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# WE ARE ABLE!

## INTERACTIVE RADIO CAMPAIGN

DATA ANALYSIS REPORT

MARCH 2023



**LIGHT**  
FOR THE WORLD

The Hague Academy for  
local governance



**ZOAC**  
from relief to recovery







TRAC FM collects valuable data from citizens throughout Uganda and enables organisations, researchers and government institutions to reach out to citizens in a direct and cost effective way.

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## I. LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>ALC</b>	Area Land Committee
<b>LFTW</b>	Light for the World
<b>MoFA</b>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<b>OPD</b>	Organisations for Persons with Disabilities
<b>VSLA</b>	Village Savings and Loan Association
<b>WaA!</b>	We are Able!

## II. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to thank the individuals who contributed to this report, especially the Ugandan citizens through whose responses to the radio polls and surveys we obtained further insights into the community perspectives on disability and inclusion of people with disabilities in the food value chain, as well as governance structures. From the over 8,500 responses across Acholi and West Nile, we received information that is crucial to understanding community perspectives on disability inclusion and providing better direct program implementation which is beneficial for the communities we serve.

This report was prepared by Trac FM and We Are Able! Project partners, spearheaded by Light for the World. The core Trac FM team includes Wouter Dijkstra, Maurice van Rooden and Innocent Amanyire from Trac FM. While We Are Able! Partner staff include Simon Opiyo, Muzamil Alli, Emilly Niringiye, Jackline Ochwo and Denish Lubangakene, Anneke Maarse and Silvester Kasozi from LFTW, Joyce Patricia Okwir, Babiye Rachel, and Robert Igalo (from ZOA), Deborah Iyute, Aciro Jennifer and Amono Rose Ocitti (from NUDIPU), Bayo Moses and Odong Wycliff from VNGI and The Hague Academy. They helped identify project specific topics and challenges within the theme of inclusive food security and local governance for people with disabilities.

This report drew upon data collected through radio polls that were aired on two radio stations across the country. We gratefully acknowledge the support of our radio partners Mega FM and Radio Pacis in Gulu and Arua districts respectively.

We would also love to thank our talk show guests, without whom the deliberations on the findings would have been limited. Their contribution through knowledge and experience sharing during the radio debates can not go unrecognised: Kilama Alfred, Nyero Denish, Odong Charles Akena, Apiyo Jennifer Lagweno.

Lastly, we would like to thank the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of The Netherlands (MoFA), whose financial aid has made the implementation of the We are Able! Programme possible.

## III. KEY FINDINGS

People without disabilities often assume that low self-esteem is the main cause of food insecurity among persons with disabilities (36% of respondents). They do not see clearly that exclusion to farm inputs and saving groups are causing most food insecurity, according to persons with disabilities.

1  
POLL

2  
POLL

With 44% of the respondents, family or community members taking advantage of them is the primary reason why people with disabilities are unable to use or produce on land.

The preference for inclusive Savings Groups (VSLAs) is evident among both people with (66%) and without disabilities (72%). The higher percentage of support from those without disabilities may support people with disabilities to participate in mainstream VSLAs.

3  
POLL

4  
POLL

Both people with (20%) and without disabilities (21%) lack support for the current system of special elective positions. This highlights the need for more inclusive representation that involves active participation and representation by elected leaders for people with disabilities.

# 1. FOREWORD

Persons with disabilities strongly depend on their family ties for their food security. In situations of general food insecurity, the families of persons with disabilities need to have food security benefits (e.g. increased agricultural productivity, better extension services) in order to improve the food security situation of persons with disabilities. At the same time, the voice and role of persons with disabilities within the family needs to be strengthened as well. This can, for example, contribute to securing the tenure rights of persons with disabilities, one of the cornerstones of sustainable food security in rural areas persons with disabilities are affected by exclusionary practices, often conveyed by beliefs, customs and social norms that consider disability as a curse and people with disabilities as incapable. This results in limited access to markets, agricultural techniques, knowledge and inputs, as well as limited access to land and exclusion from food security-related decision-making, all of which negatively affects food security.

Uganda ranks 159 on the Human Development Index (HDI) and agriculture provides for more than 70 percent of employment, and has laws that support food security and policies for extension services.<sup>1</sup> However, while these deliver poorly, the effects for persons with disabilities are even less.

In Uganda, the We are Able! program is implemented in two regions, one of which is still feeling the effects of civil war and massive internal displacement (Acholi),<sup>2</sup> and one dealing with the large-scale influx of refugees (West Nile). The impediments to food security in Uganda are manifold and include: insecure tenure rights and lacking access to land; lack of access to financing; limited public knowledge of nutrition and food security.

Women, men and youth with disabilities are severely affected by all these factors, starting with being denied access to land. Uganda has developed legislation and policies to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities. Structures exist at the local level to promote the equal participation of persons with disabilities. However, structural inefficiencies and capacity gaps have weakened the implementation of the laws and policies at the district and sub-county levels, leading to disputes and conflicts. The lack of implementation also means that food insecure persons with disabilities do not receive adequate support to improve their food security. In the regions chosen, opportunities exist to improve land security and access to land by building on previous and ongoing programs and adapting them to the needs of persons with disabilities and excluded groups. Both host communities and refugees can greatly benefit from better land-access arrangements, as land access has been flagged as one of the core challenges to peace, stability and food security.<sup>3</sup> This also provides the basis for tackling other impediments to food security such as access to financing and low agricultural productivity.

This report explores some of the dynamics at play leading to exclusion and food insecurity among people with disabilities within the West Nile and Acholi regions. From the findings we are able to identify how to design disability inclusive programmes like We are Able! and how they can be geared towards addressing the complexities and challenges that persons with disabilities face as they seek to have their rights to access to food security and land recognised.

1 Human Development Report 2020, The Next Frontier: Human Development and the Anthropocene United Nations Development Program (UNDP, 2020)

2, 3 Understanding Land Dynamics and Livelihood in Refugee Hosting Districts of Northern Uganda. United Nations Development Program (UNDP, 2018)

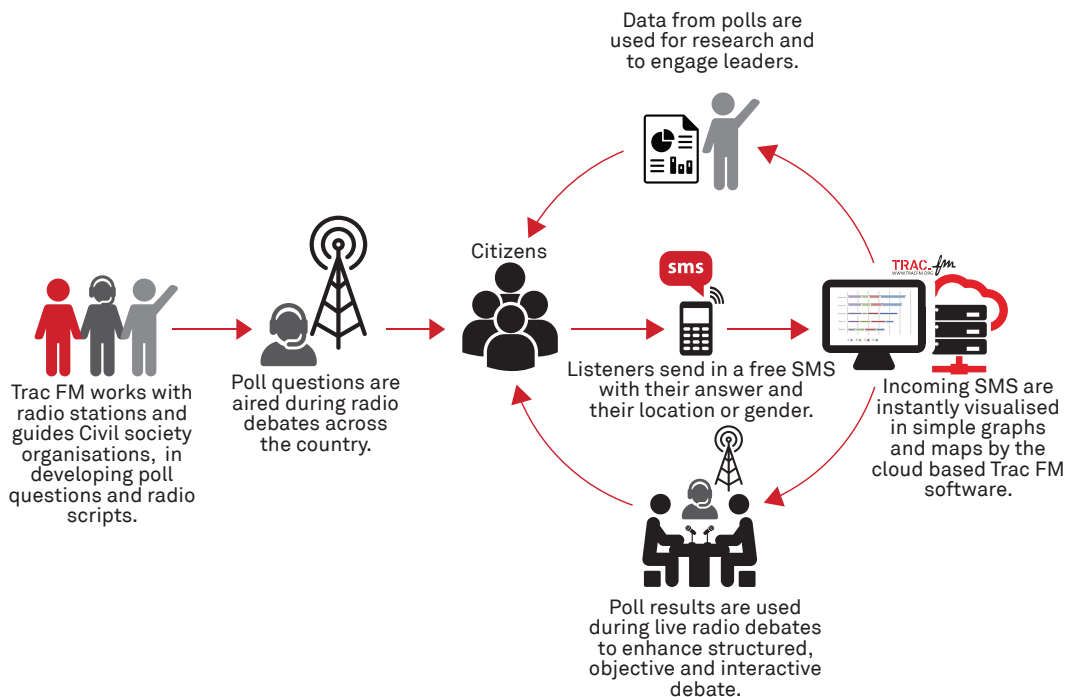


## 2. BACKGROUND

### APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

Trac FM is a company that uses radio talk shows and text message polls to gather information from people and share it with leaders and the public. They work with local language radio stations at popular times and make sure each person only gets one vote in the poll.

During live talk shows, the results are shown in real time and the host and commentators can discuss the results. In the campaign under the We Are Able! programme, two radio stations received over 1,000 responses each for each radio poll. The Trac FM platform received a total of 8,588 responses to the four poll questions.





### 3. POLL FINDINGS

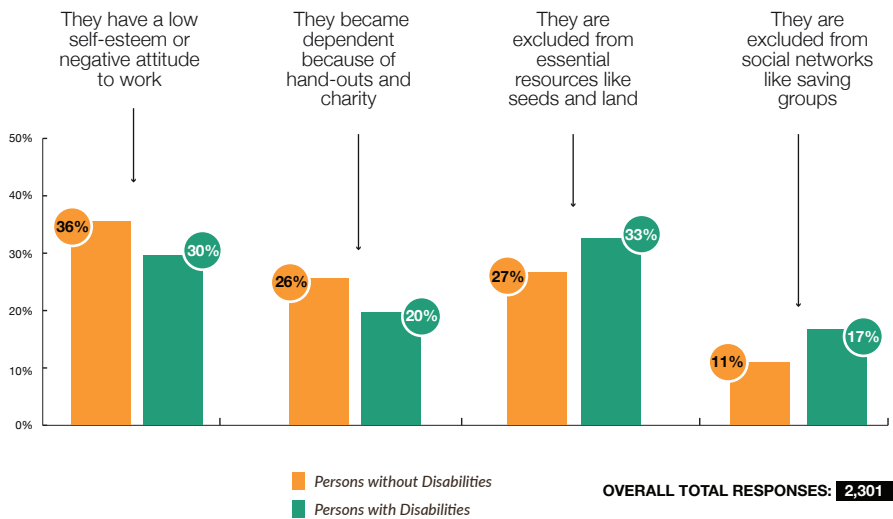
#### A. POLL 1: WHAT IS THE MAIN REASON PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES EXPERIENCE FOOD INSECURITY?

**BACKGROUND:**

Many persons with disabilities and their households face challenges like lack of access to resources, information and negative attitudes, and discrimination. This influences their livelihood situation and food security. In the coming 4 polls and 2 talk shows, we will discuss these challenges and try to find solutions to improve food security.

The first poll is about the reason behind why persons with disabilities experience food insecurity. 66% of the persons with disabilities - even though they would be able - do not produce for themselves.<sup>3</sup> Instead, many of them who could still do work despite their disability, are discouraged by their environment to take matters in their own hands.

**What is the main reason persons with disabilities experience food insecurity?**



3 Source: VNG international (2022)

## Poll 1 Analysis

From the polls, the main reason for food insecurity among persons with disabilities is a combination of factors. The majority of people without disabilities believe that the main cause for food insecurity among people with disabilities is their low self esteem; while, people with disabilities believe that it is due to the fact that they are excluded from essential resources like seeds and land.

Persons with disabilities tend to develop low self esteem due to the general negative attitudes towards them from the community. This in turn affects the persons with disabilities' access and ability to work, which can be perceived as if they do not want to work.<sup>4</sup>



## How can low self-esteem and negative attitudes towards work among persons with disabilities be addressed?

- Providing equal opportunities for employment and education: Ensuring that persons with disabilities have equal access to employment and education opportunities can help to boost their self-esteem and increase their access towards work.
- Offering training and skill-building programs: Providing training and skill-building programs can help to build the confidence and abilities of persons with disabilities, making them more equipped to participate in the workforce.
- Encouraging peer support and networking: Encouraging peer support and networking can help to create a supportive environment for persons with disabilities, reducing the negative impact of social isolation and promoting positive attitudes towards work.
- Challenging stereotypes and promoting inclusion: Challenging stereotypes like the negative perceptions towards people with disabilities and promoting inclusion can help to reduce stigma and discrimination towards persons with disabilities, improving their self-esteem and opportunities to work.
- Role modelling: placing persons with disabilities in the lead of the activities and/or initiatives for example the iSave model. This enhances their involvement and participation in livelihoods opportunities.
- Balancing interventions that are targeted towards persons with disabilities to foster meaningful and equal participation between people with and without disabilities.

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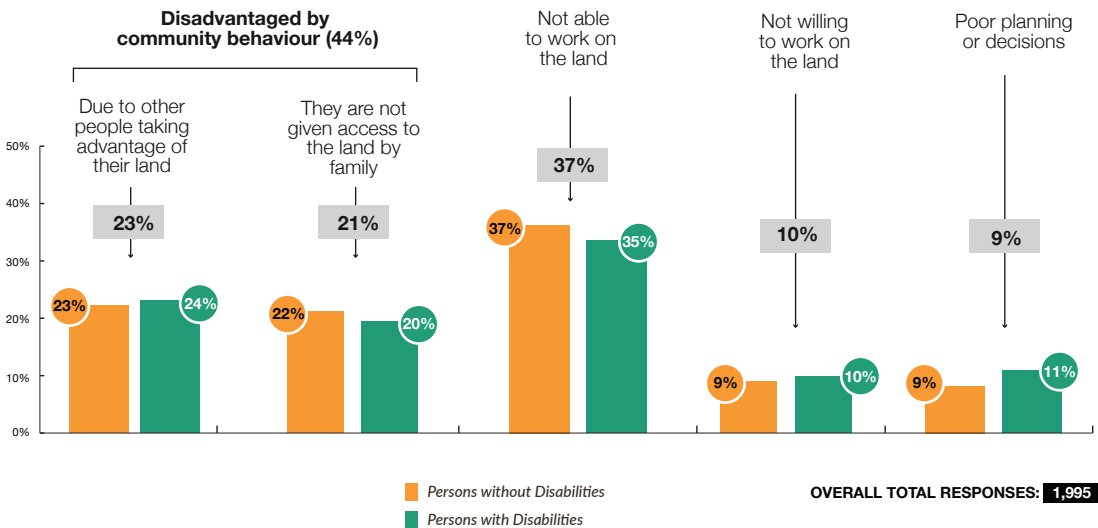
<sup>4</sup> Overcoming Barriers to Food Security: A photo narrative by people with disabilities (LFTW, 2022)

**B. POLL 2: WHY ARE PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES NOT USING OR PRODUCING ON THEIR OWN LAND?**

**BACKGROUND:**

One of the contributing factors to food insecurity among persons with disabilities is access to land and land usage. From research <sup>5</sup>, people with disabilities have challenges to access land and those that have access do not use the land to produce food. The second poll question wanted to understand why it was so.

**Why are persons with disabilities not using or producing on their own land?**



<sup>5</sup> Overcoming Barriers to Food Security: A photo narrative by people with disabilities (LFTW, 2022)

## Poll 2 Analysis

From the poll results, persons with and without disabilities were in consensus that persons with disabilities do not use nor produce on their own land mostly because they are taken advantage of and are denied access to the land by family members.

The results further indicate that the negative behaviour towards people with disabilities, exacerbated by the wide information gap about land ownership and usage rights within the community, has played a major role in hindering effective land usage by people with disabilities.

*"Women in our local context must marry and produce before they can own and fully utilise the land. They also need to get consent from the elderly head of the clan and the family before they can use it," female respondent from Nwoya district."*

This can be addressed through several ways including:

- Community sensitisation and awareness to community members, clan leadership, people with disabilities, service providers about the right to access and use of land by people with disabilities.
- Showcasing examples of successful entrepreneurs and farmers with disabilities within the communities.
- Inclusion of persons with disabilities in the land management structures for example Area Land Committees, Area Land Boards etc.
- Providing legal support to persons with disabilities to claim their rights to land use and access.
- Providing safety measures to support women with disabilities to access and use land.
- Providing people with disabilities with clear referral pathways regarding land use.



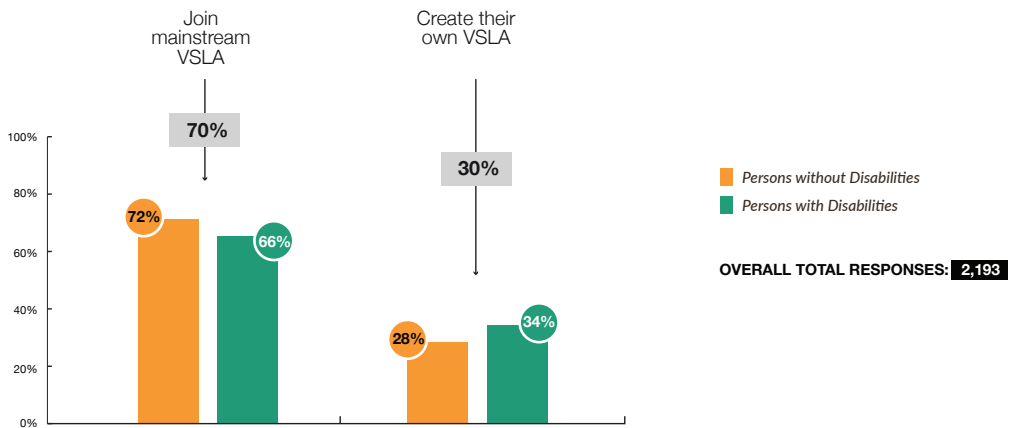
## C. POLL 3: SHOULD PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES JOIN MAINSTREAM VSLAs OR CREATE THEIR OWN?

### BACKGROUND:

Access to financial services for persons with disabilities is very crucial in ensuring that they can participate in the land/food value chain.

One of the options for people with disabilities to be more food-secure is through joining a saving group (VSLA). But there could be hindering factors that prevent persons with disabilities from joining or creating VSLAs. The third poll sought to tackle the matter/question of whether the inclusion of persons with disabilities in mainstream saving groups should be encouraged or not.

### Should persons with disabilities join mainstream VSLAs or create their own?





## Poll 3 Analysis

Inclusive VSLAs are one of few entry points at the grassroots level to raise awareness about inclusion of people with disabilities. They are a tool for delivering information about the rights of people with disabilities, building community awareness, access to skills development and agricultural support services within We Are Able! <sup>5</sup>

From the poll results, most of the respondents (70%) voted for inclusion of persons with disabilities in the present VSLAs while the rest opted for persons with disabilities to create their own VSLAs. We held a talk show to further understand why the community members thought as such, and to seek the best way to bridge the disparity, as suggested by the community members.

From the discussions within the community, persons with disabilities are less in favour of Special Interest Groups positions for themselves as compared to people without disabilities. This was because creating disability-only groups is against the principles of inclusion. We tried to figure out what could have been behind.

Much as the majority of people with and without disabilities opted for inclusive VSLAs, a small section voted for persons with disabilities forming their own groups.

Having role models with disabilities can support progress towards realising progressive and disability inclusive VSLAs. This is demonstrated by the fact that many of the participants who initiated savings groups and served in their management structures had previous experience with either an OPD or served as local councilors for people with disabilities.

Their community standing enabled them to establish trust and encourage more people with disabilities to join the groups, as well as persuade community members to join inclusive VSLAs. Therefore, it is important to note that the involvement of individuals with disabilities in leadership roles can positively influence the success of disability-inclusive initiatives like VSLAs.

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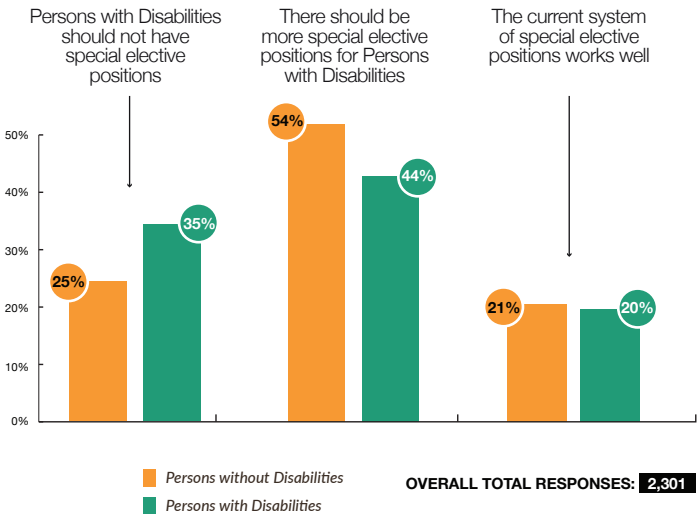
<sup>5</sup> Overcoming Barriers to Food Security: A photo narrative by people with disabilities (LFTW, 2022)

**D. POLL 4: IS AFFIRMATIVE ACTION A GOOD WAY TO REPRESENT PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN GOVERNMENT?**

**BACKGROUND:**

Uganda’s electoral laws provide for the representation of persons with disabilities at all government levels. Currently, for example, five members of parliament directly represent persons with disabilities, out of 529 members in total (1%). In this poll, we sought to know the community opinions on affirmative action of persons with disabilities as enshrined in electoral laws.

**Is affirmative action a good way to represent persons with disabilities in government?**



## Poll 4 Analysis

People with disabilities are less in favour of special elective positions for persons with disabilities compared to people without disabilities. From these results, we inquired whether persons with disability felt satisfied with the service and representation from the already filled special positions.

The majority sentiment in Acholi region leaned towards maintaining the status quo, because the majority of persons with disabilities felt that the elections are highly commercialised and monopolised by persons with disabilities who are more financially stable.

**“When they get into elective positions, the elected leaders focus on recovering the spent money as opposed to their core mandates of representation, legislation, oversight, budget appropriation and lobby and advocacy.”**

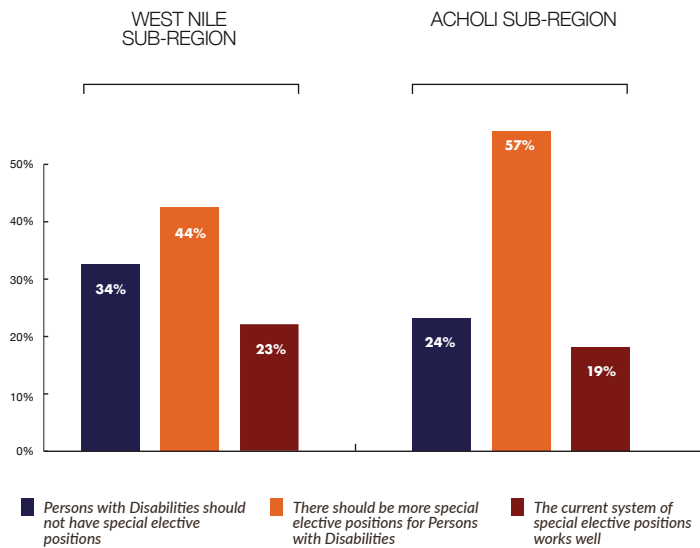
From the radio talk show, several call-ins mentioned that special positions for persons with disabilities do not exclude them from holding regular elective positions. They also expressed the need for more active representation by their elected leaders.

**“Persons with disabilities in leadership positions are manipulated due to their ignorance. The electoral college system enfranchised so many persons with disabilities who would be voters.”**

Further, a question was posed on what the community members considered a better way to ensure the rights of persons with disabilities are considered in government. The major responses were:

- Through representation in both boards, statutory bodies and governance structures.
- Through affirmative action for persons with disabilities.

## Analysis results per Sub-Region





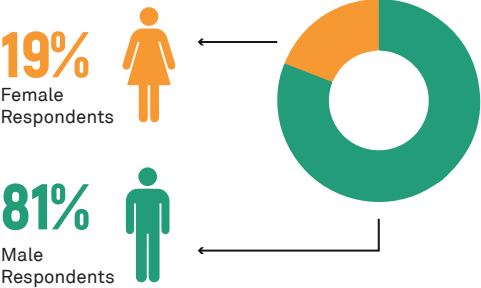
In the West Nile region, the majority of the poll respondents (57%) opted for 'B', which stated that 'There should be more special elective positions for persons with disabilities' in contrast to Acholi region (45%). We had a follow up radio talk show where a question to address the disparity was posed to the panel. The proponents for more special elective positions voted as such because they felt that the vastness of the Northern region was too high and this required extra hands.

In the We Are Able! project, we strive for more inclusion of people with disabilities and from the above results, it is imperative to create easily understandable and accessible resources that can be comprehended by individuals with minimal education. The development of simplified resources also promotes greater inclusivity for persons with disabilities, for whom comprehending these processes of leadership may be particularly challenging.

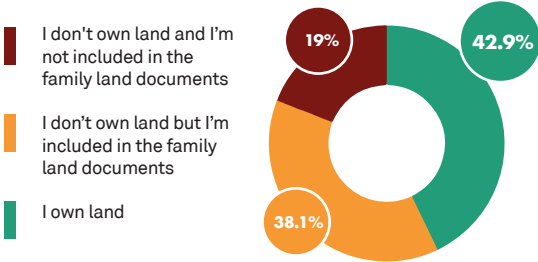


# 4. TELEPHONE SURVEY

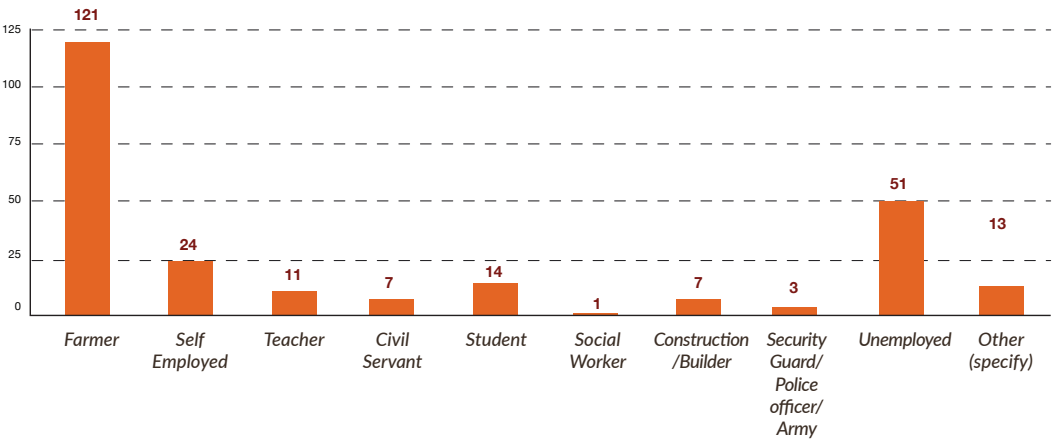
## Gender:



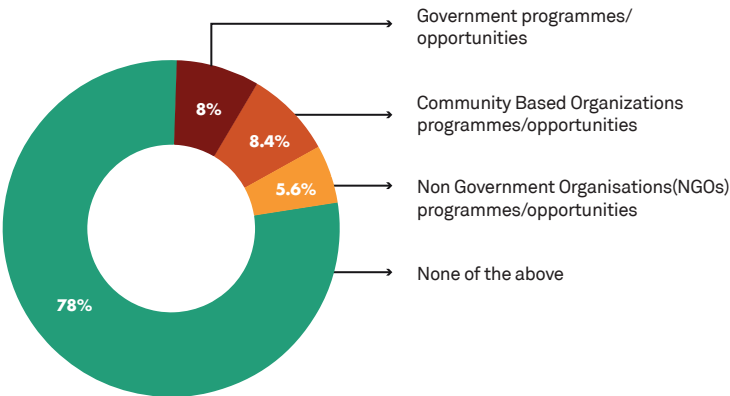
## Do you own land or is your name included in the family land documents?



## Occupaton:

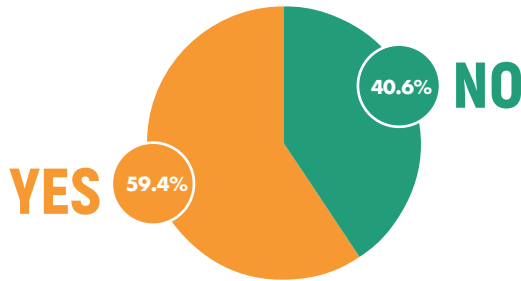


## Do you participate in any of the following programmes or opportunities?

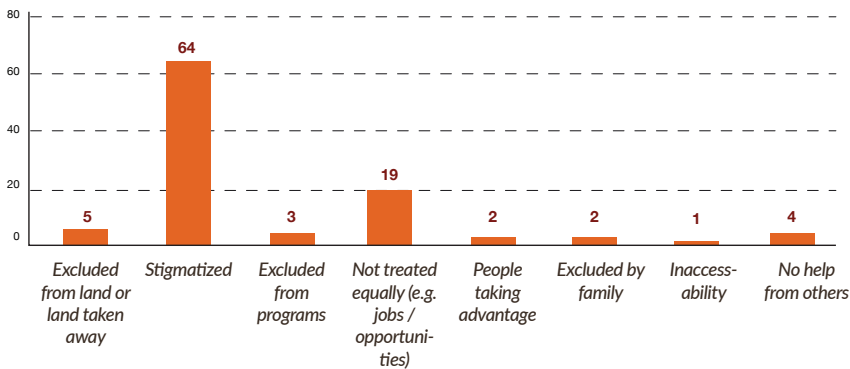




## Do you sometimes feel excluded/mistreated by community members because of your disability?



### If Yes, can you give an example:



## Overall Recommendations and Action Points

There are several actionable approaches that the WaA! Programme partners are undertaking to aid alleviate these issues, as well as support the programme's advocacy agenda. While some are directly linked to our advocacy work, others are long-term solutions to address the issue of inclusion of people with disabilities in the value chain system.

### Direct Advocacy work by WaA! partners

- Community sensitisation: Raising awareness about the rights of persons with disabilities to access land. This is coupled by sensitisation of different service providers and leaders on the rights of persons with disabilities. These include community land structures, family members in access and utilisation of land as provided for by the constitution of Uganda.
- There are local mediation initiatives in a bid to resolve land conflicts that affect persons with disabilities and their families.

- Training Leaders of persons with disabilities on issues of land rights for a continuous and sustainable way of ensuring that persons with disabilities issues on land rights remain on the table both in the community and lower local government Agenda.
- Showcasing examples of successful entrepreneurs and farmers with disabilities.
- Solutions that could be addressed through policy advocacy.
- Inclusion of persons with disabilities in the land management structures (ALCs).
- Providing legal support to persons with disabilities to claim their rights to land use and access.
- Defining clear referral pathways regarding land issues to be given to people with disabilities.
- Inclusion of the Ministry of lands on Disability inclusion and representation on land structures as a higher engagement.
- There is a need to undertake exposure seminars where land structures share experiences of disability inclusion on land issues to act as an opener to other stakeholders and leaders. This should have a change story from a person with a disability as a point of interaction.

### Direct Advocacy work by WaA! partners

- **National:** Ministry of Lands, Ministry of gender, Labour and Social Development, Parliament.
- **District:** Area Members of Parliament, District Land Board, District land officers, LC5 Chairpersons and their councillors
- **Sub-County:** Area Land Communities, Physical planning Committee, LC2 Court, LC1s and Rwot Kweri, persons with disabilities (District Unions), Office of the CDO in charge of disabilities.
- **Other stakeholders:** The media, organisations working with persons with disabilities and organisations of persons with disabilities, religious and cultural Institutions.

### Recommended changes in this legislature

- Representation of persons with disabilities at all land structures to address interest of persons with disabilities.
- Defining clear process and procedures to follow on land registration, costs involved, time taken to register, and referral pathways incase of any land related issues.
- Action on affordable costs of land registration for community members like the persons with disabilities.

## 5. PROJECT PARTNERS

For the We Are Able! campaign, Trac FM collaborated with Light for the World in consortia with ZOA, NUDIPU, VNGI, and the Hague Academy. Together we worked on developing the radio polls and additional context information, clarifying the collected data, sharing the outcomes on social media and selecting the (local) radio guests based on their thematic interests.



## 6. ABOUT TRAC FM

Trac FM transforms radio audiences from passive listeners to active participants. Through SMS polls and radio talk shows citizens of Uganda and other East African countries take part in inclusive and well-informed public debate on social development, public policy and governance. Through its network of partner stations, Trac FM reaches out to the most remote and excluded citizens through the use of basic mobile phones, free SMS and interactive FM radio talk-shows, all broadcasted in local languages.

Trac collects real-time data through radio and SMS to identify cultural, socio-economic and political trends from a citizen perspective. Local language programming, respondent anonymity, long-standing partnerships with radio stations and the involvement and training of local radio journalists enables Trac FM to build a unique relationship with a large sample of the population and discuss intimate and sensitive topics with them at a national scale. The collected feedback is analyzed, packaged and disseminated to assist policymakers and practitioners on the ground to integrate unmediated citizen opinions in the development of their policies and programs.

Trac FM International is an NGO registered in the Netherlands and Uganda with programs throughout East-Africa. Would you like to efficiently and effectively interact with the communities you serve?

For interactive radio campaigns, Monitoring Evaluation and Learning partnerships and other questions, please contact us at [info@tracfm.org](mailto:info@tracfm.org).



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Trac FM collects valuable data from citizens and enables organisations, researchers and government institutions to reach out to remote communities in a direct and cost effective way. Contact [info@tracfm.org](mailto:info@tracfm.org) for more information.