades and subjects. The effect sizes are similar to what we found for the previous phase. Based on that earlier experience, we also expect that teachers – having received their first payment – will increase their effort and student learning in 2024.

In the mainland, KiuFunza has a long-standing relation with the President’s Office – Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG). PO-RALG is an MOU partner of Twaweza’s: it provides the permits for our school level work, and was involved in the design of both KiuFunza III and this scale-up. Twaweza provides quarterly reports on the KiuFunza program implementation and visits the Ministry when possible. KiuFunza organizes its central trainings for implementation teams in Dodoma twice a year, and invites our Ministerial counterparts to visit, observe and discuss progress. However, this engagement is somewhat one-sided, and our counterparts find it hard to make time for KiuFunza.

Lessons and Insights from engaging ministries and national-level institutions

Building trust is key: Our experience with the Uganda Ministry of Health highlights the importance of investing time to build trust and rapport. This approach led to a highly informative national launch on emergency medical services, with government officials taking ownership.

Strategic Partnerships: We must be strategic in:

- **Partner Selection:** Leveraging partner networks and credibility to amplify our data.

- **Co-creation:** Collaborating with government and others to ensure data meets their needs and fosters buy-in.
- **Timing:** Engaging at critical moments in policy and planning cycles.
- **Venue & Atmosphere:** Choosing spaces that promote open and respectful dialogue.

Deeper Engagement: We'll become more deliberate, engaging throughout the decision-making process and exploring how to offer valuable implementation support.

Budget size matters: KiuFunza is competing for PO-RALG's attention with multi-million education interventions funded by large multi- and bilateral donors. We believe that in order to increase our policy footprint, we need to increase in size and search for effective partnerships, both in Tanzania and internationally. This search will be central in our medium-term scaling agenda.

5. Actors - Civil Society

Solidarity among civil society organizations in a time of closing civic space is vital, there is greater strength in numbers. In 2021 --half way through strategic plan (2019-2023) -- we articulated four strategic outcome statements to guide our aspirations in strengthening the field of civil society. These outcomes targeted individual activists, organizations and citizen's trust on civil societies. During 2023, Twaweza worked more closely with peer civil society organizations on a number of initiatives in all three countries. We worked directly with select organisations and through civil society coalitions.

Kenya:

We for the first time worked with the Okoa Uchumi Coalition through engaging with the Centre for Fiscal Affairs. We strategically positioned Twaweza as the provider of citizen generated data for issues of public interest. Through this, Twaweza gained great mileage and confidence among the CSOs in Kenya, and we enabled data driven advocacy around the Finance Bill.

Twaweza collected views of the citizens through a Survey Monkey. More than 25,000 Kenyans responded to the survey. This data was launched in a media launch in collaboration with the larger Okoa Uchumi and it received significant media coverage from over 30 news pieces including mentions at the National Assembly by Hon. Robert Mbui - Minority Leader and Hon. Otiende Amollo during the debate on the Finance Bill at the second reading on Wednesday the 15th of June 2023.

Uganda:

We carried out stakeholder mapping in partnership with the Ministry of Health because the ministry wanted to seek wide input from civil society.

When the team read about the proposed rainwater harvesting bill, this prompted the team to share the Sauti za Wananchi data on rainwater harvesting. It was at this meeting that the Member of Parliament invited Twaweza to a press conference that was scheduled the next week.

Tanzania:

CSO Week 2023: Twaweza was a key member of the steering committee that organizes the increasingly influential Annual CSO Week in Arusha. Our contribution in terms of shaping the content has been instrumental to making sure that we have sessions that are tailored to putting citizens at the centre. We used the opportunity to showcase animation work through animators themselves whereby we organized a town-hall style session with the animators sharing their experience and responding to questions.

We continued working the Ajenda ya Vijana (Youth Manifesto) coalition to help support their growth and modalities for working together. These workshops were demand driven following an earlier session with the group.

We held a three-day capacity exchange workshop with Southern Zone civil society organisations in which we shared ideas around fundraising, communications, animation, monitoring. We also engaged a group of local journalists on community-driven journalism.

We continued to support our partners Equality for Growth, Creative Industry Network Tanzania, Tanzania Centre for Democracy.

We supported the National Council of NGOs (NACONGO) to prepare a dashboard of resolutions and action points made at previous regulatory engagements between government and the sector.

We played a key part in the (Data Festival) 2023 as a member of the Steering Committee and lead partner for three sessions.

Outcome 12: Unusual actors mobilize, coalesce and work together to take specific actions in defence of democracy

Kenya: The Elimu Bora Technical Working Group referenced the Competency-based Curriculum (CBC) report calling on the government to address the confidence deficit in the rolling out of the CBC by the parents.

We co-hosted, with Afrobarometer, a pan-African webinar on making democracy work in and for Africa. This was a new space for us but amplified the democratic values we stand for during the open government week. One of the key speakers was the former president of Sierra Leone, H.E Ernest Bai Koroma.

Tanzania: In March 2023, the President indicated that the country would look into re-joining the Open Government Partnership at the earliest opportunity. In May, we hosted an OGP Week event to reintroduce OGP to the government and Tanzania's past experience with it until 2017. We had more than 70 people in attendance which attracted media attention.

As part of the organizing committee for the World Press Freedom Day, in partnership with UNESCO and other CSOs we helped organise a well-attended event on the theme of "Shaping a Future of Rights: Freedom of expression as a driver for all other human rights" in Zanzibar in May 2023. Thematic Workshops included Gender and Women's Leadership, Media Viability and Innovation, Media Laws and Policy Reform and Safety and Protection of

Journalists. We hosted a session Media Viability and Innovation in collaboration with DW Akademie, JamiiForums, and Nukta Africa.

Uganda:

Twaweza together with Hope for Victims of Traffic Accident (HOVITA) amplified the advocacy on making third party insurance work for citizens, prompting the parliament's health committee to convene a meeting with other stakeholders including the Insurance regulatory authority, Ministry of Works and Transport to find a solution to the problem.

Anti-corruption Coalition Uganda (ACCU), Center for Policy Analysis (CEPA) in partnership with Twaweza also amplified advocacy around the amendment of some sections of the Access to Information Act with Members of Parliament on the ICT Committee.

The Tax Justice Alliance invited Twaweza to form part of the team to draft their new strategy.

Outcome 13: Citizens express trust in civil society and view their work as constructive and critical

Tanzania. Through an Omnibus survey of a nationally representative panel of 2,000 respondents, we have been collecting citizens' views and experiences on the work of civil society organizations in Tanzania every two years. In general, the level of citizens' trust in civil society remains fairly large with small variations over the years.

- 84% of respondents reported that they have never interacted with CSOs before compared to 89% in 2021 and 87% in 2019
- 30% of respondents believe that CSOs make significant contribution to the development of their communities compared to 35% in 2021 and 44% in 2019
- 44% of respondents state that CSOs address citizens' priorities and concerns to a larger extent compared to 29% in 2021 and 46% in 2019.

Outcome 14: CSOs have increased advocacy, financial management and fundraising capacities

In Tanzania, partly as a result of our support to help them strengthen strategy and financial management operations, three of our partners – Equality for Growth, TheChanzo and the Creative Industry Network Tanzania - were able to secure new funding from donors

Outcome 15: Individual activists are better organized, networked, resourced, skilled and toolled

In Tanzania five animators from separate animation districts shared their experience and expertise at CSO Week 2023 on how they facilitate productive relationships between citizens and government to solve their challenges. All animators in Tanzania and Uganda have gained new skills and knowledge in problem-solving, engagement, government systems and processes.

Lessons and Insights from working with civil society

NGO's autonomy challenge: Despite its limitations, the statutory National Council of NGOs (NACONGO) remains the key voice for NGOs in Tanzania. We must strengthen it while advocating for its greater autonomy and independence.

Engaging early: engaging with civil servants early in their careers offers a unique window for influence, fostering a more open dialogue.

Coalition-building: In Kenya and Uganda, we're finding success through coalitions, by offering data, analysis and insights, and resources to support joint advocacy efforts.