




COMMUNITY-BASED M&E FORUMS:

THE UGANDA BARAZA PROGRAMME

Baraza: Swahili word for veranda: Was used by the past African freedom fighters during liberation wars as a platform where they would converge to assess their performance in the struggle



What is a *Baraza* Programme

- A Public Service Delivery results Monitoring Tool in which all stakeholders get engaged.
- It is a platform that promotes routine assessment and follow-up on the progress of implementation of public programmes in the local community.
- In a nutshell, *Barazas* form a Tool for Enhancing Participatory Monitoring of PSD results, hence causing ownership of public programmes by the beneficiary communities.
- The acquired Baraza information feeds into the overall Gov't M&E system assessment tools such as NAPR, NHAPR, LGMSD to guide policy decisions.



Institutionalisation of *Barazas* in Uganda

- ❑ **In 2009, H.E the President of Uganda directed the Office of the Prime Minister to:**
 1. Mobilise and engage the local citizens and other stakeholders in participatory monitoring of PSD results.
 2. Empower local citizens through disclosure of public information to enable them task their local leaders for accountability of the resources spent on public programmes & projects.

Institutionalisation of *Barazas* in Uganda

3. *Barazas* were then established in Government as; citizens' advocacy Fora that bring together Stakeholders to continuously monitor & assess performance progress of the public sector.
 4. Government's objective is to eliminate the information gap between:
 - ✓ Political leaders & citizens,
 - ✓ Political leaders & technocrats,
 - ✓ Technocrats & citizens
- So as to improve performance tracking & feedback.

The Key Stakeholders for the 3 Levels of Uganda's Barazas

LEVEL 1: Regional Baraza level.

- Extraordinary Barazas that are chaired by the Rt. Hon. PM
- Barazas Involve; Central Gov't Strategic Policy Makers, Development Partners & the District / City Executive Leaders from the selected region.
- Barazas review performance progress on strategic mid-term outcome targets & the ruling Gov't manifesto strategic commitments based on the NDP III programme.



Picture: *Uganda's Prime Minister Rt. Hon. Robina Nabbanja is chairing a regional Baraza in greater Mubende region. She also got joined by other Stakeholders to inspect / assess the reported outcome from Gov't Agricultural seedlings that were distributed to beneficiaries. 1st September, 2023*

The Key Stakeholders for the 3 Levels of Uganda's Barazas

LEVEL 2: District / City division Baraza level.

- Chaired by the Resident District Commissioner (RDC) / (RCC)
- Participants are invited from all-over the DLG without restrictions
- An OPM Minister presides over the Baraza at this level
- Involves; area Ministers & MPs, central & local Gov't technical officials, private sector representatives, civil society, cultural, religious & opinion leaders and the entire community from DLG,
- At this level, Barazas review progress of the output performance targets of activities implemented in all **LLGs**



Picture: *During a recent District Level Baraza in Kyotera District on 15th Feb 2022, the Minister for General Duties from the OPM Rt. Hon. Justine Lumumba responded to community concerns. She later on presented Cabinet Memo that highlights to Cabinet the outstanding issues of policy concern for the attention of Gov't. **The actions on the issues are already underway.***

The Key Stakeholders for the 3 Levels of Uganda's Barazas

LEVEL 3: Sub county Baraza level.

- Chaired by the Resident District Commissioner (RDC) and Presided over by the OPM Minister
- Area Ministers & MPs participate, Involves; central Gov't technical officials, Local Gov't technical & political leaders, the civil society, Cultural, Religious & Opinion leaders and the entire community from the host Sub county
- At this level, Barazas review progress of the output performance targets of the **PDM** and other activities implemented in all Parishes, Wards & Cells in the Sub county, Town council or Municipal division
- Participants are invited from only the host Sub county, Town council or Municipal division



Picture: The RDC of Pakwach District chairs a recent Sub county Baraza in Wadelai Sub county, Pakwach District on 20th July 2023

Level of Uptake of Uganda's *Barazas*

- There is unprecedented uptake of the programme by both the Duty bearers, Policy makers, Development partners and the Community,
- Clearly evidenced through the high demand for the *Barazas* and passionate participation by Local citizens, MPs, Ministers, Development partners, Society elders, Opinion leaders etc. [*Though it wasn't like that initially and this was due to political sentiments*].
- On average each *Baraza* is attended by BTN 500 to 600 participants.



Picture: A section of the participants that participated during a recent *Baraza* in Budaka District passionately raise issues



How Gov't Uses *Barazas*

- Through the *Barazas*, Gov't provides information & involves the public service beneficiaries in project monitoring to improve both the quality and quantity of local public service delivery.
- Government uses *Barazas* to identify the stalled, dragged, substandard and or shoddy projects in the local communities and re-prioritize their resumption and completion.
- *Barazas* are used to popularise Government policies, programs and projects for purpose of ownership by the beneficiary communities.

How Gov't Uses *Barazas*

- Barazas are used as platforms for awareness creation, knowledge sharing to strengthen the ordinary citizens' rights /empower them to demand for good services, gender-responsiveness, good governance and the rule of law in accordance with Chapter I of Uganda's Constitution: ***(Power belongs to the people).***
- Barazas are Tools for localisation of the NDPs & the SDGs implementation process. During Barazas local citizens are oriented on the progress status of the NDP and on the achievement of specific SDGs hence, ***leaving no one behind !***

How Gov't Uses *Barazas*

- Government most often utilizes *Barazas* to solve other budget neutral public concerns such as;
 - ✓ Gender Based Violence (GBV),
 - ✓ Recovery of stolen public goods through Whistle-Blowing,
 - ✓ Abating public servant absenteeism and
 - ✓ Re-aligning priorities to better match with the needs of local citizens (i.e. *demand driven planning*).



Contribution of the Barazas to the LG M&E Systems and the Human Rights

- The programme has attracted interest from various Dev't partners including; the UNDP, EU among others who have invested resources for enhancing the LG M&E systems plus translation of budget information materials into local language. To ensure the citizens engage the leaders in meaningful debate during Barazas.
- The development concerns and issues that are raised during these Barazas are submitted to the MDAs & LGs for action and there is continuous monitoring & follow up in the LGs

Contribution of the Barazas to the LG M&E Systems and the Human Rights

Most often during the week of Baraza preparations in a Sub county, or immediately after the Baraza is held local leaders prioritize the formerly stalled activities. **Pictures** below show what often happens in the Districts:

State of the Road in Karugutu before the Baraza preparation week



New State of the same Road in Karugutu Just after the Baraza week





Contribution of the Barazas to the LG M&E Systems and the Human Rights

- Quick responsiveness by Government to the demands of the local citizens,
- Participatory Monitoring leads to ownership of Government programmes & projects by the local communities,
- Through Barazas, citizens boldly input their prioritised livelihood concerns in the Sub county, Town council, Municipal & District development plans which feed into the overall NDP (*demand driven planning process*)



Contribution of the Barazas to the LG M&E Systems and the Human Rights

- Data on Fiscal disbursements from MOFPED to the LGs is openly presented to local citizens at the Baraza. Through the Media, citizens are also empowered on how to access the Budget allocations via the Gov't Budget website. This is commensurate with the Right to Public Information Act of 2005.
- There has been gradual Reduction in the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) which has reduced from 155 in 2015 to 144 in 2022.

Contribution of the Barazas to the LG M&E Systems and the Human Rights

- The recent Spot-Monitoring & Follow up activities conducted by OPM in the LGs indicated that; there has been an improvement in the rate at which the issues raised and their recommendations are responded to and acted on by the Action centers (MDAs and LGs).
1. The percentage range has improved from 55-60% in FY2018/2019 to 70-75% by FY2022/2023.
 2. This is due to the acquired basic M&E knowledge by the RDCs, District chairpersons, Councilors



The State Minister for Northern Uganda Reconstruction Hon. K. Grace Freedom (middle) conducts follow up exercise to assess progress of the ongoing construction of the SEED school reported to be stalled during Baraza in West Nile region

Contribution of the Barazas to the LG M&E Systems and the Human Rights

- Regarding legal actions, the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister has been able to direct the responsible Agencies to take action by fast-tracking the progress of investigations, audits & court processes.
- The Agencies include; the Police (for investigations), the Auditor General (for the audit) & the Attorney General (for court processes).
- The Media services have been brought down to the lower local governments to make the ordinary persons' voices be heard as indicated in the media crew picture below:



Media Crew at the Baraza in Harugali Sub county in Bundibugyo District, making the ordinary persons' voices be heard



Thank you!