



## Activity brief (December 2013)

### Parliament of Uganda Institutional Strengthening Program

1 July 2012 – 30 June 2013



**Background:** Through the AAPF and the Africa Program Support Group, an activity design team carried out a training needs assessment in April 2012. Subsequently, the team prepared an activity design for a one-year training program for Ugandan Members of Parliament (MPs) and parliamentary committee staff to support institutional strengthening in public financial management.

**Objective:** The program was designed in collaboration with the Parliament of Uganda and was aimed at supporting its contribution to the national goal of improving democracy and the rule of law to lift income levels and living standards through improved performance of the legislature. Specifically, the objective of the program was to improve the effectiveness of the legislative function of the Parliament and strengthen its oversight function over the Executive.

**Activity description:** The activity comprised six training modules, targeting MPs and parliamentary staff, based on the Parliament's identified priorities. The six modules were: Improving Performance of Officers at the Table; Effective Committee Work; Financial Scrutiny – Understanding Estimates and Financial Documents; Parliamentary Leadership for Women; Research and Reporting; and Communicating with the Electorate and the Media.

To ensure participants were exposed to international best practice, as well as gaining a better understanding of Ugandan Parliament practices and procedures, a mix of international and local presenters were used in the delivery of each module.

**Outcomes:** Although parliamentary strengthening programs are difficult to assess in terms of their long-term institutional outcomes, this program has produced very positive results. Participant feedback indicates very high levels of satisfaction. Since the training, participants reported a number of key outcomes:

- The 118 female training participants have formed a women's caucus to ensure Parliament adopts a more 'gendered' approach. Additionally, female MPs reported greater confidence in using parliamentary procedures.
- The Office of the Clerk reported that its staff gained a better understanding of their role and their cooperation with committee chairs improved.

- Financial scrutiny training has resulted in an improvement of budget analysis skills and better understanding of the different roles in the budget accountability process.
- As a direct result of the training, the research department is producing bill summaries for MPs and planning new research publications including Issues Papers.

#### Participants:

Module	M	F	Total
Improving Performance of Officers at the Table	14	7	21
Effective Committee Work – Leadership of Committees	32	10	42
Effective Parliamentary Leadership for Women MPs	0	56	56
Research and Report Writing Skills	18	8	26
Parliamentary Financial Scrutiny	43	18	61
Communicating with the Electorate and the Media	25	19	44
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>250</b>

**Participant feedback:** The training program received positive feedback from participants. Merina Barungi, an assistant clerk who attended the first training module, said the course content was "very relevant to needs we have currently. The trainers were obviously very experienced and knowledgeable, and because the sessions were interactive we had a chance to apply some of the ideas passed on to us," Ms Barungi said.

Others said the program provided lessons from parliamentary systems in other countries, such as Australia and Canada. This enabled participants to look at their roles from a different perspective and identify ways to improve their performance.

<b>Activity number:</b>	143/01
<b>Date approved:</b>	29/05/2012
<b>Date commenced:</b>	01/07/2012
<b>Date completed:</b>	30/06/2013
<b>Implementation partner:</b>	Legislative Leadership and Governance Group (within the Alfred Deakin Research Institute at Deakin University in Australia)
<b>Total cost:</b>	AUD 543 335