



CIDD-UG NEWSLETTER

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Second Rural Democracy Ride for Enhancing Citizen Democratic participation takes route in Bukedi Sub region- CIDD-UG using UPIMAC Civic Education Materials.

There is no better substratum for a state and nation building than an informed citizenry. Through civic education, individuals are empowered to recognize that they have a choice, seek to understand the big picture, welcome the opportunity to learn, and are ready to challenge what they feel is wrong. And yet the existing interventions offer very limited opportunities for such grounded civic education to take place where the most affected are rural women and young people.

It is a well-known fact that in Uganda just like many other countries, young people in rural areas have often found themselves marginalized by decisions on the formulation and development of rural policy on one hand and by decision-making processes on the other. Yet they are more profoundly affected by the transitions taking place in contemporary society. The challenges lying ahead in rural areas of Uganda will have a fundamental impact on the opportunities available to young people and women who are continuing to live in the rural areas if not attended to.

By comparison with urban settings, rural areas are still short of the necessary communication tools and resources that benefit young people and women. This therefore prompted CIDD-UG to start delivering interventions meant to provide information focusing on rural youth and women such as relocating developmental information and intervention directly to rural areas. The innovation is currently helping young people and women to access critical development information and skills that empower them to play their roles and responsibilities within the constitutional limits.

During the first quarter of 2020, CIDD-UG conducted civic empowerment through second round Rural Democracy Ride (RDR) led by the women and young people. The selected Civic Educators under CIDD-UG have been empowered not just as recipients of civic education but rather providers of knowledge on civic education. This is also a move for building strong civic and social safety nets in our areas of operation.



Jane Namajja & Elly Olupot traversing the village of Limoto, Puti-Puti Sub County - Pallisa with civic education

As a result, CIDD-UG has been able to build capacity of **45** young women and men in the districts of Pallisa, Kibuku and Budaka on tactics and skills of civic education propagation.



Civic education in the kitchen by RDR Puti-Puti Sub County-Pallisa District

In the same vein, CIDD-UG has used the 45 trained youth to access over **345, hard to reach** young people and women during the period under review and interested them to participate in public policy and democratic process of their country. Through this approach, we anticipate to increase the number of young people and women who do not only act as Civic Educators but will rather interest themselves to take up leadership position as a means to deepen their bargaining power when it comes to distribution of resources across the public sectors.

During the first quarter of **2020** CIDD-UG has deliberately intensified rural democracy rides that have involved a number of young people and women who previously had low interest in

acquiring civic education either because of poor access to information or low interest in the value of civically aware youthful population.

For CIDD-UG, every opportunity to communicate in rural areas is an opportunity for civic education.

Rural democracy ride as implemented by CIDD-UG has been able to access groups of the population that have always been hard to reach. This has provided an opportunity for them to receive civic education to enhance their meaningful participation in policy development and a life of democracy.

One of the young people found drinking local beer had this to say *“it is surprising that Government has now realized that even drunkards like us have value, thank you for coming. You go and tell our sub county authorities that we also want to benefit from development programmes that they have kept giving their relatives alone.* This group thought that the RDR team was sent to their village by Government. It was a clear indication that these youth were not only civically aware of how to benefit from Government programmes but also where



Civic education as we fetch water by RDR Florence Asio & Abutwairu Nagumba



Frances Tino & Kenneth Okwangole -CIDD-UG providing Civic education at local beer pot during RDR in Pallisa

and how to complain if services were not reaching them. This gave CIDD-UG an opportunity for civic education. At the end of rural democracy ride, most of the hard to reach groups that were met appreciated the need to take part in development planning not only as individuals but also as community groups. The rural democracy ride also contributed to mobilizing citizens to participate in the recently concluded update of the national voters' registers as one of the messages sent out during RDR called for eligible voters to take keen interest in the national voter's registers and ensure that they are up-to-date.

CIDD-UG will continue using this approach to propagate civic education as a Contribution towards creating a proactive and engaged citizenry (active citizens) actively influencing democratic Processes in Uganda and able to hold governance institutions to account.

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