Three Facets of Political Inequality

Evidence from Citizen Consultations in Kampala

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Overview

Quick glance: *Developing Kampala's Citizen Charter*

Scope: Kampala, Uganda | 2,312 residents | 188 small-scale citizen meetings
Duration: Jan. 2019 – Jun. 2021
Implementation: IPA Uganda
Funders: IGC, WZB, Columbia, an anonymous foundation

Results based on baseline survey, consultation behavior and decisions, and post-consultation survey.

Primary goal: measurement of political inequality

How can we best measure citizens' **degree of political power** (understood as influence)? How much inequality is there in this?

How do gaps in voice (Coffe & Bolzendahl, 2011; Kasara & Suryanarayan, 2015) relate to **systemic responsiveness** (Gaikwad & Nellis, 2018)?

Probe complex linkages between 3 different dimensions of political inequality:

1. **input**: inequality in intensity of participation
2. **throughput**: inequality in the system's responsiveness to demands
3. **output**: inequality in how much decisions favor specific individuals / groups

What a Charter is

The consultations targeted the construction of a Citizens' Charter for the city of Kampala: a document outlining

1. **principles** and **clear standards** of service provision;
2. **rights** and **responsibilities** of citizens and bureaucrats

An institution which we could observe as it is being created…

Preview of findings

We uncover clear disparities in inputs, with more advantaged citizens participating more during meetings.

There is evidence of limited elite capture, but not of outright throughput inequality between groups.

Thankfully, no evidence of output inequalities, suggesting the possibility of effective compartmentalization.

Even in a “hard case” (trained facilitators, small group, grounded topics) we continue to observe input inequality.

Where does discrepancy come from?

Inequality in participation and preferences $\not\rightarrow$ inequality in outputs.

Our interpretation: evidence consistent with discussion leaders countervailing efforts by more powerful groups to skew outcomes.

Possible means:

- imposing their own views on discussions
- amplifying opinion of less powerful groups

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What do you think could be happening?

Theoretical framework

Simple model of political action

We start from a simple model: a *status quo* policy, x, which N players with ideal policy points x_i^* try to influence.

Each player takes action with intensity a_i^*, and with π_i^* denoting how well the action shapes the outcome.

The new policy is the result of all individual actions:

$$x' = x + \sum_{i=1}^{N} \pi_i a_i \tag{1}$$

Strategies depend on other actors

The best response of player *i* is:

$$a_i = \frac{\pi_i(x_i^* - x)}{1 + \pi_i^2} - \frac{\pi_i \sum_{-i} \pi_j a_j}{1 + \pi_i^2} \tag{2}$$

Important to note that action taken by *i* depends on:

1. own effectiveness: π_i
2. *j*s action: a_j
3. *j*s effectiveness: π_j

Multiple forms of inequality

In equilibrium, welfare is:

$$w_i = -(1+\pi_i^2)\left(\frac{(x_i^* - x) + \sum_j (x_i^* - x_j^*)\pi_j^2}{1+\sum_j \pi_j^2}\right)^2 \tag{3}$$

We can have inequality in:

1. *inputs*
2. *throughput*
3. *outputs*

These are distinct quantities, and inter-related in complex ways depending on where the *status quo*, x, is.

Capturing the dynamics

We try to assess these inequalities in the setting of our consultative meetings.

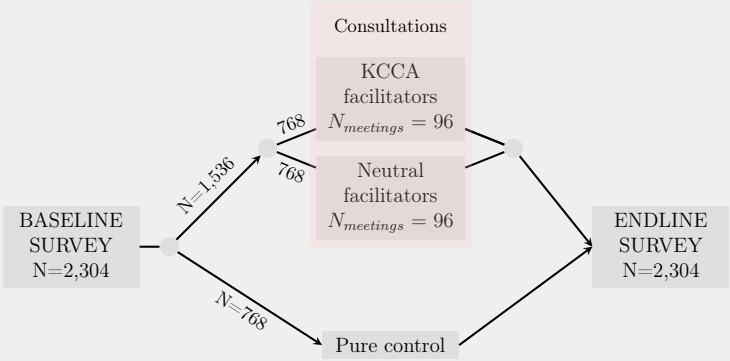
They allow us to:

1. measure preferences, and the actions taken to promote these
2. measure outcomes (decisions)

We sacrifice some generalizability, but gain tight control over the process and the ability to measure frequently.

Design

Treatment: assigned to consultation



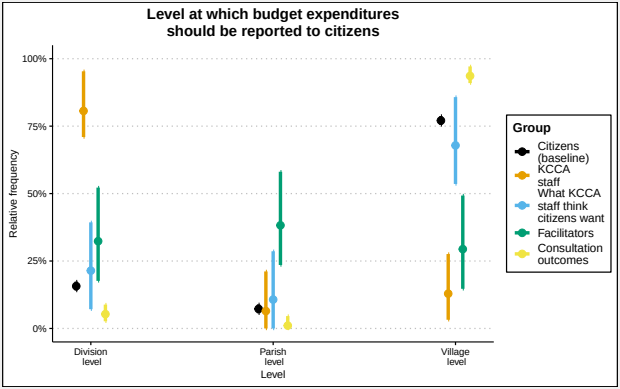
Balance: $T1$ vs. $T0$ | Balance: $T1_1$ vs. $T1_0$ | Sampling | Areas sampled | Factorial design

Structure of meetings

- Small-scale consultation meetings, of around 1-1.5 hours
- Participants: 6-8 citizens recruited from the same village
- Facilitated by KCCA officials, or *neutral* facilitators (trained enumerators)
- Objective: collect input from citizens for construction of Charter
- Decisions: made unanimously by the group, and recorded by facilitator

Neutral facilitators underwent a special training focused on the importance of neutrality in such consultations.

Disagreement: citizens vs. KCCA



We also observe preference variation among citizens: Disagreement

Mapping: questions–data

Component	Data used
Input inequality	Political behaviors reported in baseline survey Attendance Participation patterns during consultations
Throughput inequality	Facilitator preferences over consultation outcomes Consultation outcomes Citizen preferences over consultation outcomes
Output inequality	Attendance Citizen preferences over consultation outcomes Facilitator preferences over consultation outcomes

Dimensions of inequality we probe

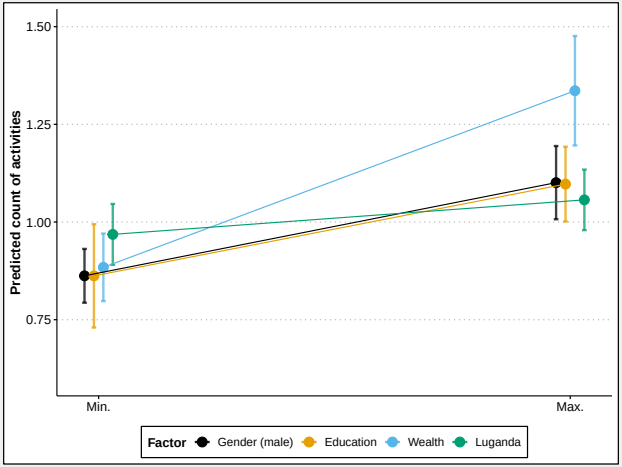
Among citizens	Between citizens and facilitators
Gender Education Wealth Language (Luganda)	Who exerts more influence over final outcome?

Results

Results

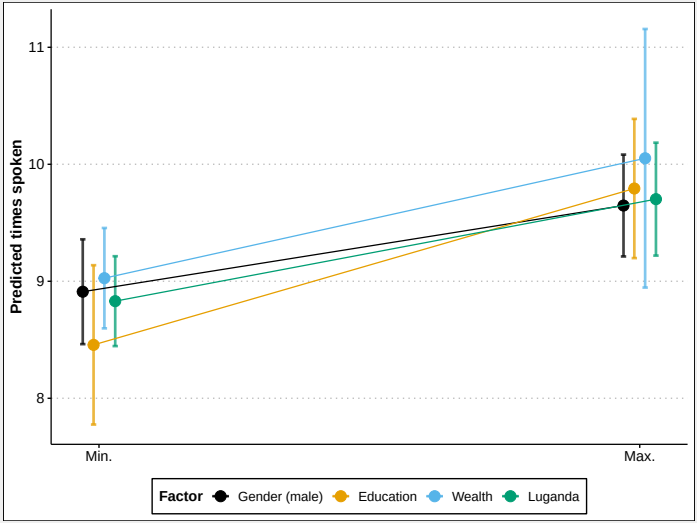
Input inequality

Inequality in conventional participation

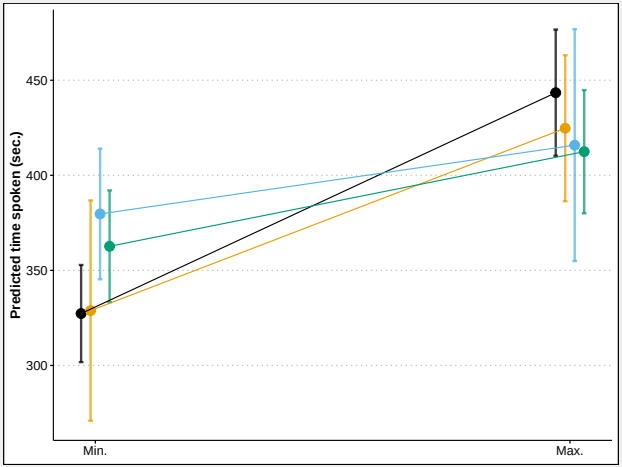


Gender: `max.` designates men. Luganda: `max.` designates native speakers. Attendance to meetings

Inequality during consultations: times spoken



Inequality during consultations: total time spoken



Distribution of outcome

Is there input inequality?

Input inequality is clearly present, both for conventional political activities and for consultation meetings.

This is matched by meaningful differences in pre-meeting preferences.

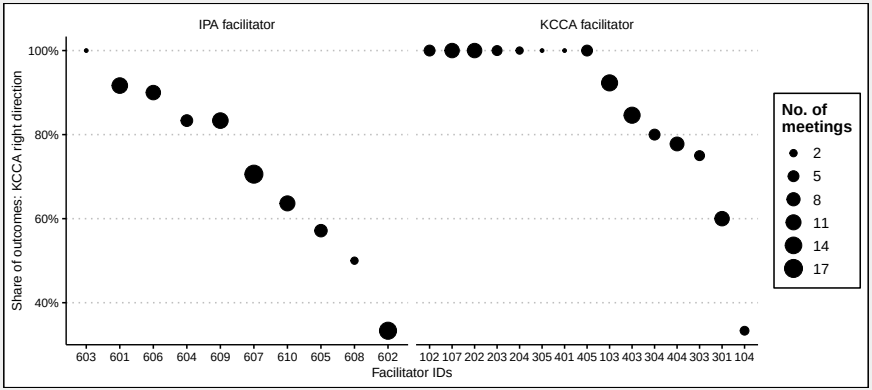
Example 1 Example 2 Example 3

Attendance to meetings is more equal (efforts to mobilize), but inside consultations established patterns re-emerge.

Results

Throughput inequality

Effect of leaders: KCCA going in right direction?



Facilitators in general, and IPA facilitators in particular, matter!

Do facilitators drive outcomes?

Meeting outcomes: facilitator FEs

Model	R^2	Adj. R^2	F-test	d.f.	p
Report budget: detail	0.209	0.093	1.800	(24, 163)	0.017^{**}
Channels of communication	0.433	0.349	5.183	(24, 163)	0.000^{***}
Growth vs equality	0.253	0.143	2.305	(24, 163)	0.001^{***}
Raising fees and taxes	0.241	0.129	2.159	(24, 163)	0.003^{***}
Monitor Charter	0.097	−0.036	0.726	(24, 163)	0.820
KCCA right direction	0.229	0.115	2.014	(24, 163)	0.006^{***}

Note: $^{***}p < 0.01, ^{**}p < 0.05, ^{*}p < 0.1$.
[1] Estimates are R^2 values from regressions including facilitator ID fixed effects.
[2] Outcomes are the meeting outcomes, as recorded by the facilitators.
[3] All models are OLS specifications. To ensure this, where needed, outcomes were dichotomized: "in-person meetings" were contrasted with "drop-in centers" and "social media channels"; "raise fees" was contrasted with "keep the same" and "lower fees". [4] No clustering was needed.

Adj. R^2: *lower* bound on the degree influence (Humphreys, Masters, & Sandbu, 2006). Facilitators drive 10–35% of variation in meeting outcomes.

Are they more influential in disadv. contexts?

	Meeting decision: Drop-in centers
(Intercept)	0.037
	(0.026)
Facilitator prefs. drop-in center	0.271
	(0.208)
Advantaged community	0.137**
	(0.056)
Facilitator pref. * Advantaged	−0.263*
	(0.133)
R^2	0.068
Adj. R^2	0.052
Num. obs.	183
RMSE	0.361
N Clusters	24

$^{***}p < 0.01$; $^{**}p < 0.05$; $^{*}p < 0.1$

1. The dynamic we expect is only seen for this topic: communication channels with citizens
2. Facilitator preferences drive meeting outcome more in disadvantaged communities
3. Similar dynamic, though faint, for a second topic; no evidence for remaining three topics

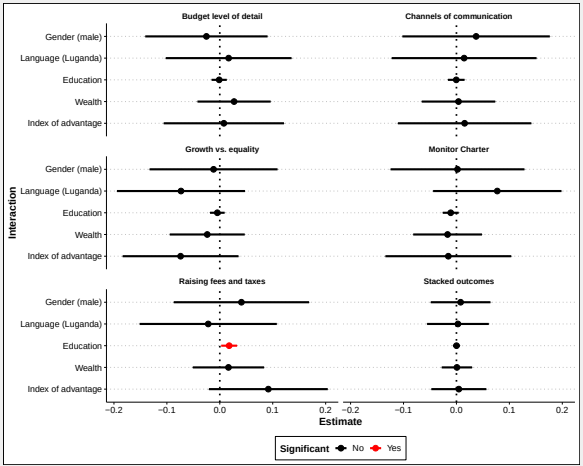
KCCA vs. IPA facilitators: is there outcome skew?

Model	Category	Coef.	SE	*p*
Report budget: detail		-0.041	0.046	0.388
Channels of communication	Drop-in centers	-0.445	0.851	0.601
	Social media	1.267	0.658	0.056^{*}
Growth vs. equality		-0.009	0.064	0.89
Raising fees and taxes	Raise fees	1.388	0.666	0.039^{**}
	Keep fees same	0.788	0.594	0.186
Monitor Charter		-0.067	0.050	0.2
KCCA right direction		0.164	0.090	0.088^{*}

Note: $^{***}p < 0.01, ^{**}p < 0.05, ^{*}p < 0.1$.
[1] Estimates are for the effect of whether the meeting is a KCCA-led meeting or not. [2] Outcomes are the meeting outcomes, as recorded by the facilitators. [3] Models 1, 3, 5 and 6 are OLS specifications; Models 2 and 4 are multinomial logistic regressions with trichotomous outcomes. This is why 2 coefficients are reported for the latter models. [4] Analyses are clustered at the level of facilitators.
[5] Reference category for *channels of communication* is "in-person consultations".
[6] Reference category for *raising fees and taxes* is "lower fees and taxes".

For two of five issues, we see outcomes skewed in a direction preferred by the institution (KCCA).

Disadvantaged do worse under some facilitators?



No: we don't see inequality in responsiveness.

Example: $Match_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * gender + \beta_2 * KCCA + \beta_3 * gender * KCCA + \epsilon_i$

Is there throughput inequality?

We find clear influence of facilitators in the process: anywhere between 10 and 35% (of variance in outcomes explained by facilitator identity).

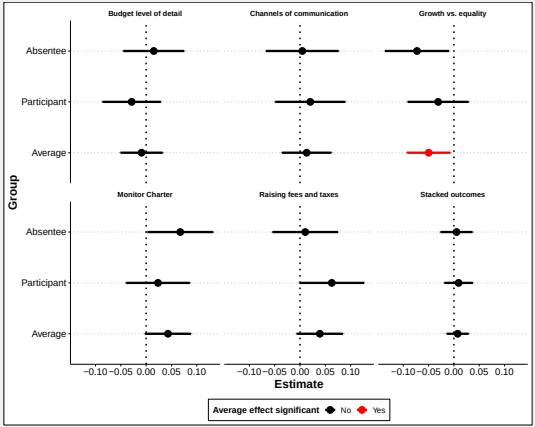
For a subset of issues, clear differences in outcomes between KCCA and IPA facilitators.

No evidence that the preferences of some sub-groups are favored over those of other sub-groups.

Results

Output inequality

Disadvantaged less likely to get favored outcome?



$$Match_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * gender + \beta_2 * attended + \beta_3 * gender * attended + \epsilon_i$$

Results for education | Results for wealth

Effects of meetings: changed preferences?

Only a small share of participants changed their preferences as a result of the meeting.

	Budget expenses information	KCCA–citizens communication	Monitor KCCA performance	Inequality vs. growth	Fees vs. more KCCA services
Changed (%)	16.52	16.68	15.65	15.42	17.94
N	1174	1163	1150	1135	1126

Effects of meetings: % satisfied with outcomes

	Budget expenses information	KCCA-citizens communication	Inequality vs. growth	Fees vs. more KCCA services	Monitor KCCA performance
Doesn't match	89.78	84.17	90.35	79.16	85.39
Does match	90.27	91.07	86.72	82.47	90.31

Note: Rows split based on whether respondents' pre-meeting preferences match meeting outcomes or not.

Is there output inequality?

No evidence of output inequality for any of the discussion topics.

Some effects of socio-demographics, but of inconsistent direction.

No disparity in effect of socio-demographics depending on participation in meetings.

Results

Structural model

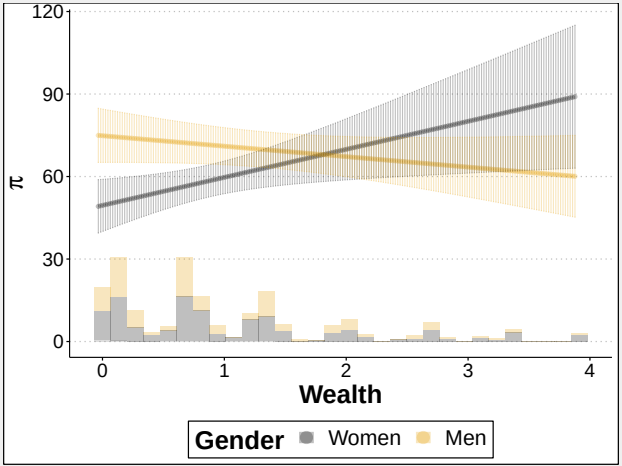
Using framework to directly estimate power

$$a_i^* = \frac{\pi_i}{1 + \sum_j \pi_j^2} \left((x_i^* - x) + \sum_j (\pi_j^2 (x_i^* - x_j^*)) \right) \tag{4}$$

π conceptualized as function of interplay between gender and wealth.

Goal is to retrieve parameters that govern one's level of political power in consultations.

Power in consultations



Dynamic for total time spoken in meeting

Conclusions

Summing up

We find consistent patterns of input inequality during on consultations (by gender, wealth, education), but *not* in attendance at consultations.

Discussion facilitators have a moderately-strong influence over the outcome of the consultation (some evidence of throughput inequality, but no disparities in responsiveness).

Encouragingly, we find no systematic evidence of output inequality.

Summing up

We find consistent patterns of input inequality during on consultations (by gender, wealth, education), but *not* in attendance at consultations.

Discussion facilitators have a moderately-strong influence over the outcome of the consultation (some evidence of throughput inequality, but no disparities in responsiveness).

Encouragingly, we find no systematic evidence of output inequality.

Egalitarian process partly offset by inequalities in power.

Implications

Lijphart (1997): unequal participation produces unequal responsiveness (Hill & Leighley, 1992). Might not always be the case.

A mistake to infer inequality in outcomes from inequality in inputs, or inequality in responsiveness from inequality in inputs.

In our setting, we believe facilitators play an offsetting role—what else could be at play?

Future work

Further improvements on the structural model:

- test a model for meeting outputs, as a function of *status quo*, ideal preferences, and power
- incorporate the preferences of discussion leaders (potentially as *status quo*)
- add more covariates: salience of issues, beliefs about own's influence or that of others
- hierarchical structure: meeting random effects
- add *status quo* as a separate parameter

Thank you for the kind attention!

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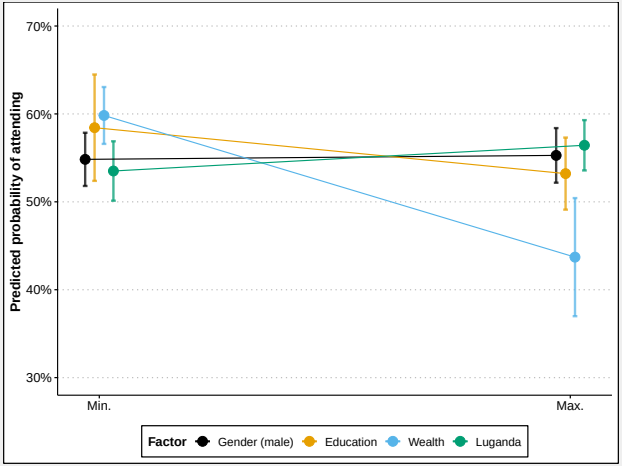
Appendices

Equality in meeting participation



Back to participation dynamics

Meetings vs. pure control

Factor	Mean control	Mean meetings	Diff. mean	SE diff.	*z*-statistic	*p*	95% CIs	
Gender (male)	0.58	0.54	−0.04	0.02	−2.35	0.02	−0.08	−0.01
Luganda	0.55	0.54	−0.01	0.03	−0.46	0.64	−0.06	0.04
Education	11.25	10.94	−0.31	0.22	−1.44	0.15	−0.74	0.12
Wealth	1.08	1.13	0.05	0.05	0.85	0.40	−0.06	0.15
Index of advantage	0.02	−0.01	−0.04	0.02	−1.52	0.13	−0.08	0.01
Political efficacy	2.82	2.80	−0.02	0.05	−0.29	0.77	−0.12	0.09
Pro-sociality	16.71	16.42	−0.29	1.44	−0.20	0.84	−3.13	2.56

Note: Sample N = 1,656. 1,539 originally invited to attend, and 117 recruited again from villages where no meeting could be organized.

Back to design

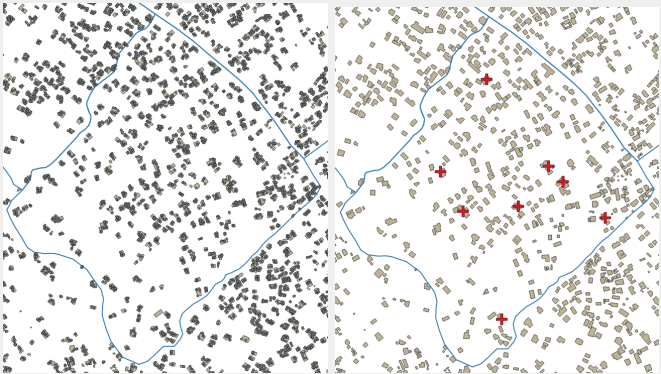
IPA vs. KCCA meetings

Factor	Mean control	Mean meetings	Diff. mean	SE diff.	*z*-statistic	*p*	95% CIs	
Gender (male)	0.56	0.55	−0.01	0.03	−0.20	0.84	−0.06	0.05
Luganda	0.55	0.53	−0.02	0.04	−0.49	0.63	−0.10	0.06
Education	10.71	11.04	0.32	0.34	0.94	0.35	−0.36	1.01
Wealth	1.07	1.15	0.08	0.08	0.99	0.32	−0.08	0.24
Index of advantage	−0.02	0.00	0.03	0.04	0.68	0.50	−0.05	0.10
Political efficacy	2.85	2.80	−0.05	0.07	−0.81	0.42	−0.19	0.08
Pro-sociality	16.47	17.89	1.43	2.31	0.62	0.54	−3.14	5.99

Back to design

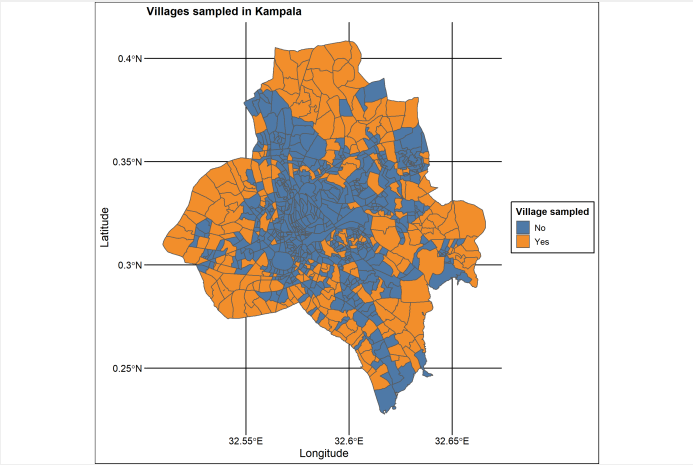
Baseline sampling

Sampling frame and final sample for one Kampala village



Back to design

Areas sampled



Back to design

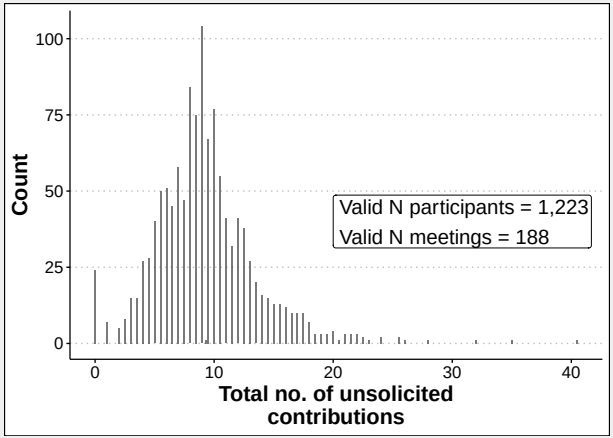
Realized sample

Factorial design

		N planned	*N* realized
$T1_0$: Control	Villages	96	97
	Individuals	768	773
$T1_1$: Neutral deliberative forums	Villages	96	93
	Individuals	768	745
$T1_2$: KCCA-led deliberative forums	Villages	96	95
	Individuals	768	761
TOTAL	Villages	288	285
	Individuals	2304	2312

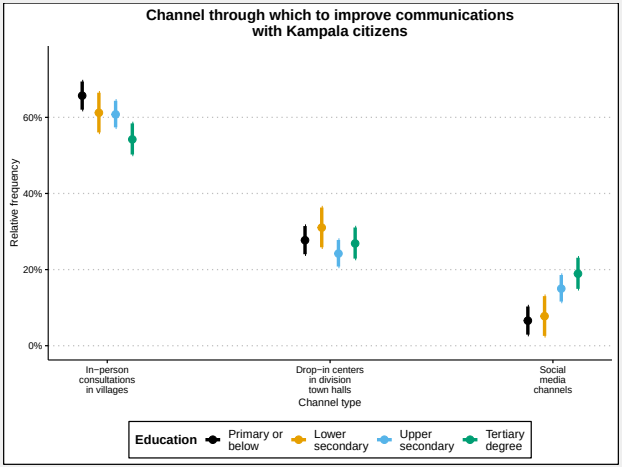
Back to design

Total no. of uninvited contributions



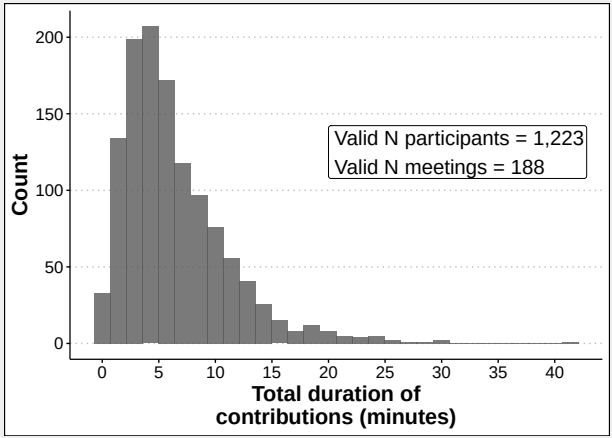
Back to inequality in participation

Disagreement: citizens vs. citizens



Back to disagreement with KCCA

Total time spent speaking



Back to inequality in participation

Preferences for raising fees and taxes

		Coef. estimates			Model fit		
Category	Contrast	Coef.	SE	p	R^2	Sig. test	p test
Gender (male)	Keep fees same	0.0992	0.0907	0.2740	0.0003	1.2566	0.5335
	Raise fees	0.0252	0.1280	0.8440			
Luganda	Keep fees same	-0.0015	0.0921	0.9866	0.0019	9.5400	0.0085^{**}
	Raise fees	-0.3291	0.1209	0.0065^{**}			
Education	Keep fees same	0.0678	0.0112	0.0000^{***}	0.0097	47.3619	0.0000^{***}
	Raise fees	0.0789	0.0148	0.0000^{***}			
Wealth	Keep fees same	0.2104	0.0482	0.0000^{***}	0.0047	23.0063	0.0000^{***}
	Raise fees	0.2210	0.0599	0.0002^{***}			
Index of advantage	Keep fees same	0.4725	0.0846	0.0000^{***}	0.0062	30.1399	0.0000^{***}
	Raise fees	0.3424	0.1177	0.0037^{**}			

Back to input inequality

Preferences for channels of communication

		Coef. estimates			Model fit		
Category	Contrast	Coef.	SE	p	R^2	Sig. test	p test
Gender (male)	Drop-in centers	0.0319	0.0915	0.7276	0.0001	0.3371	0.8449
	Social media	0.0677	0.1288	0.5992			
Luganda	Drop-in centers	−0.1742	0.1026	0.0896	0.0009	3.9632	0.1378
	Social media	−0.1455	0.1324	0.2719			
Education	Drop-in centers	0.0177	0.0114	0.1190	0.0138	61.3856	0.0000***
	Social media	0.1212	0.0171	0.0000***			
Wealth	Drop-in centers	0.1448	0.0516	0.0050**	0.0127	56.2963	0.0000***
	Social media	0.4266	0.0586	0.0000***			
Index of advantage	Drop-in centers	0.1265	0.0928	0.1728	0.0105	46.7637	0.0000***
	Social media	0.7934	0.1203	0.0000***			

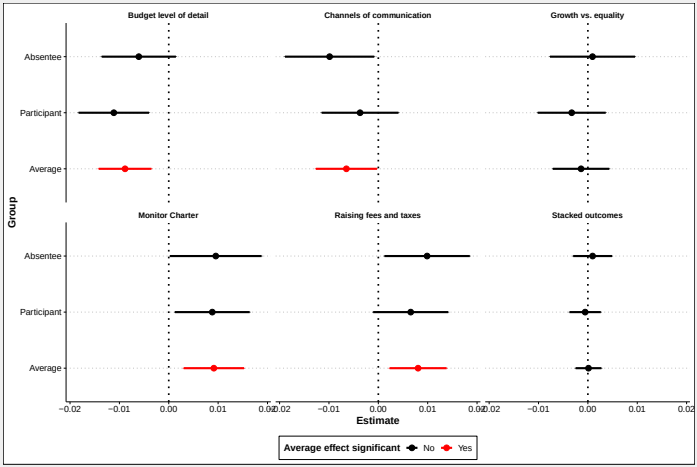
Back to input inequality

Preferences for budget reporting level

		Coef. estimates			Model fit		
Category	Contrast	Coef.	SE	p	R^2	Sig. test	p test
Gender (male)	Parish level	-0.0099	0.1725	0.9543	0.0002	0.8047	0.6688
	Village level	-0.0902	0.1134	0.4264			
Luganda	Parish level	0.0378	0.1747	0.8286	0.0015	5.0590	0.0797
	Village level	0.2290	0.1107	0.0386^{*}			
Education	Parish level	0.0452	0.0215	0.0357^{*}	0.0048	15.8057	0.0004^{***}
	Village level	-0.0250	0.0139	0.0709			
Wealth	Parish level	0.1220	0.0804	0.1292	0.0045	14.6655	0.0007^{***}
	Village level	-0.1235	0.0552	0.0255^{*}			
Index of advantage	Parish level	0.2779	0.1547	0.0725	0.0031	10.0209	0.0067^{**}
	Village level	-0.1525	0.1062	0.1511			

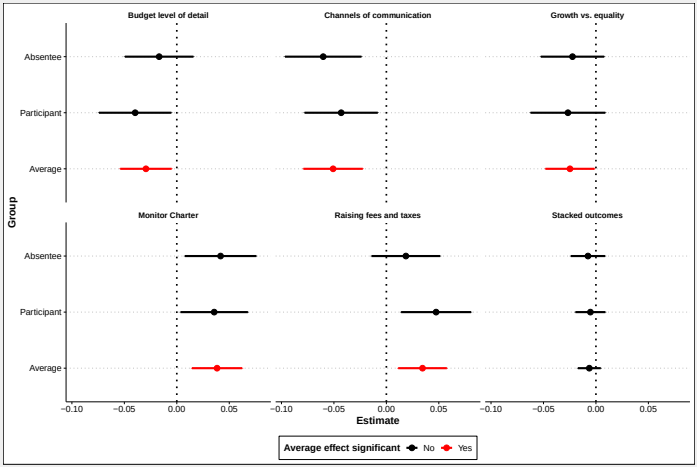
Back to input inequality

Effect of education



Back to output inequality

Effect of wealth



Back to output inequality