

FORUM FOR WOMEN IN DEMOCRACY (FOWODE)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

TECHNICAL EXPERT (CONSULTANT) TO CONDUCT A GENDER AUDIT OF THE PARISH DEVELOPMENT MODEL (PDM)

1. Introduction

Forum for Women in Democracy (FOWODE) is a non-partisan feminist organisation established in 1995 with the vision of *“a just and fair society where, in all spheres, public and private, women and men in their diversities share equally in decision making.”* Over the years, FOWODE has positioned itself as a leading national actor in advancing gender equality, women’s leadership, and inclusive governance. While its core focus remains women’s empowerment, the organisation adopts a gender-transformative approach that actively engages men and broader societal structures to promote equitable participation and shared accountability.

FOWODE In partnership with Nakere Rural Women Activists (NARWOA), Amudat Inter-Religious Development Initiative (AIDI), and Women’s Integrated Development Association (WIDEA), and with support from the Royal Danish Embassy and PACER¹ funding partners, FOWODE is implementing the *Women’s Amplified Voice for Accountability (WAVA)* project in the Karamoja sub-region. The project aims to strengthen women-led accountability for gender-responsive service delivery and climate justice across the districts of Napak, Karenga, Kotido, Amudat, and Nakapiripirit, while also contributing to national-level policy and governance processes.

The WAVA project is strategically aligned to Uganda’s broader governance and development architecture, particularly the Parish Development Model (PDM), which serves as the Government’s flagship framework for socio-economic transformation at the parish level. By strengthening citizen voice, enhancing accountability systems, and promoting gender-responsive service delivery, WAVA contributes to improving the effectiveness, inclusiveness, and equity of public interventions implemented under PDM, particularly in historically marginalised regions such as Karamoja.

2. Assignment background

The Government of Uganda launched the Parish Development Model (PDM) in 2022 as a whole-of-government strategy aimed at transitioning households from subsistence livelihoods to participation in the money economy. Anchored at the parish level the lowest unit of planning and service delivery the model seeks to deliver integrated services across production, financial inclusion, infrastructure, social services, data systems, and governance.

As Uganda’s flagship socio-economic transformation programme, with an annual investment exceeding UGX 1 trillion, PDM represents a significant opportunity to address poverty, vulnerability, and structural inequalities. However, its transformative potential

¹ Partnerships for Accountability, Civic Engagement and Human Rights (PACER)

is inherently dependent on the extent to which it effectively responds to existing gender disparities embedded within Uganda's rural economy.

Women constitute more than 51% of Uganda's population and form the backbone of the informal economy, accounting for approximately 87% of workers in this sector. Despite this, women face disproportionately high levels of vulnerable employment, estimated at 64% compared to 46.5% for men. Young women are particularly disadvantaged, with 52.2% classified as Not in Employment, Education, or Training (NEET), compared to 28% of their male counterparts. Persistent gender pay-gaps ranging between 32% and 46%—further highlight systemic inequalities in access to economic opportunities and benefits.

Within this context, the effective implementation of PDM requires deliberate and sustained efforts to address structural barriers that limit women's participation in productive activities, access to financial services, and influence in decision-making processes. Without such measures, there is a risk that existing inequalities may be reproduced or exacerbated, thereby constraining the programme's overall impact.

The WAVA project is designed to complement and strengthen PDM implementation by reinforcing the governance, accountability, and inclusion dimensions that underpin its success. Specifically, WAVA supports women and community structures to actively engage in monitoring service delivery, influencing local planning processes, and holding duty bearers accountable. This aligns closely with key PDM pillars, including financial inclusion, governance and administration, social services, and data systems, where citizen engagement and responsiveness are critical for achieving equitable outcomes.

In addition, WAVA's focus on climate justice and gender-responsive service delivery ensures that local development processes are not only economically transformative but also socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable. Through this approach, the project contributes to strengthening the interface between citizens, civil society, and government systems at parish, district, and national levels.

At the policy level, the project is anchored in Uganda's broader legal and development frameworks, including the 1995 Constitution, Vision 2040, the National Development Plans, the National Gender Policy (2010), and the country's commitments under the Sustainable Development Goals. These frameworks collectively underscore the centrality of gender equality, inclusive governance, and equitable service delivery as foundational pillars of national development.

It is against this background that FOWODE, under the WAVA initiative, seeks to undertake a comprehensive gender audit of the Parish Development Model. The audit will assess the extent to which gender equality and equity have been integrated into the design, implementation, financing, governance, and monitoring of PDM, with particular focus on the Karamoja sub-region.

The findings of this assessment are expected to generate actionable evidence to inform policy dialogue, strengthen programme implementation, and enhance the responsiveness of PDM to the needs and priorities of women and other marginalised groups. Ultimately, the audit will contribute to ensuring that PDM delivers on its intended goal of inclusive and equitable socio-economic transformation for all Ugandans.

3. Objectives of the assignment

3.1.Overall objective

To assess the extent to which gender equality and equity are integrated into the design, implementation, financing, governance, and monitoring of the Parish Development Model.

3.2.Specific Objectives

- 1. Assess Gender Responsiveness in Programme Design and Policy Alignment**
 - Examine the extent to which PDM design frameworks, guidelines, and operational modalities integrate gender equality principles.
 - Analyse alignment with national gender policy frameworks and commitments to inclusive development.
- 2. Analyse Implementation Practices and Beneficiary Reach**
 - Assess how PDM interventions are being implemented at parish and district levels, with a focus on women's² access to:
 - Productive resources
 - Financial services (including PDM SACCOs)
 - Extension and support services
 - Identify disparities in participation, benefit distribution, and decision-making.
- 3. Examine Governance, Participation, and Accountability Mechanisms**
 - Evaluate the extent to which women and marginalised groups are represented and actively engaged in PDM governance structures.
 - Assess functionality of accountability mechanisms, including citizen feedback, transparency, and oversight systems.
- 4. Assess Financing Flows and Resource Allocation from a Gender Perspective**
 - Analyse allocation, access, and utilisation of PDM resources, including potential gender-based barriers.
 - Examine whether financing mechanisms are responsive to women's economic realities and constraints.
- 5. Evaluate Data Systems, Monitoring, and Learning Mechanisms**
 - Assess the extent to which PDM monitoring systems incorporate gender-disaggregated data.
 - Evaluate how data is used to inform adaptive management and equitable decision-making.
- 6. Identify Structural and Contextual Barriers to Women's Inclusion**
 - Analyse socio-cultural, economic, and institutional constraints limiting women's effective participation and benefit from PDM.
 - Pay particular attention to intersectional vulnerabilities (e.g., young women, women with disabilities).
- 7. Generate Evidence-Based Recommendations for Policy and Practice**

² For all objectives, the consultant shall consider that women are not homogenous & thus present data that desegregates women in their diversities (different demographics)

- Provide practical, scalable recommendations to strengthen gender responsiveness across PDM pillars.
- Identify entry points for civil society, government, and development partners to enhance inclusive implementation.

4. Scope of the Assignment

4.1. Geographic Scope

The audit will be conducted in the Karamoja sub-region, specifically in the districts of:

- Napak
- Karenga
- Kotido
- Amudat
- Nakapiripirit

These districts represent priority implementation areas for PDM, characterised by high poverty levels, vulnerability, and historical marginalisation, making them critical for assessing inclusive delivery of government interventions.

4.2. Thematic Scope

The assignment will adopt a multi-dimensional analytical framework, covering the following key domains:

- a) Programme Design and Policy Frameworks**
 - Review of PDM guidelines, implementation frameworks, and operational tools
 - Integration of gender equality principles in policy design
- b) Implementation and Service Delivery**
 - Access to PDM services across key pillars:
 - Financial inclusion
 - Production and livelihoods
 - Social services
 - Equity in targeting and beneficiary selection
- c) Governance and Institutional Arrangements**
 - Functionality of parish-level governance structures
 - Representation and participation of women in decision-making
 - Transparency and accountability systems
- d) Financing and Resource Access**
 - Access to PDM funds and financial services
 - Barriers affecting women's uptake and utilisation of resources
- e) Monitoring, Data Systems, and Learning**
 - Availability and use of gender-disaggregated data
 - Effectiveness of MIS and reporting systems in informing decisions
- f) Cross-Cutting Issues**
 - Gender norms and power relations
 - Climate vulnerability and resilience
 - Intersectionality (youth, disability, marginalised groups)

4.3.Stakeholder Scope

The audit will engage a diverse range of stakeholders, including:

- National-level policymakers and implementing agencies
- District and sub-county local government officials
- Parish Development Committees and SACCO leadership
- Civil society organisations and community-based groups
- Women beneficiaries and community members
- Cultural and religious leaders where relevant

This ensures a whole-of-system perspective, consistent with PDM's integrated approach.

5. Methodology

The gender audit will adopt a mixed-methods, participatory, and systems-oriented approach designed to generate both empirical evidence and actionable insights on how gender is integrated within the Parish Development Model (PDM). The methodology will combine quantitative and qualitative techniques to assess policy intent, institutional practice, and lived experiences of beneficiaries - particularly women and marginalised groups.

5.1.Analytical Framework

The audit will be guided by established gender and governance analytical lenses to ensure depth and rigour, including:

- ***Gender Equality Continuum Tool:*** to assess whether PDM interventions are gender-blind, gender-sensitive, or gender-transformative.
- ***Gender Roles Framework (Harvard Analytical Framework):*** to examine division of labour, access to and control over productive resources within PDM-supported households.
- ***Political Economy Analysis (PEA):*** to interrogate power relations, incentive structures, and decision-making dynamics influencing inclusion within PDM structures.

This integrated framework will enable assessment not only of what is happening, but why gender gaps persist within PDM systems.

5.2.Inception Report Refinement

Without prejudice to the above framework, the consultant will develop a detailed and context-specific methodology in the inception report, including:

- Sampling strategy and tools
- Data collection instruments
- Fieldwork plan and timelines
- Data analysis plan

This will ensure methodological clarity and alignment with stakeholder expectations prior to full implementation.

5.3.Data Collection Methods

i). Document and Policy Review

A comprehensive desk review will be undertaken to assess the extent to which gender considerations are embedded in the design and operationalisation of PDM. Key documents will include:

- PDM policy framework, guidelines, and implementation manuals
- National and district level budgets and expenditure reports
- Parish-level development plans and SACCO operational guidelines
- Monitoring and evaluation frameworks and administrative data systems
- Relevant national frameworks (e.g., Gender Policy, NDP III/IV, Vision 2040)

ii). Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

In-depth interviews will be conducted with stakeholders across national and sub-national levels to capture institutional perspectives, implementation realities, and policy-level insights. These will include:

- Officials from relevant Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs), particularly those responsible for gender, local government, and the national PDM coordination office.
- District and sub-county technical officers (e.g., Community Development Officers, Parish Chiefs)
- PDM implementers and programme coordinators
- Development partners and civil society actors engaged in governance and gender equality

KIIs will interrogate institutional capacity, accountability mechanisms, financing flows, and constraints affecting gender-responsive implementation.

iii). Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

FGDs will be conducted across the five target districts (Napak, Karenga, Kotido, Amudat, and Nakapiripirit) with diverse community-level stakeholders, including:

- Women beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of PDM
- Youth (male and female), including NEET groups
- Persons with disabilities and other marginalised groups
- Parish Development Committees (PDCs) and SACCO members

These discussions will generate insights into access, participation, decision-making power, benefit distribution, and perceived barriers within PDM structures, ensuring that lived experiences inform the audit findings.

iv).Case Studies and Outcome Tracing

Selected case studies will be developed to document practical experiences of women and vulnerable groups engaging with PDM, including:

- Access to PDM funds and productive assets
- Participation in SACCO governance and parish decision-making
- Outcomes related to livelihoods, resilience, and agency

Outcome tracing techniques will be used to link PDM interventions to observed changes in gender relations and economic participation.

v). Quantitative Data Analysis

Where available, the audit will analyse administrative and programme data to assess:

- Gender-disaggregated access to PDM resources (funding, training, inputs)
- Participation rates in governance structures (PDCs, SACCOs)
- Distribution of benefits across gender and social categories

This will help quantify inclusion gaps and disparities in programme reach and outcomes.

5.4.Ethical Considerations

The audit will adhere to strict ethical standards, including:

- Informed consent and voluntary participation
- Confidentiality and anonymisation of responses
- Sensitivity to power dynamics, particularly when engaging vulnerable populations
- Gender-sensitive facilitation approaches to ensure inclusive participation

5.5.Participatory and Validation Processes

The methodology will integrate participatory validation mechanisms to enhance ownership and credibility of findings:

- Stakeholder debrief sessions at district level
- Validation workshop with national stakeholders (MDAs, CSOs, development partners) – *[this will be separately funded by FOWODE, and should therefore not be costed in the consultancy]*
- Iterative feedback loops during data collection and analysis

This ensures that findings are contextually grounded, verified, and actionable.

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6. Assignment duration

This assignment is expected to be conducted within a period of 60 working days from the date of signing the contract.

Any changes beyond this timeline will have to be communicated and agreed with the contracting party. All tasks under this initiative are expected to be concluded by 30th August 2026.

7. Key Deliverables

The Consultant will be expected to deliver the following outputs within the agreed timelines:

- **Inception Report:** A comprehensive report detailing the refined methodology, analytical framework, work plan, sampling strategy, and data collection tools.
- **Field Data Report:** A complete documentation of fieldwork, including cleaned datasets, transcripts, and all data collection instruments used.
- **Draft Gender Audit Report:** A structured report presenting preliminary findings, analysis, and emerging recommendations for review.
- **Validation Workshop:** Facilitation of one stakeholder validation workshop to present findings, gather feedback, and strengthen ownership of results.
- **Final Gender Audit Report:** A revised and high-quality report incorporating stakeholder feedback, including actionable recommendations for policy and practice.

8. Assignment management arrangements

This assignment will be undertaken under a consultancy arrangement; therefore, no employer–employee relationship shall exist between the Consultant and FOWODE. For the duration of the assignment, the Consultant will report to and work closely with the **Director of Programmes**, who will provide overall technical oversight and coordination.

To ensure effective implementation and quality assurance, roles and responsibilities will be as follows:

FOWODE will:

- Provide overall coordination, strategic guidance, and quality assurance for the assignment.
- Procure and contract the Consultant.
- Review and provide timely feedback on key deliverables, including the inception, draft, and final reports.
- Facilitate access to relevant stakeholders and documentation where necessary.
- Organise and support validation and dissemination processes.

The Consultant will:

- Lead the day-to-day planning and execution of the assignment.
- Obtain all necessary ethical and administrative clearances required for fieldwork.
- Develop the inception report, including tools and detailed methodology.
- Recruit, train, and supervise enumerators and field facilitators.
- Oversee data collection, entry, cleaning, analysis, transcription, and translation.
- Submit all raw data, transcripts, and supporting materials to FOWODE.
- Facilitate stakeholder validation processes and contribute to dissemination of findings.
- Ensure timely delivery of all outputs in line with agreed timelines.

9. Required Competencies

FOWODE invites applications individual consultants (preferably working in a team) with demonstrated expertise in gender analysis and governance.

The required competencies include

- **Gender Expertise:** The team must include a gender specialist with strong expertise in gender analysis, social development, and women's economic empowerment, particularly in relation to public policy and development programmes.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation Expertise:** The team should include an M&E specialist with demonstrated experience in gender-responsive data systems, mixed-methods research, and results-based analysis.

Team Lead Qualifications:

The Team Lead should possess:

- A minimum of a Master's degree in Gender Studies or a related social science discipline.
 - At least five (5) years of proven experience in gender analysis, women's rights, governance, or policy-related research.
- **Contextual and Field Capacity:** The team must demonstrate capacity to operate effectively in Karamoja, including:
 - Availability of local language facilitators, or
 - A clear and feasible plan to recruit qualified local facilitators within the region.
 - **Additional Value:** Experience in conducting gender audits, political economy analysis, or evaluations of government programmes will be considered a strong asset.

10. Ethics and data protection

All outputs produced under this assignment—including data, reports, tools, and any related materials (collectively referred to as the “Work Product”) shall remain the **sole property of FOWODE**. The Consultant shall not publish, share, or disseminate any part of the Work Product without prior written approval from FOWODE.

The Consultant is required to adhere to the highest ethical standards throughout the assignment, including:

- Obtaining informed consent from all participants prior to engagement.
- Ensuring confidentiality, anonymity, and secure data handling.
- Applying “Do No Harm” principles, particularly when engaging vulnerable populations.
- Upholding safeguarding standards, including protection from exploitation and abuse.
- Ensuring gender-sensitive and inclusive data collection approaches.

11. Application process and timeline

Interested and qualified consultants are invited to submit the following:

- **Cover Letter:** A brief statement summarising the consultant's understanding of the assignment, suitability for the role, and relevant expertise in relation to the ToR.
- **Technical Proposal:** A detailed proposal outlining the proposed approach, methodology, analytical framework, work plan, and team composition (where applicable).
- **Financial Proposal:** An itemised budget clearly indicating professional fees, fieldwork costs, logistics, and any other associated administrative expenses.
- **Curriculum Vitae (CVs):** Updated CVs of all proposed team members, highlighting relevant qualifications and experience related to gender analysis, governance, and mixed-methods research.
- **Relevant Experience:** Evidence of recent and similar assignments undertaken, particularly those involving gender audits, policy analysis, or work with local communities and non-governmental organisations. *(Please include at least two client references with contact details.)*

Please submit expressions of interest to:

Forum for Women in Democracy (FOWODE)

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P.O Box 7176 Kampala

Tel: +256 777 991 366

Website: www.fowode.org

Submit to email: consultants@fowode.org copy in fowode@fowode.org

Submission Deadline: 19th May 2026

Disclaimer:

Forum for Women in Democracy (FOWODE) is an Equal Opportunities, gender sensitive and corruption intolerant employer – Women are particularly encouraged to apply. FOWODE does not charge or seek payment for any recruitment process. Any form of canvassing or lobbying for expression of interest shall lead to automatic disqualification.