



Institute of Social Policy and Research
RESEARCH FOR DEVELOPMENT



OPINION POLL REPORT ON CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN THE BUDGET MAKING PROCESS IN SOUTH SUDAN

CONDUCTED BY:

THE INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL POLICY AND RESEARCH (ISPR)

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NAJJ CONSULTANTS conducted the Opinion Poll based on its Management and Development Capacity Building Consultants-Juba, South Sudan

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ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYM

CEFoRD	Community Empowerment for Rehabilitation and Development
COVID-19	Corona Virus Disease of 2019
CSOs,	Civil Society Organizations
FGDs	Focus Group Discussion
ISPR	Institute of Social policy Research
KIIs	Key Informant Interviews
MTE	Midterm review
NMFA	Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
OBS	Open Budget Survey
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms Of reference
UNIMISS	United Nations Mission in South Sudan
USD	United States Dollars

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction:

ISPR is working with Community Empowerment for Rehabilitation and Development (CEFoRD) commissioned an opinion poll on National Budget for Policy Makers to inform the policymakers on how they would consider citizens' participation in the budget process seriously.

Key findings

- a. **Are citizen's voices been heard during the budget process including an effort to include vulnerable and underrepresented groups?** According to policy makers citizen voices are heard during the budget making process. 72.2% Juba, 75.5% in Yambio and 71.8% in Wau while according to the citizens only 26.6% in Juba, 37.6% and 37.9% believe that citizen participation is embedded in the budget making process.
- b. **Are citizens able to find out about the purpose, scope, and intended outcomes for public engagement in the budget process:** According to policy makers: 72.6% in Juba, 69.8% in Yambio and 71.8 % in Wau believe that they are able to find out about the purpose, scope, and intended outcomes for public engagement in the budget process while citizens believe that most of the engagement processes are just procedures and for select few.
- c. According to the citizens the budget making process in South Sudan is not participatory; only 13.3% citizens in Juba, 25.4% in Yambio and 29.7% in way believe it's participatory. The remaining either said that it's not transparent or were not sure whether it's participatory or not.
- d. **Does the government share the feedback they received and how it has been used to enhance budget debates and approval?** The citizen ascertained that the government shares feedback on the budget making proposals. Wau recorded the highest percentage of citizens at 82.1%, Juba 77.3% while Yambio, had 73.6%. The feedback was noted to be through mass media, through citizen's handbook, conferences as well as through relevant ministries. Community representatives like Members of Parliament (MPs) and local administration
- e. **Is citizen participation embedded in the budget process to provide regular input into decision-making?** The majority of the respondents 787(68.3%) said that citizen participation is not embedded in the budget process to provide regular input into decision making. In Juba they were 417(73.4%), Yambio 194(62.4%), while in Wau, they were 136(62.1%).

Conclusion

The budget making process should be inclusive and participatory. From the opinion poll it's clear that the government and other non-state actors are making efforts to engage and have meaningful participation of citizens but the platforms to engage are still restrictive to a few who are able to access budget making information. Citizen engagement in the budget making process is dependent on access to information, access to spaces and participation platforms. Participation in budgeting process is still

very low and access to spaces should be enhanced through awareness creation and provision of information using media channel that are open and easily accessed by communities. This calls for targeted civic and human rights education.

Some the citizens still feel that they are excluded and disfranchised and therefore not getting information about the process and feedback on their proposal from the government on the budget making process, this calls for deliberate and consistent capacity building programs to improve their understanding of the process of the budget making process while also having clear mechanisms for inclusion. The government should also provide timely and relevant information to citizens.

The citizens also have the feeling that participation is undertaken as a procedure but not embedded in the budget making process. To improve participation, the government should develop and work with community structures that have their roots from the ground in the community.

CHAPTER 1 : BACKGROUND

The opinion poll report is a culmination of a highly participatory and reflective process on what is the level of knowledge, engagement, and participation of citizens on the budget making process.

1.1 Project Background

The Institute of Social Policy and Research and Community Empowerment for Rehabilitation and Development has been implementing activities targeting Transitional National Legislative Assembly in Juba, State Legislative Assemblies, Civil society organizations, Journalists, media houses and Community members, religious leaders, youth, women, private sector, and Anti-Corruption Commission. The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NMFA) funds the program. The initiatives under this project strengthen the capacity of citizens to effectively engage in the national budget process and strengthen key government actors' capacity to create a pro-citizen national budget.

The South Sudan budget making which is supposed to be transparent and inclusive has significant gaps in the capacity of the parliament to provide oversight on economic management of the state as stipulated in the Public Financial Management and Accountability Act. Generally, there is low technical capacity of parliamentarians to monitor the use of public and natural resources and to effectively advocate for more transparent and accountable practices to ensure that revenue generated by government is translated into development for the people of South Sudan. Thus, to address some of these current challenges this project will take a two-fold approach to both **strengthen the capacity of citizens** to effectively engage in the national budget process, as well as **strengthen the capacity of key government actors** to create a **pro-citizen national budget**. This will be achieved through increasing awareness of citizens on the national budget process and then their participation and engagement in the national budget process. We will also aim to increase reporting by the media on the budgeting process through our trainings and support. The intervention will work to also increase the awareness of key government actors on the budget process such as members of parliament and those working in the ministries of finance. Finally, we will provide support to increase the government engagement with citizens on budget processes.

The Enhancing Citizen Participation for a Transparent and Accountable Budget is a three-year project funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NMFA) with the goal of a Transparent, Accountable, and Pro Citizen Budget.

The project outcomes include:

Outcome 1: Strengthened citizen participation in the national budget process.

Outcome 2: Strengthened Government Engagement with Citizens on the Budget Process.

1.2 The purpose of Opinion Poll

Opinion Poll on National Budget for Policy Makers is to inform the policymakers on how they would consider citizens' participation in the budget process seriously. The objectives were to develop strategic recommendations for policymakers to improve transparency and accountability, on the pro-citizen budget including debating on key issues that will lead to an increase in citizens' participation. This will lead to accountability, transparency and ownership of government projects.

1.3 Objectives of the Opinion Poll

The opinion poll was guided with the following questions which are important to measure whether there is meaningful citizen participation in the budget process.

- a. Are citizen's voices been heard during the budget process including an effort to include vulnerable and underrepresented groups?
- b. Are citizens able to find out about the purpose, scope, and intended outcomes for public engagement in the budget process?
- c. Does the government share the feedback they received and how it has been used to enhance budget debates and approval?
- d. Is citizen participation embedded in the budget process to provide regular input into decision making?

CHAPTER 2 : OPINION POLL APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the approach and process that was employed in conducting the opinion poll including: Opinion poll design, scope, sampling procedures, data collection, data analysis, limitations, and ethical considerations.

2.1 Opinion Poll Design

The opinion poll employed a cross sectional study design using the quantitative approach to data collection. The opinion poll was done using an online questionnaire which was self, and enumerator assisted.

The findings of this Opinion Poll were validated during a validation workshop at Yam Hotel on September 29, 2023. The Validation workshop was attended by National and State Members of Parliament, Officials from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning from National and State levels, Civil Society Organizations, Media organizations, International Organizations and UN and selected citizens.

2.2 Sampling Procedures

The opinion poll covered the three project areas of Juba, Yambio and Wau and at the national level. The ISPR and CEFORD team facilitated mobilization of the sampled participants with number of actual participant's dependent on availability of sampled groups.

Table 2-1: Primary Data Collection Sample in Surveyed Location

	Male	Female	Others	Total
Juba	412	209	2	623
Yambio	153	155	3	311
Wau	111	105	3	219
	676	469	8	1153

2.3 Opinion Poll Data Collection

Relevant data collection tools were developed in consultation with ISPR and CEFORD. Primary data were collected through poll survey.

2.4 Data Analysis and Management

Quantitative data was processed and analysed through SPSS database to generate appropriate descriptive statistics for data population and disaggregation. The findings are illustrated in different forms including tables, graphs, and pie charts, as well as

narratives. The entire process entailed data coding, cleaning and generation of percentages, frequency tables, charts, and cross-tabulations that were used to develop the descriptive statistics on the evaluation themes.

2.5 Reporting, Dissemination and Action Planning

The information generated from the data analysis, information obtained from the document review, and the subsequent findings were used to develop the initial (draft) opinion poll report which was presented to the ISPR Team for review and validation. The Team input and feedback was incorporated culminating in the final Opinion Poll report.

2.6 Limitations and Challenges

The major challenge in the Opinion Poll was getting respondents for the self-administered and the fact that most of the participants required facilitation for participating in the exercise which was not planned for.

2.7 Ethical Considerations

The opinion poll was conducted in conformity with the ethical principles, standards and practices of any study or evaluation, and the propriety standards set out in the Terms of Reference and Contract. Specific attention and considerations were given to ethical issues around Informed Consent and Confidentiality; Privacy and Safety; Data Protection; and Sensitivity and Non-Disclosure of internal document. Informed consent was secured by explaining the purpose and objectives of the opinion poll, the nature and intended use of information sought, and participant selection criteria. Participants were given fair, clear, honest explanations on the extent to which confidentiality of information and records would be maintained. In regard to informed consent, voluntary participation was emphasized, with participants being offered the option to proceed with or decline the engagement after explanation of what the opinion was all about.

CHAPTER 3 : CONTEXT ANALYSIS

This chapter presents an overview contextual analysis for the South Sudan budget making process drawing from document review. It covers summary national budget making context analysis including citizen participation, government priorities, key legal and policy trends.

3.1 National Context Overview

South Sudan's prolonged years of conflict and political instability created severe institutional capacity gaps, particularly in the areas of public finance management, and allowed the culture of rent seeking and created avenues for corruption. The key crucial elements- transparency and accountability, to good governance have been compromised.

The Republic of South Sudan gained sovereignty from Sudan in 2011 and is currently emerging from a period of prolonged civil conflict, which has disproportionately affected incomes and livelihoods, particularly for vulnerable groups, youth and women, and constrained private sector development. The country's economy is heavily dependent on oil resources, which accounted for 80% of the industry sector's value added and over 95% of total government revenue and exports earnings during 2012-2020. With an estimated 11.2 million people (2020) and a Gross National Income per capita of 351 USD (2021), the country is considered by the Bank as a country in transition since 2012. Key drivers of fragility include political instability and conflict, insecurity and tensions at community level, weak institutions, and poor financial and economic governance. At the economic front, growth prospects were undermined by desert locusts' invasions, floods, falling global oil prices and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The country was ranked at the bottom of African countries (53rd out of 54 countries) with an overall score of 20.7 points in the 2020 Mo-Ibrahim index of African governance. Similarly, it was ranked at the bottom (180th out 180 countries) on the 2021 Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index, with a score of 11 on a scale of 0-100 (0 representing highly corrupt and 100 clean). The country also performed poorly in the 2017 Open Budget Survey (OBS), scoring a transparency index of 5 out of 100 (compared to the global average of 42)

3.2 Legal and Policy Framework

In September 2018, the revitalized peace agreement for South Sudan sought to end the country's bloody civil war, which has claimed hundreds of thousands of lives and created a massive refugee and humanitarian crisis. Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS), together with the interim constitution of South Sudan 2011 as amended, gave the South Sudan Legislative Assembly powers of annual resources allocation to all spending agencies as well as approving the national budget. The South Sudan Legislative Assembly's power was further strengthened by the Public Financial Management and Accountability Act, 2011, as amended.

The Budgetary management is the most important role of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning of South Sudan as enshrined in the Transitional Constitution of South Sudan 2011 as amended. The Public Financial Management and Accountability Act, 2011 is the institutional legal framework put in place and permits the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to exercise powers in ensuring effective and efficient public financial management and accountability including budget preparation, execution, management, and reporting; internal audit; and public procurement among others. The constitution of The Republic of South Sudan 2011 and amended 2015, Annual Appropriation Act to guide the Yearly budgeting and utilization. Economic cluster (Chapter 4 of R-ARCSS). Public Finance Management Act 2008. State Revenue Authorities to harvest the state revenue and manage on behalf of the state. Parliamentary Budget committee, Budget Public Hearing process and Annual Tax schedules to guide the taxing process.

The Public Financial Management and Accountability Act, 2011 provides the process and procedure of engagement in the budgeting process. The Public Financial Management Action Plan 2012 gave MoFEP the responsibility to deliver a credible budget through proper budgetary control as a means to ensure fiscal control and predictability while systematically devolving the roles and responsibilities of accountable budget execution to the spending agencies. The allocation of financial resources is guided by the well-established budgetary control system to ensure proper accountability, transparency, and discipline in budget spending. The government of South Sudan established Financial Allocation and Fiscal Monitoring Commission tasked with the responsibility of monitoring the spending and fiscal allocation to all spending agencies and ensuring that they are adherent to budget execution principles such that the targets set in the annual working plan are achieved and value for money realized (Public Financial Management & Accountability Act 2012 p.8).

Budgets also are a financial mirror reflecting the prioritization of programmes and policies by the government, given the financial operating environment and the overall state of the economy. Thus, the dynamic links between the budgets and the development plans are a demonstration of the commitment of the government of the day to convert plans into an effective programme of action. The Financial Year covers a period of 12 months, which runs from 1st July to 30th June each year.

New provisions in South Sudan's Constitution enshrine openness, accountability, and public participation as guiding principles for public financial management. Yet, translating participation laws into meaningful action on the ground is no simple task. Experience has shown that in the absence of commitment from leaders and citizens and without appropriate capacities and methodologies, public participation provisions may lead to simple tick-the-box exercise.

3.3 Budget Making Process in South Sudan

Participatory Budgeting (PB) is now globally recognized for transforming citizens from being superficial observers in public administration to fully active and demanding participants. This results in re-ordering social priorities and promoting social justice. The benefits of PB include; it improves the transparency of public administration and efficiency in public expenditures, encouraging citizen participation in decision-making and, in the allocation and oversight of public funds. It leads to increased demand for accountability of public leaders and managers, enables collective prioritization and co-management of resources, generates increased trust between the government and the population and creates a democratic culture within the community to strengthen the social fabric.

The Government of South Sudan has made progress in citizen participation but still saddled with problems including limited capacity, lack of oversight, and corruption. The pre- and post-independence eras have witnessed development and approval of budgets by the government through the National Legislative Assembly but with very little or no citizen participation in directing government on key citizen budget priorities in the quest of having an inclusive budget as stipulated in the law. There is a lack of clear Framework or policy on how citizens can be engaged in budget formulation. There is also no policy that ensures that there is awareness among citizens on how, where, what, and when government will spend budgeted funds.

In addition, the country budget making process exhibits limited capacity of the various Committees in the National Legislative Assembly especially the Public Accounts Committee to ensure that each and every Ministry or Government Institution provides a comprehensive financial accountability to funds allocated to them in a particular Financial Year. The level of transparency and ownership of the budget by the citizens is still low in most of the states.

3.4 Government Engagement in Budget Making process

The budget making process requires the involvement of the Executive, Parliament, citizens, and other stakeholders connected to the budget process which has four budget phases; 1. Budget planning and Preparation 2. Budget Proposal 3. Budget Debate and Approval 4. Budget Execution, Monitoring and Evaluation. The expectation is that the government should provide platforms and spaces for public engagement in the budget making process.

3.5 Participatory budgeting and citizen engagement

Participatory budgeting allows residents to identify, discuss, and prioritize public spending projects, and gives them the power to make real decisions about how money is spent. Five objectives of citizen participation are identified: information exchange, education, support building, supplemental decision making, and representational input. Then through the development of a typology of participatory mechanisms, techniques are matched with their most appropriate objectives.

Preparation of the budget tends to involve just about anyone of importance who is associated with a non-profit entity, including community representatives, funding sources, and regulatory agencies. These external parties have different backgrounds and often have different budget expectations. Participation and active citizenship is about having the right, the means, the space and the opportunity and, where necessary, the support to participate in and influence decisions and engage in actions and activities so as to contribute to building a better society.

3.6 Citizen participation in Budget making process

Citizen's participation and engagement for financial transparency and accountability have been very limited. Citizen voice and participation are essential to build and sustain democratic South Sudan through a well-set good governance system. Both the local, state, and national governments operate in a closed and non-transparent manner without the meaningful participation of citizens on budget process. Promoting participatory, representative, and inclusive pro-citizens budget will be a key issue. For South Sudan to make a remarkable change, it is important that efforts are exerted on building active citizens and effective states.

The processes stipulated in the Act are not followed mainly because there is limited oversight and accountability on how the government manages its budget. Moreover, citizen participation in the budgeting process is almost non-existent. In order to ensure a meaningful and transparent budget, it's paramount to engage various stakeholders including the citizens in the budgeting process.

3.7 Budget Making Process Challenges

The South Sudan budget process has several limitations linked to lack of credibility and transparency. The budget lacks credibility and comprehension because it does not fully take into consideration sector ministries' planning despite their submissions as well as lack of reporting from the states on the central government transfers. The recurrent failure to meet the approval deadline, which is before or by 30th June 8, by parliament is another contributing factor. In addition, the Parliament has not been efficiently exercising its role to ensure oversight of the budget expenditures due to human and financial constraints. Moreover, budget preparation cycle is still not inclusive because of limited nationwide consultation with civil society due to insecurity outside Juba.

Among the major trending issues in the budget making process in South Sudan include lack of transparency in the budget management, lack of inclusive participation of all stakeholders in the budget planning, weak internal and external control mechanism, lack of qualified staff in the accounts and budget departments, lack of timely and adequate budgetary information sharing, and failure of the parliament to exercise its oversight role on the planning and implementation of the budget, among others

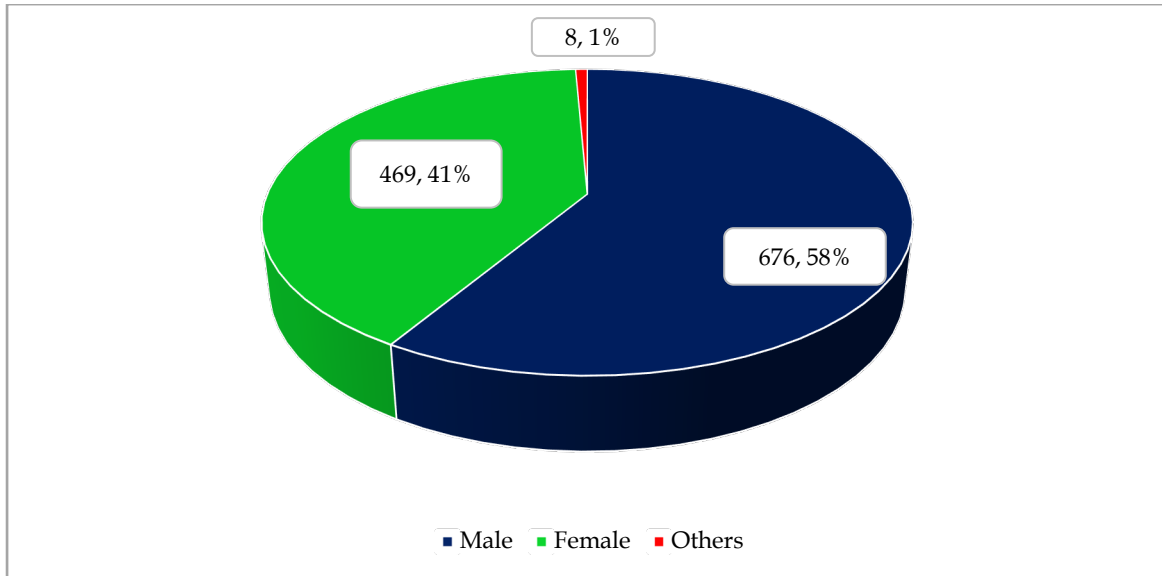
CHAPTER 4 : OPINION POLL FINDINGS

This chapter is the main analytical part of the opinion poll. The chapter presents, interprets and discusses the findings from the opinion poll.

4.1 Demographic information

Demographics of the participants: Male 676(58%), 469(41%) female and at 8(1%).

Figure 4-1: Distribution according to gender



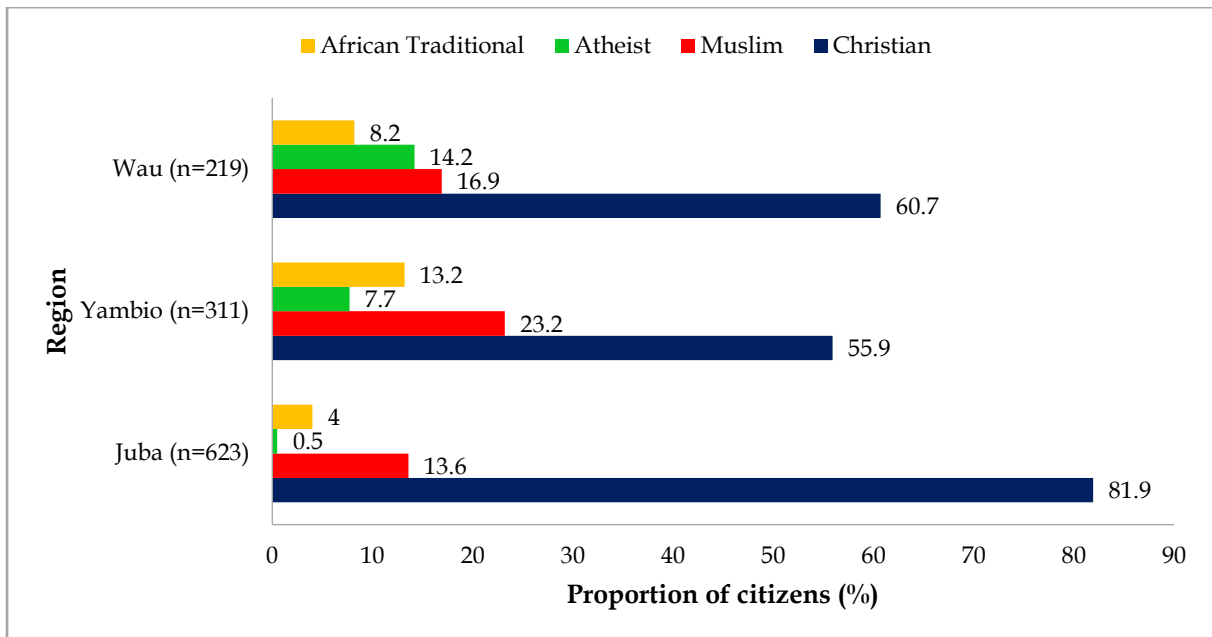
Gender of the participants

Table 4-1: Gender of participants per region

Region	Sex	Number of respondents	Percent
Juba	Male	412	66.1
	Female	209	33.5
	Others	2	.3
	Total	623	100.0
Yambio	Male	153	49.2
	Female	155	49.8
	Others	3	1.0
	Total	311	100.0
Wau	Male	111	50.7
	Female	105	47.9
	Others	3	1.4
	Total	219	100.0

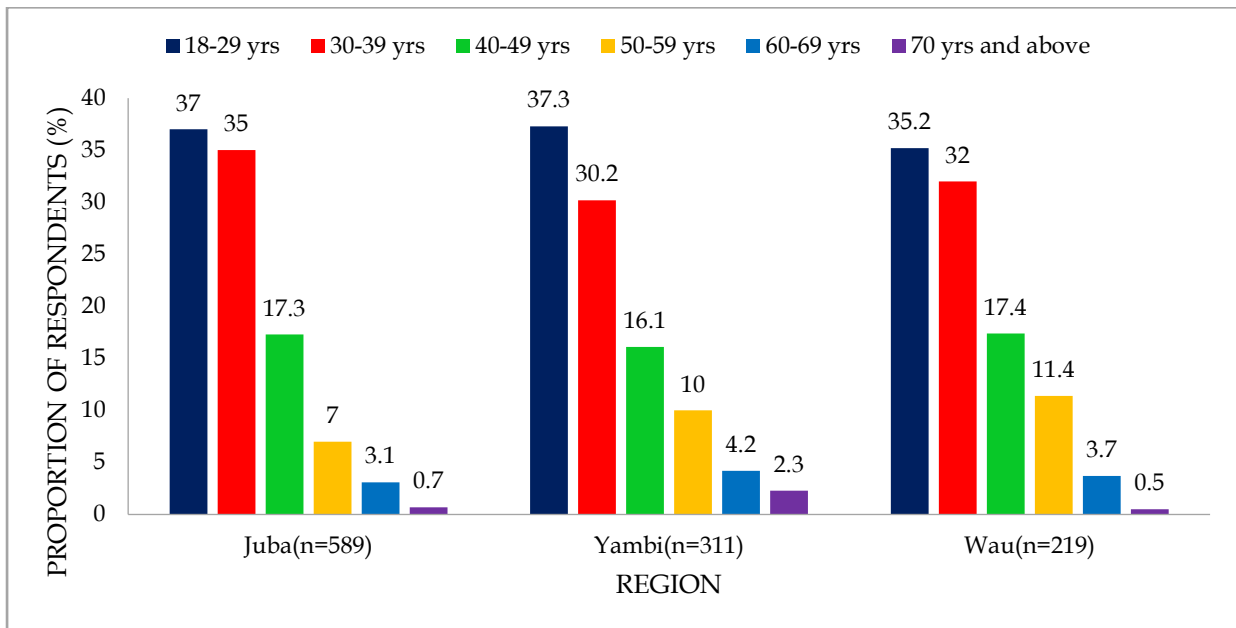
Religion: Christianity is the main religion reported by majority of the respondents across all the regions with Juba reporting 81.9%, Wau 60.7% and Yambio 55.9%

Figure 4-2: Religion of citizens



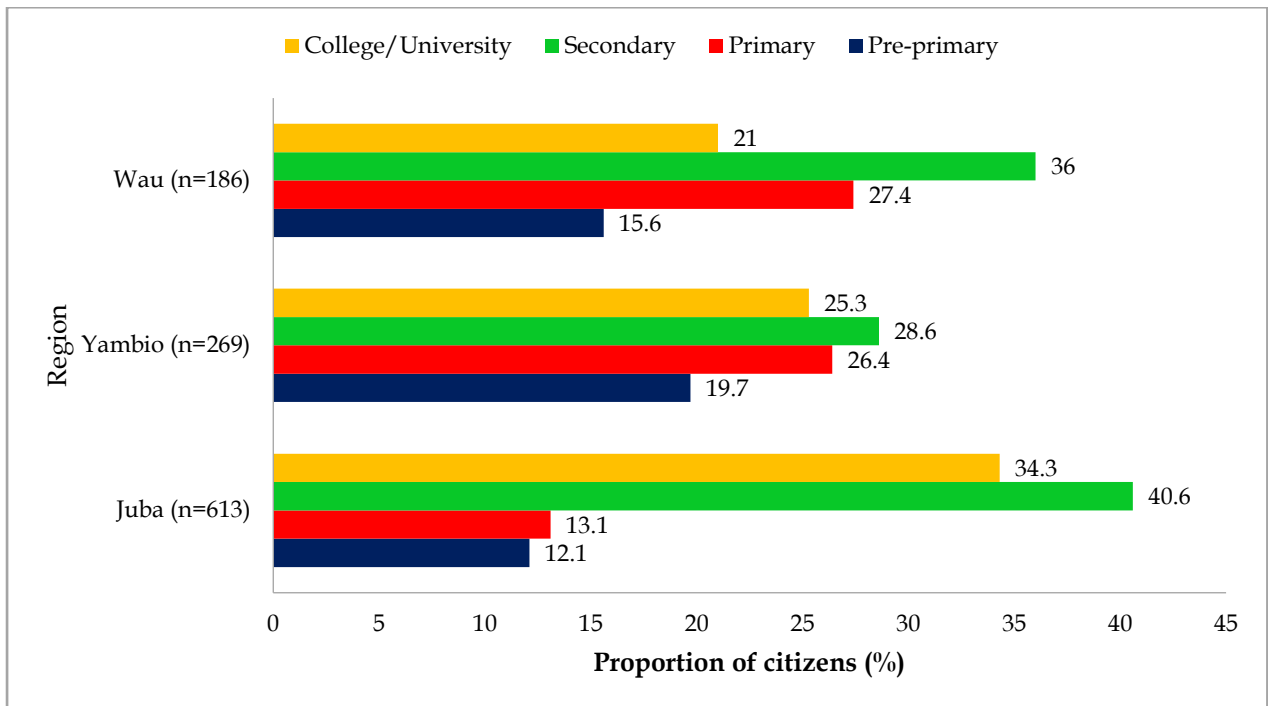
Age of the respondents: The mean age of the respondents across board was determined to be 35.5 years old, with the youngest and the oldest being 18 years and 82 years old respectively. The meaning indicates that the majority of the youth forms the population.

Figure 4-3: Level of education



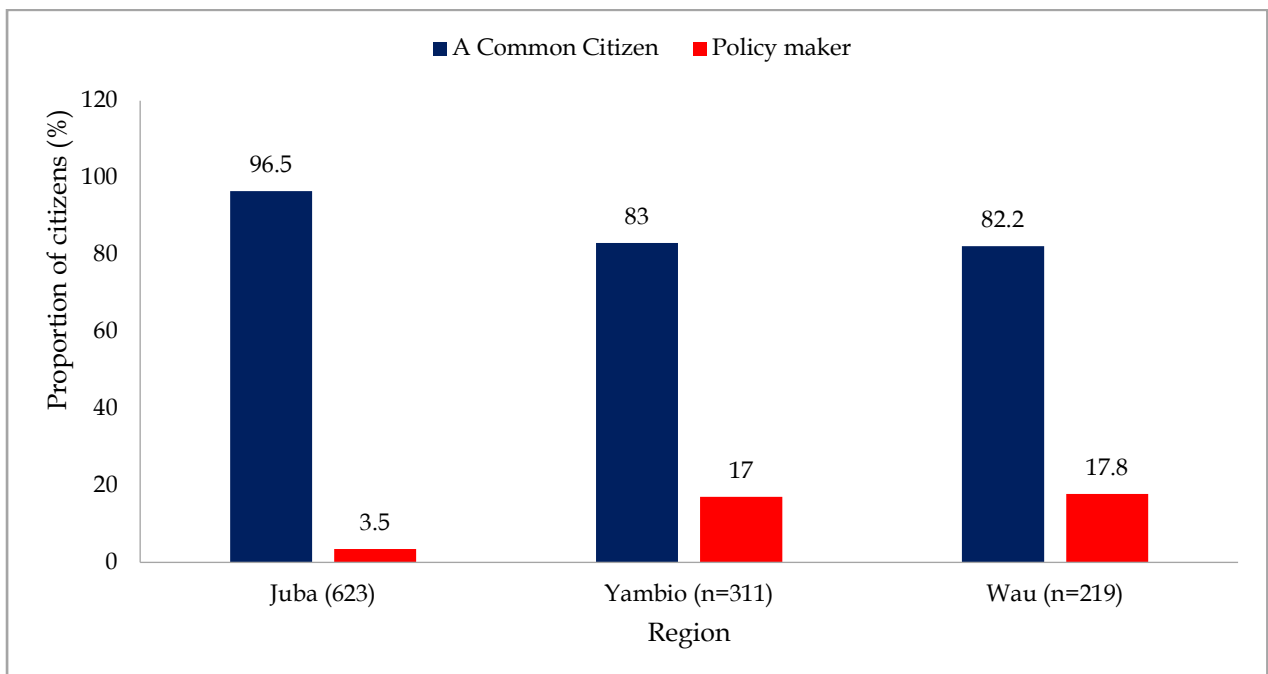
Level of education: 36.8% had attained secondary education. In Juba, had the highest at 40.6%, followed by Wau at 28.6% and Yambio at 28.6%

Figure 4-4: Education Level of the citizens



Out of 1153 only 53 (0.045%) were policy makers with Juba recording 3.5% out of 623 respondents, Yambio had 17% reporting to be policy makers while Wau had 17.8%

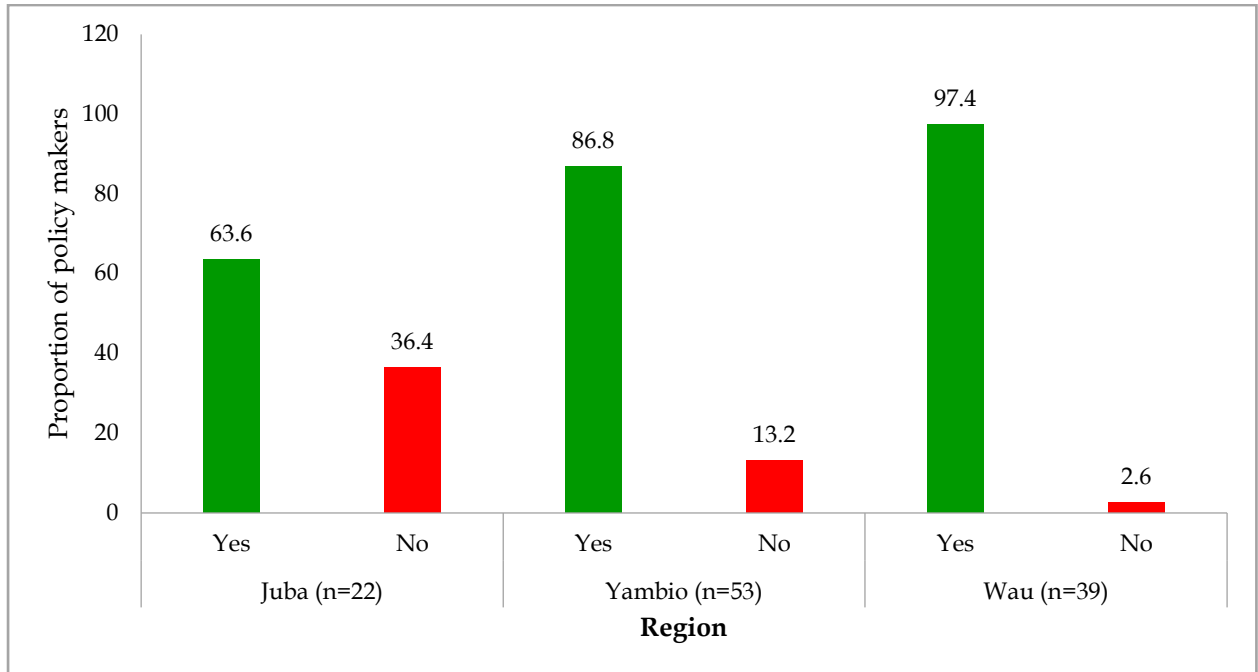
Figure 4-5: Role of citizens in budget making.



4.2 Policy makers engagement in the budget making process in South Sudan

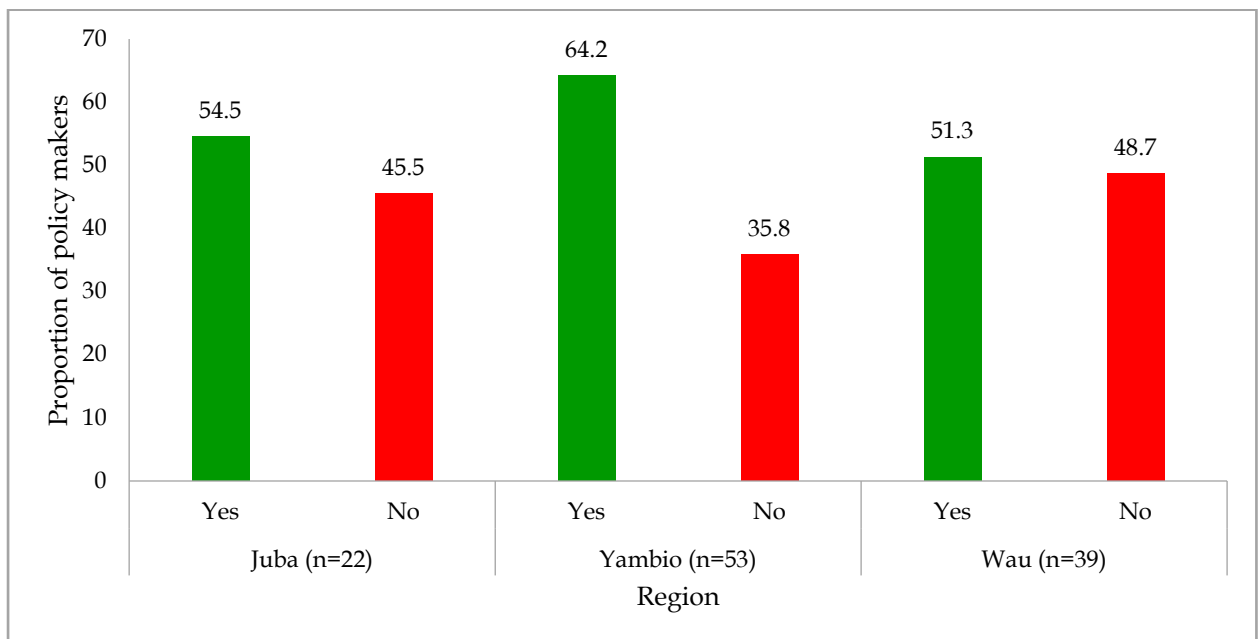
97.4% of policy makers in Wau, Yambio 86.8% and Juba 63.6% are engaged in the budget making process.

Figure 4-6: Engagement of policy makers in Budget making process.



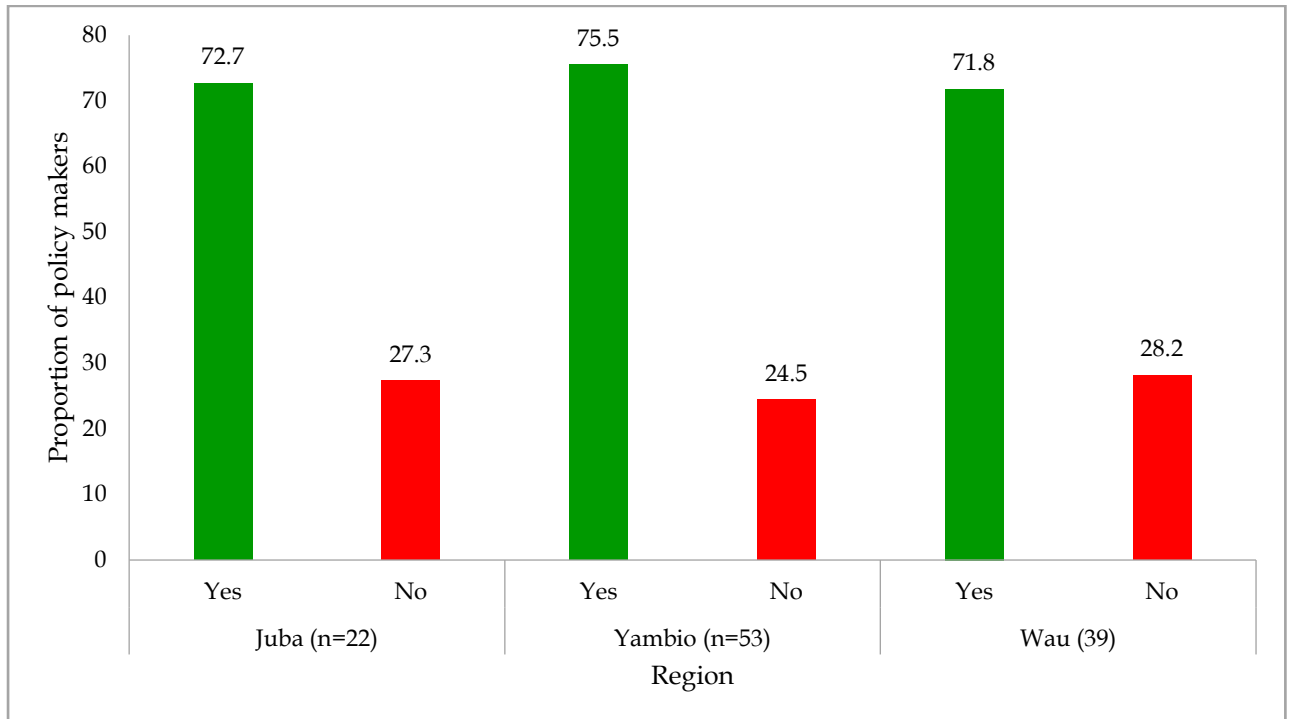
Engaged in entire budget making process: Most policy makers are involved in the entire budget making process Yambio at 64.5%. Juba at 54.4% while Wau is at 51.3%

Figure 4-7: Engaged in entire budget making process.



Citizen’s voices heard during the budget process: Many of the policy makers believe that citizen voices are heard during the budget making process. 72.2% Juba, 75.5% in Yambio and 71.8% in Wau.

Figure 4-8: Voices of citizens are heard.

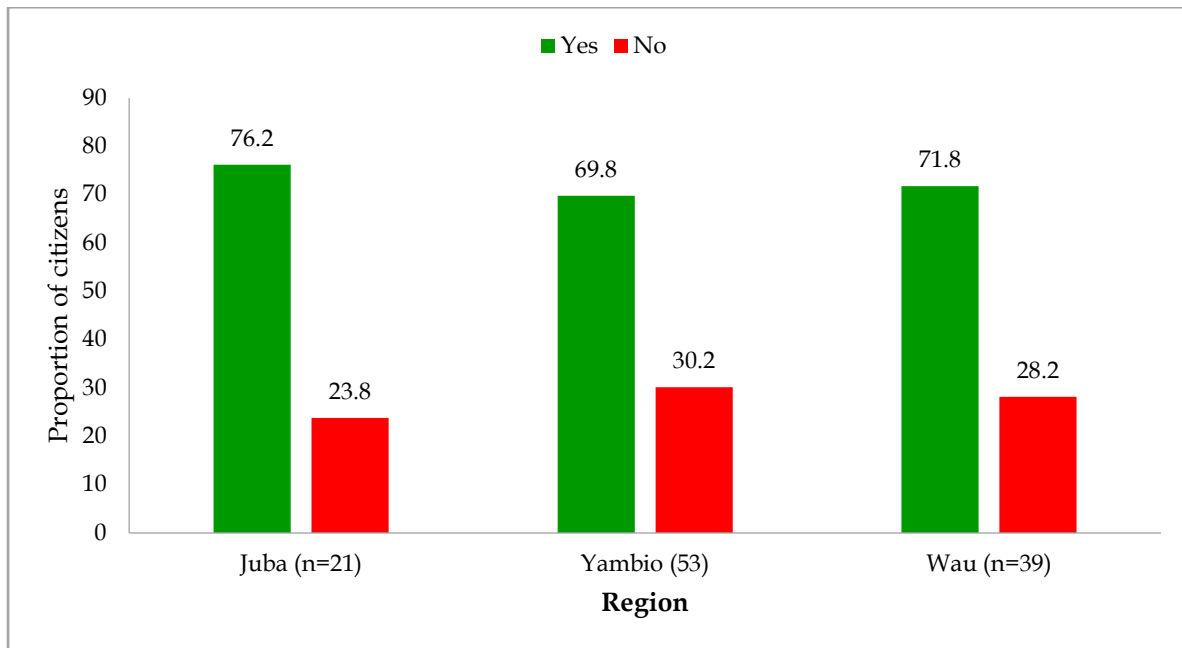


The citizens felt that their voices are heard when they receive services from the government more so when the vulnerable citizens are included to receive the services. Inclusivity to participate in any government process makes them feel that their voices are heard as well as being supported financially through cash transfer programs among others.

Those who felt that their voices were not heard talked of discrimination from the government officials as one of the reasons for their situation. There is also an assuming attitude from some of the government officials which makes communication to rather one way.

72.6% in Juba, 69.8 in Yambio and 71.8 % in Wau believe that they are able to find out about the purpose, scope, and intended outcomes for public engagement in the budget process.

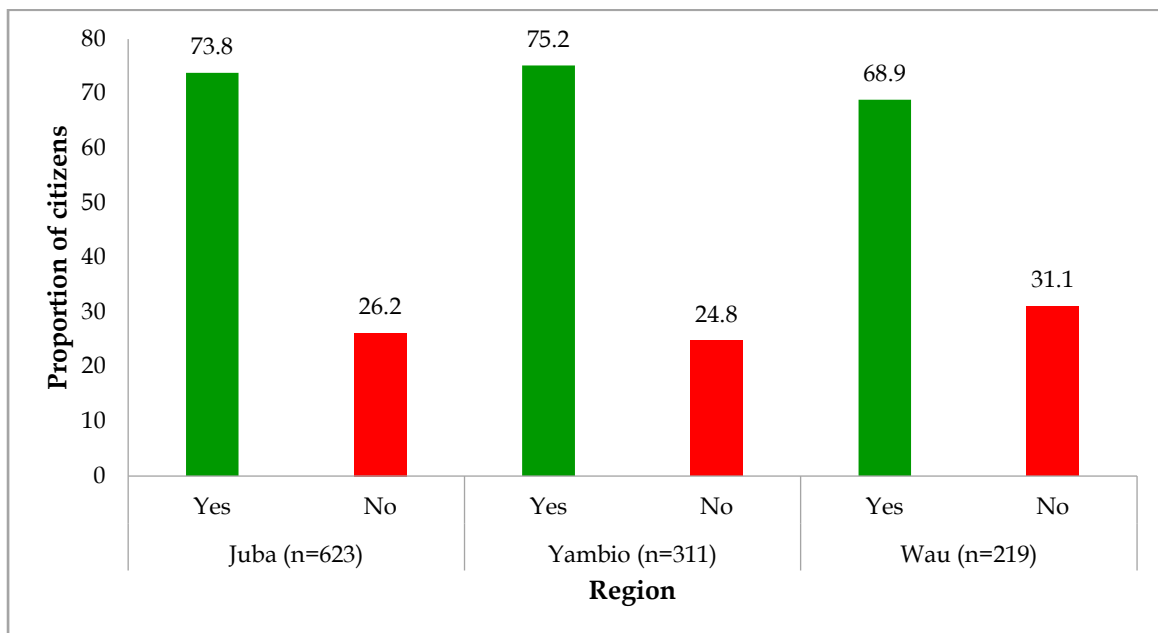
Figure 4-9: Citizens find out about purpose, scope and intended outcomes.



4.3 Citizen Engagement in the Budget making Process

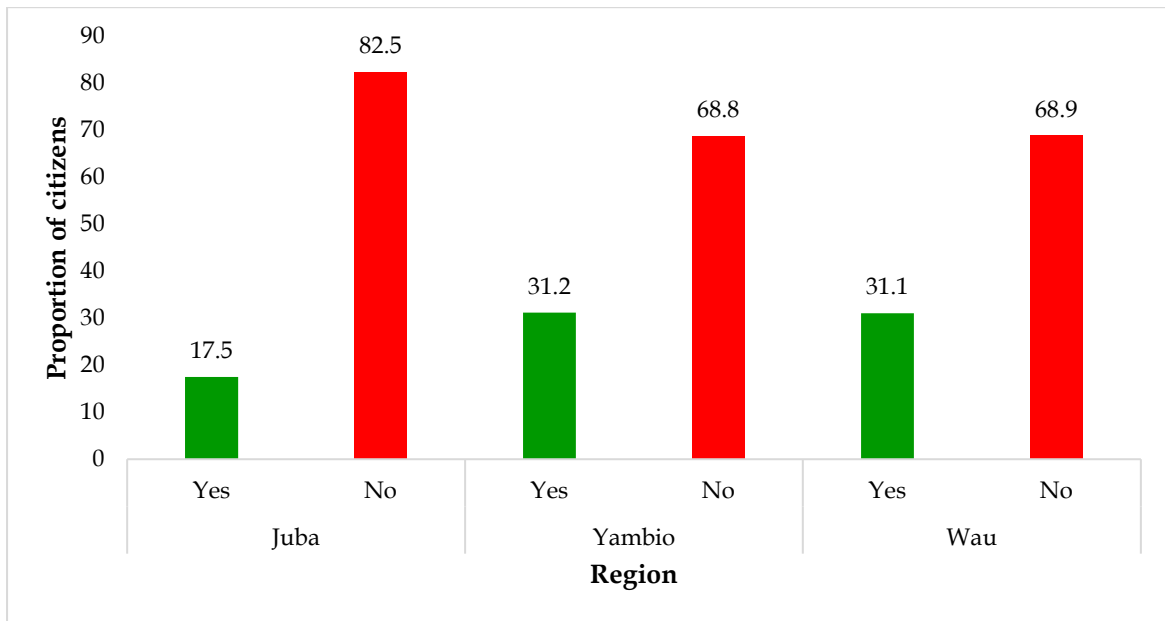
Ever heard of budget making process: Most of the citizens have ever heard of the budget making process: 73.8% in Juba, 75.2% in Yambio and 68.9% in Wau have heard.

Figure 4-10: Ever heard of budget making process.



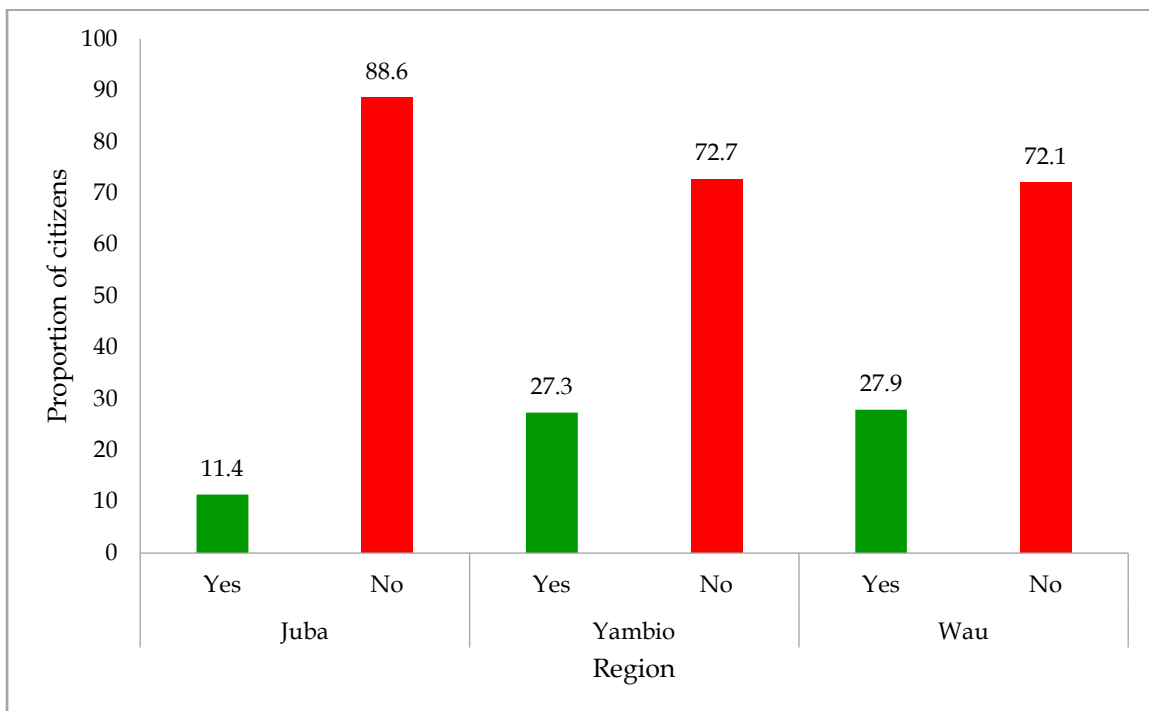
Ever been engaged in budget making process: Citizen Engagement in the budget process is very low: 17.5% in Juba, 31.2% in Yambio and 31.1% in Wau have ever engaged in the budget making process.

Figure 4-11: Ever been engaged in budget making process.



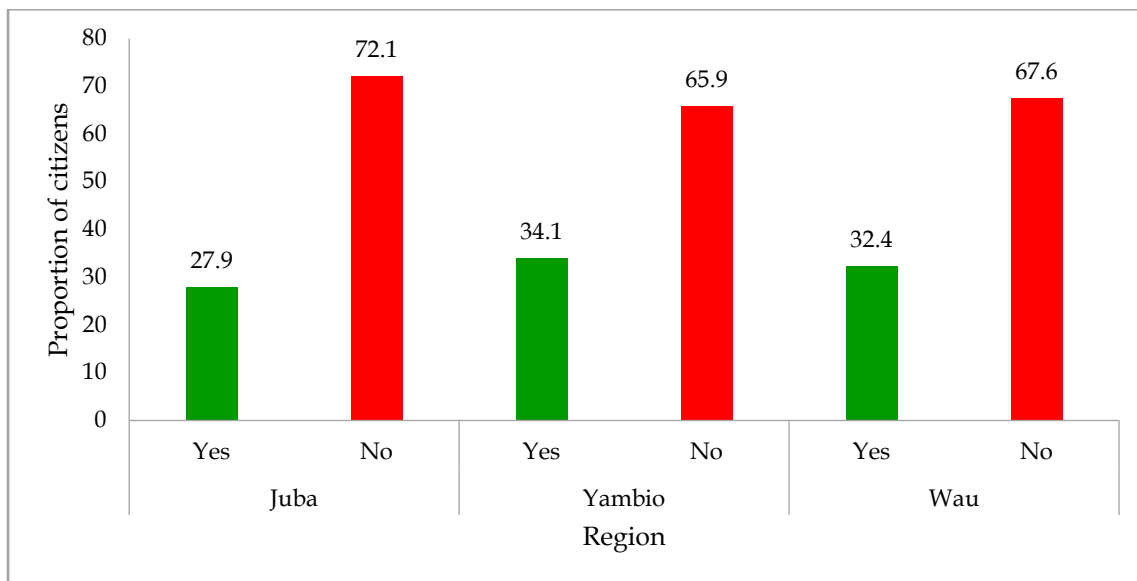
Were your views considered? For those who have been involved only 11.4% in Juba, 27.3% in Yambio and 27.9% in Wau believe that their views were considered on the budget making process.

Figure 4-12: Views considered.



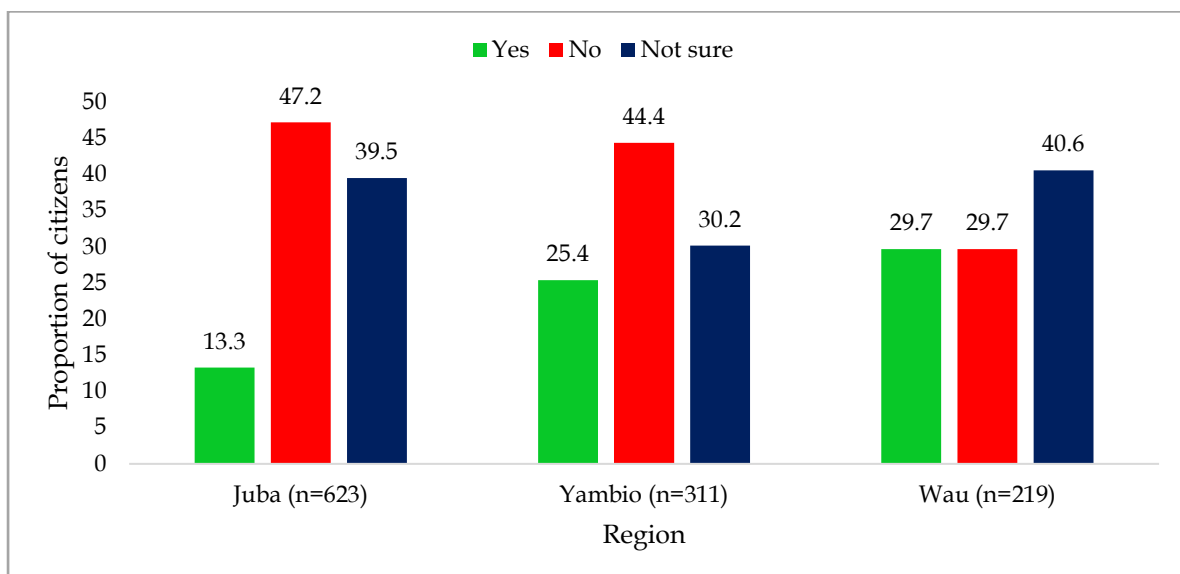
Know the steps in developing the national budget: Citizen who know the steps in developing the budget are few: 27.9% in Juba, 34.1% in Yambio and 32.4% in Wau.

Figure 4-13: Know the steps in developing national budget.



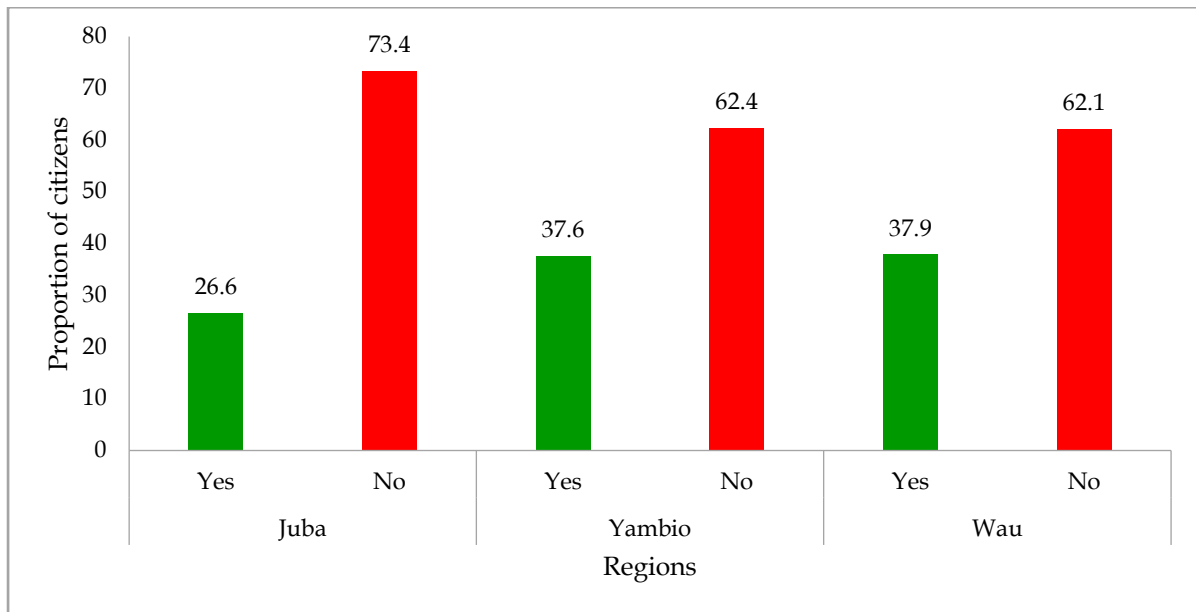
Budget process in South Sudan is participatory: According to the citizens the budget making process in South Sudan is not participatory; Only 13.3% citizens in Juba, 25.4% in Yambio and 29.7% in way believe it's participatory. The remaining either said that it's not transparent or were not sure whether it's participatory or not.

Figure 4-14: Budget process in southern Sudan participatory



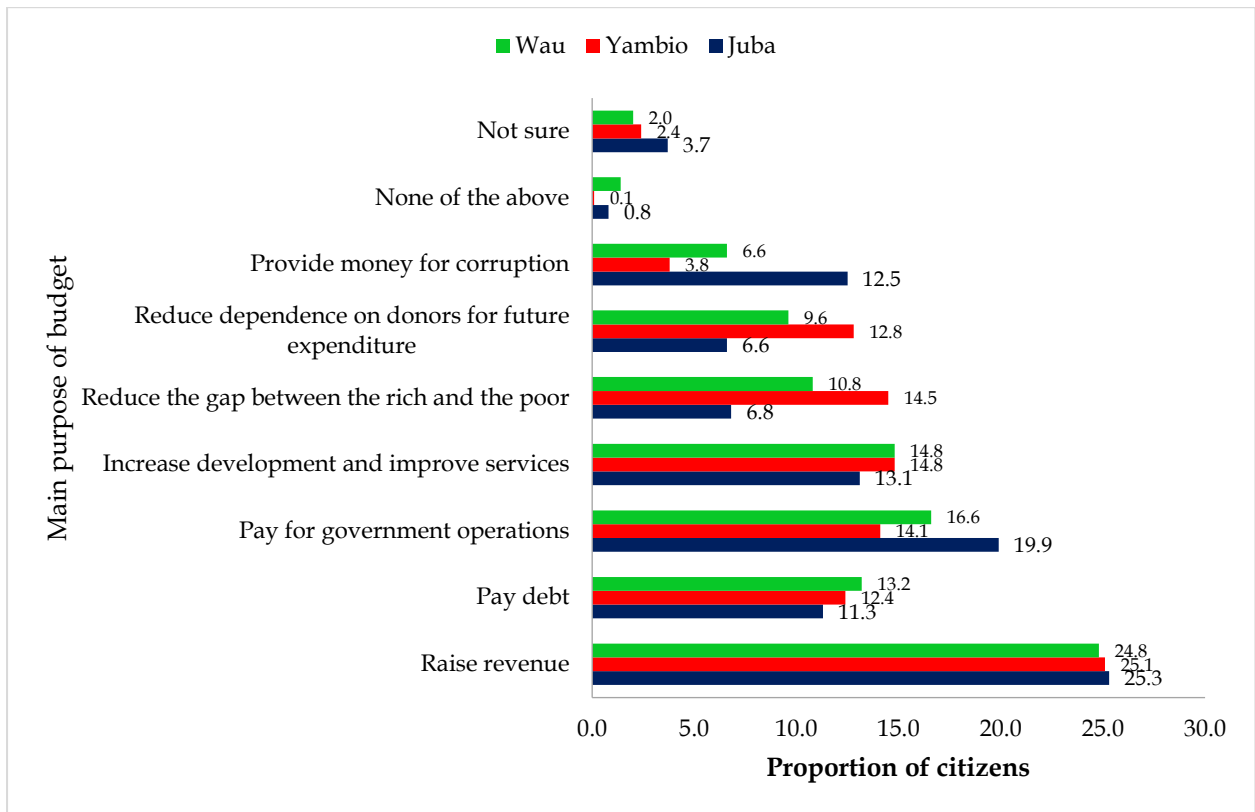
Citizen participation is embedded in the budget process: Only 26.6% in Juba, 37.6% and 37.9% believe that citizen participation is embedded in the budget making process.

Figure 4-15: Citizen Participation embedded in budget process.



Main purpose of budget: Raising revenue was the main purpose of budget as according to 25.3% in Juba, 25.1% in Yambio, and 24.8% in Wau. Paying for government operations is another major purpose of budget highlighted by 19.9% of the citizen in Juba, 14.1% in Yambio and 16.6% in Wau. The other mentioned purposes of budget are shown in table 4-16 below.

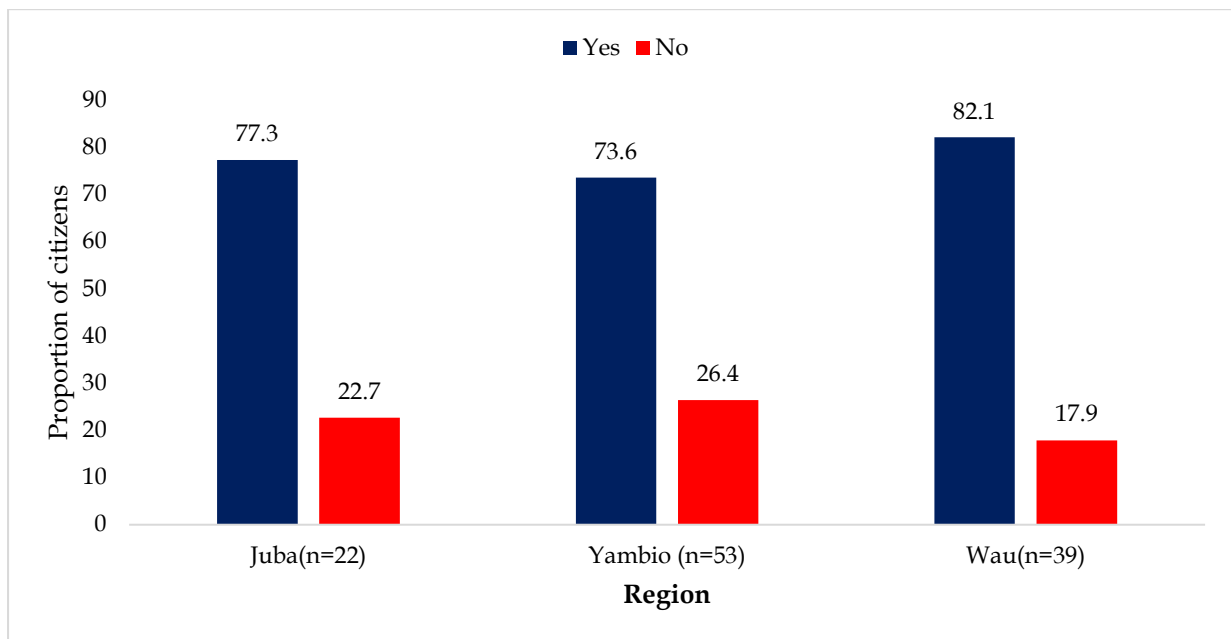
Figure 4-16: Main purpose of budget



4.4 Government Engagement and feedback in the Budget making Process

Government shares the feedback they received and how: The citizen ascertained that that the government shares feedback on the budget making proposals. Wau recorded the highest percentage of citizens at 82.1%, Juba 77.3% while Yambio, had 73.6%. The feedback was noted to be through mass media, through citizen’s handbook, conferences as well as through relevant ministries, citizen representatives like Members of Parliament (MPs) and State Government officials.

Figure 4-17: Government share feedback



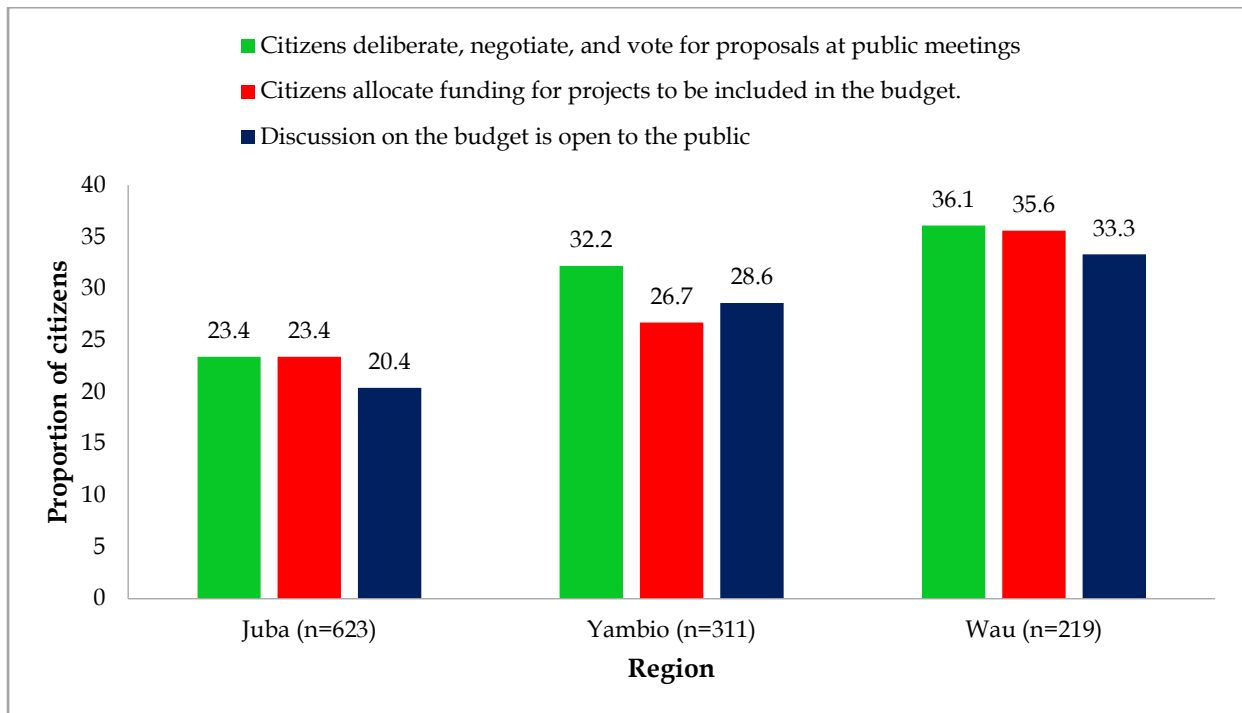
4.5 Discussions on the Budget Proposal

Citizen deliberates, negotiate and vote on budget proposals: 23.4% in Juba, 32.2% in Yambio and 36.1% of citizens deliberate and negotiate on the budget proposal.

Citizen allocates funds for projects: 23.4% in Juba, 26.7% in Yambio and 35.6% in Wau say that citizens allocate funds for projects,

Budget discussion is open to the public: 20.4% in Juba, 28.6% in Yambio and 33.3% in Wau.

Figure 4-18: Discussion on budget proposal



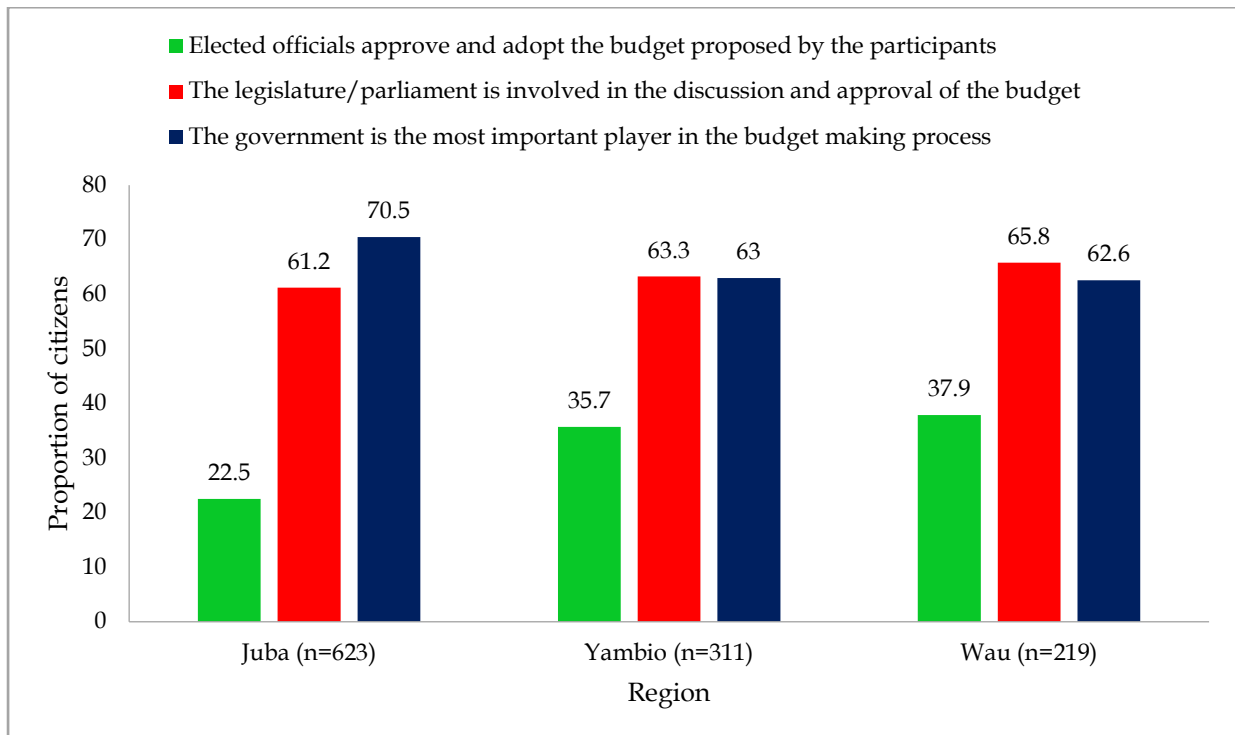
4.6 Approval Process of the Budget

Role of elected leaders in the budget approval: 22.5% in Juba, 35.7% in Yambio and 37.9 % in Wau of citizen believe that elected officials approve and adopt the budget proposed by the participants.

Role of Legislature in approval of the budget: 62.1% in Juba, 63.3% in Yambio and 65.8% in Wau believe that the legislature/parliament is involved in the discussion and approval of the budget.

Most important player in the budget making process: 70.5% in Juba, 63.0% in Yambio and 62.6% in Wau believe that the government is the most important player in the budget making process.

Figure 4-19: The approval process of the budget



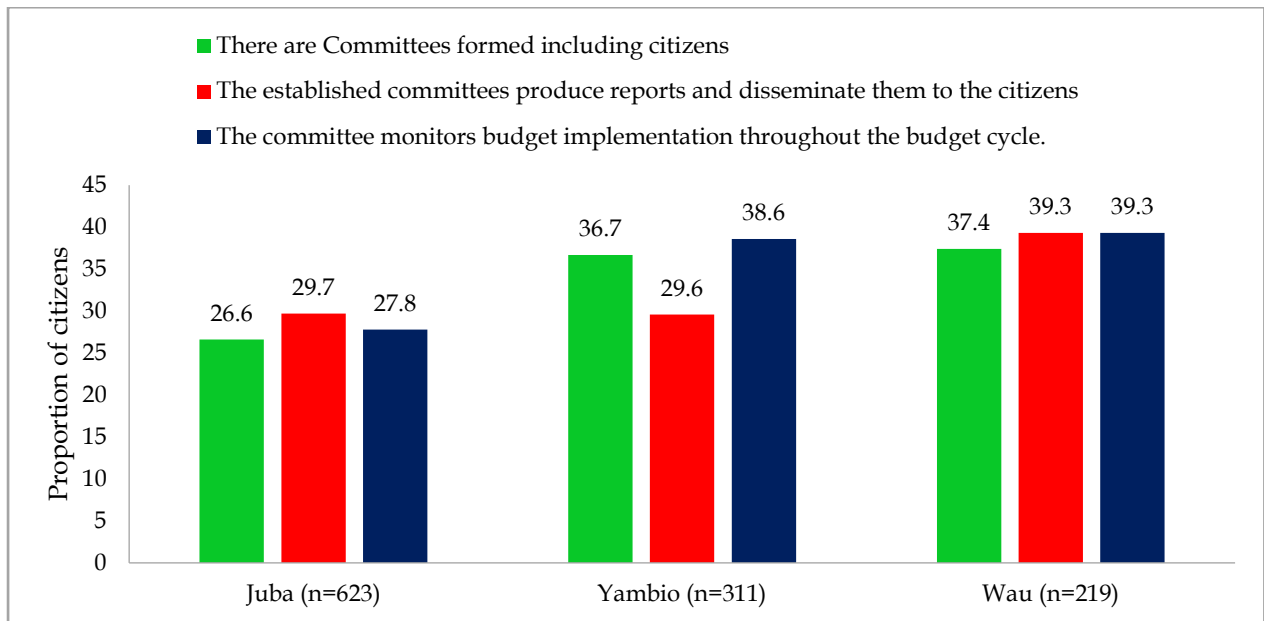
4.7 Citizen over sighting the Budget making process

Citizen involvement for budget-making committees: 26.6% of citizens in Juba, 36.7% in Yambio, and 37.7% in Wau say that there are budget committees which are formed to oversee the budget-making process which include ordinary citizens.

Role of committees in production and dissemination of budget reports: 29.7% in Juba, 29.6% in Yambio, and 39.3% in Wau say that the established committees produce and disseminate budget reports.

Citizen monitoring of budget implementation: 27.8% in Juba, 38.6% in Yambio and 39.3 in Wau affirms their involvement in budget monitoring.

Figure 4-20: Citizen over sighting the budget



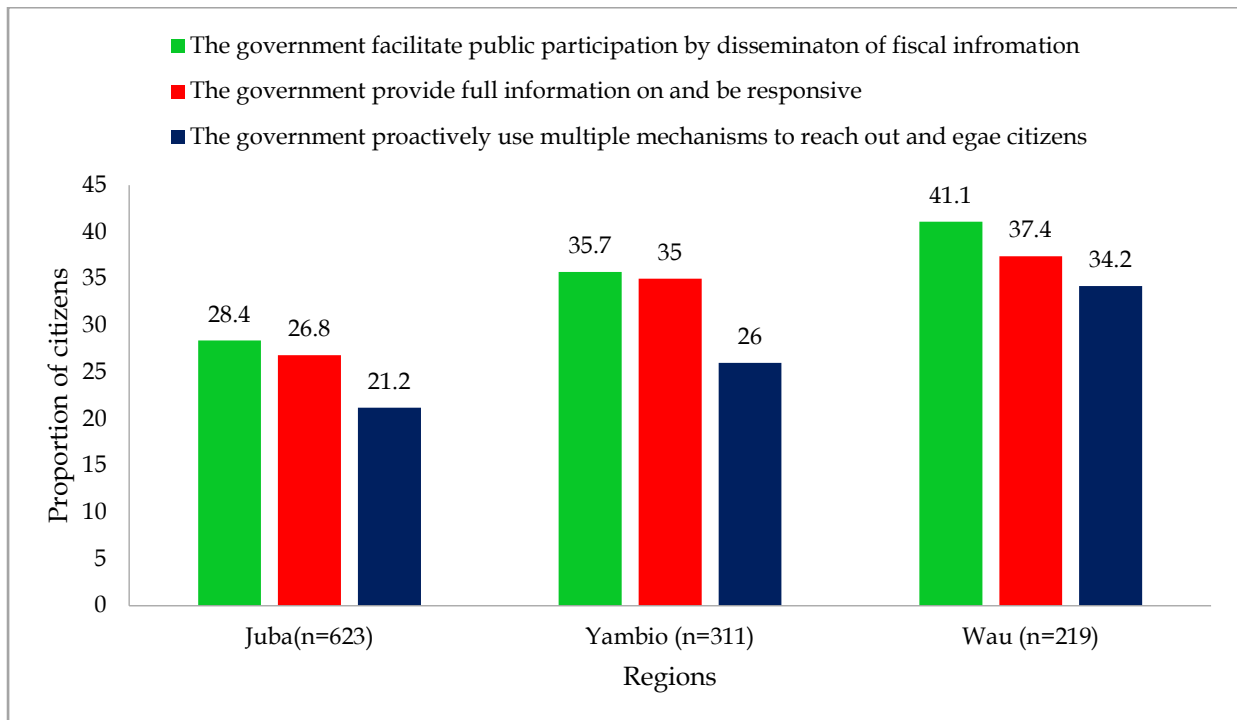
4.8 Principles of participatory budget making process

Government facilitates public participation by dissemination fiscal information: 28.4% of citizen in Juba, 35.7% in Yambio and 41.1% in Wau believes that the government facilitates public participation by disseminating complete fiscal information and all other relevant data, in formats and using mechanisms that are easy for all to access, understand, and use.

Government provision of full information and responsive: 26.6% in Juba, 35.0% in Yambio and 37.4% in Wau believe that the government provides full information on and is responsive with respect to the purpose of each engagement, its scope, constraints, intended outcomes, process, and timelines, as well as the expected and actual results of public participation.

Government mechanism to reach out and engage citizen and non-state actors: 21.1% in Juba, 26.0% in Yambio and 34.2% in Wau believe that the e government pro-actively use multiple mechanisms to reach out to engage citizens and non-state actors.

Figure 4-21: Principles of participatory budgeting process 1

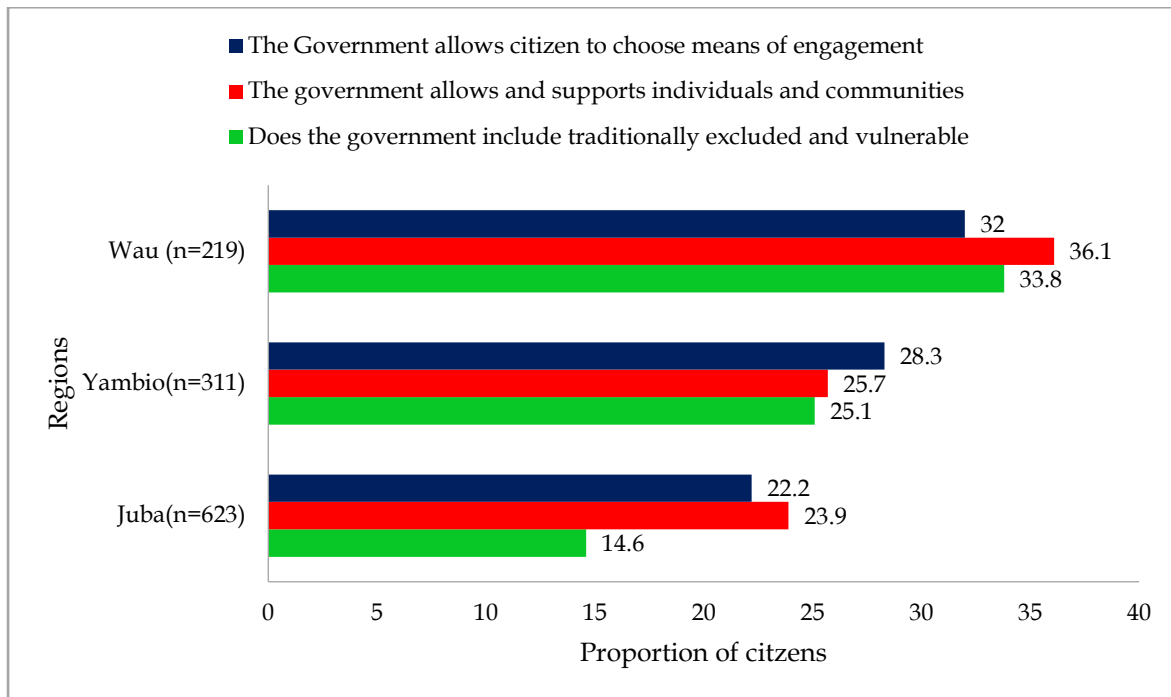


Government allows citizen to choose means of engagement: 22.2% in Juba, 28.3% in Yambio and 32.9% in Wau feel that the government includes traditionally excluded and vulnerable groups and individuals, and voices that are seldom heard, without discrimination on any basis including nationality, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, or caste; and consider public inputs on an objective basis irrespective of their source.

Government support to individual and committee to engage in the budget making process: 23.9% in Juba, 25.7% in Yambio and 36.1% in Wau feel that the government allows and supports individuals and communities, including those directly affected, to articulate their interests in their own ways.

Inclusion of vulnerable and excluded by government in the budget making process: 14.6% in Juba, 25.1% in Yambio and 33.8% in Wau feel that the government includes the traditionally excluded and vulnerable groups in the budget making process.

Figure 4-22: Principles of participatory budgeting process 2

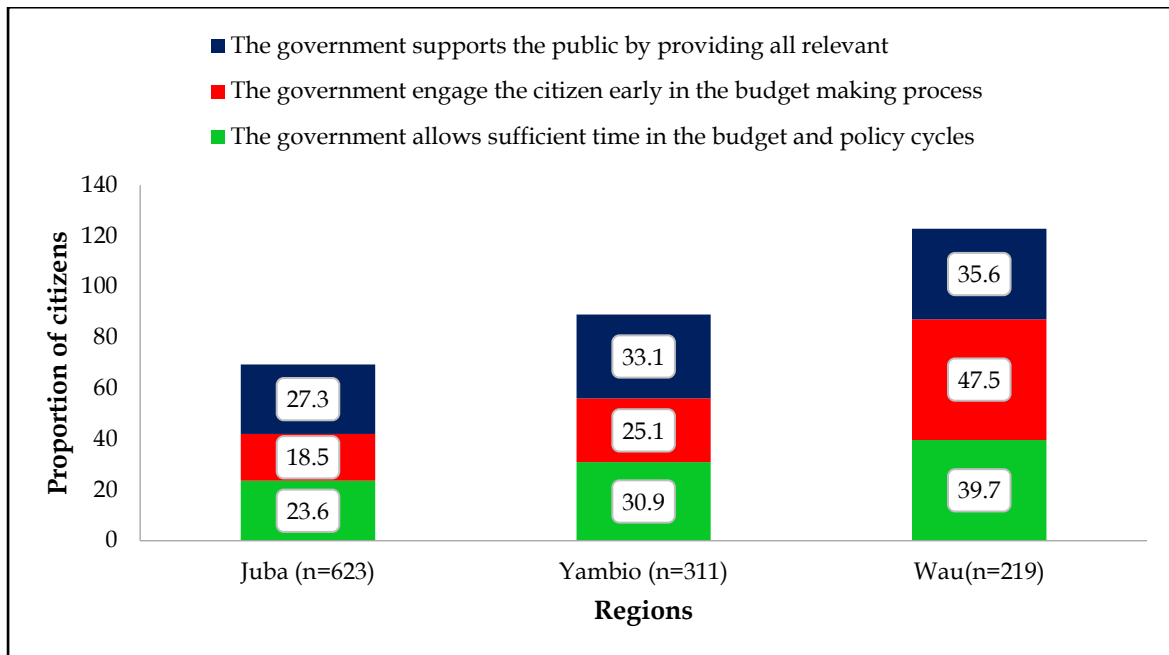


The government allows for sufficient time for the budget process: 23.6% in Juba, 30.9% in Yambio and 39.7% in Wau feel that the government allows sufficient time in the budget and policy cycles for the public to provide inputs in each phase.

Engagement of citizens in the budget making process early: 18.5% in Juba, 25.1% in Yambio and 47.5% in Wau believe that the government engages the citizen early in the budget making process.

Government support to public engagement: 27.3% in Juba, 33.1% in Yambio and 35.6% believe that the government supports public engagement by providing all relevant information, highlighting, and informing key policy objectives, options, choices, and trade-offs, identifying potential social, economic, and environmental impact.

Figure 4-23: Principles of participatory budgeting process 3

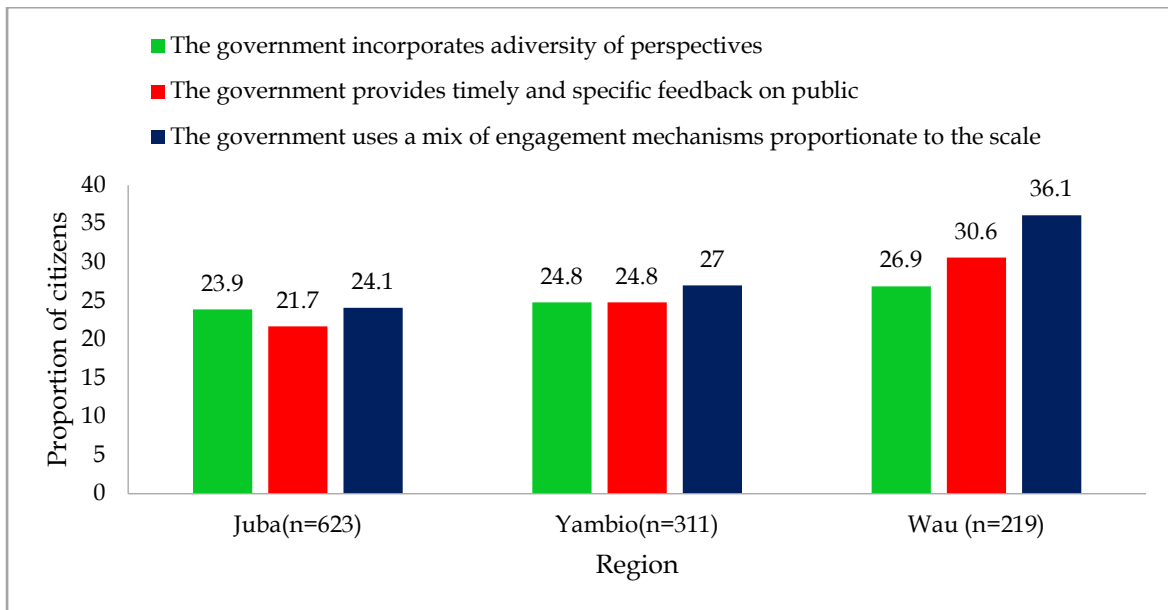


The government incorporates diversity of perspectives: 23.9% in Juba, 24.8% in Yambio and 26.9% in Wau believe that the government incorporates diversity of perspectives in the budget making process.

Government offering feedback on public input: 21.7% in Juba, 24.8% in Yambio and 30.6% in Wau feel that the government provides timely and specific feedback on public inputs and how they have been incorporated.

Government use of mixed engagement mechanisms: 24.1% in Juba, 27.0% in Yambio and 36.1% in Wau say that the government uses a mix of engagement mechanisms proportionate to the scale and impact of the issue or policy concerned.

Figure 4-24: Principles of participatory budgeting process 4

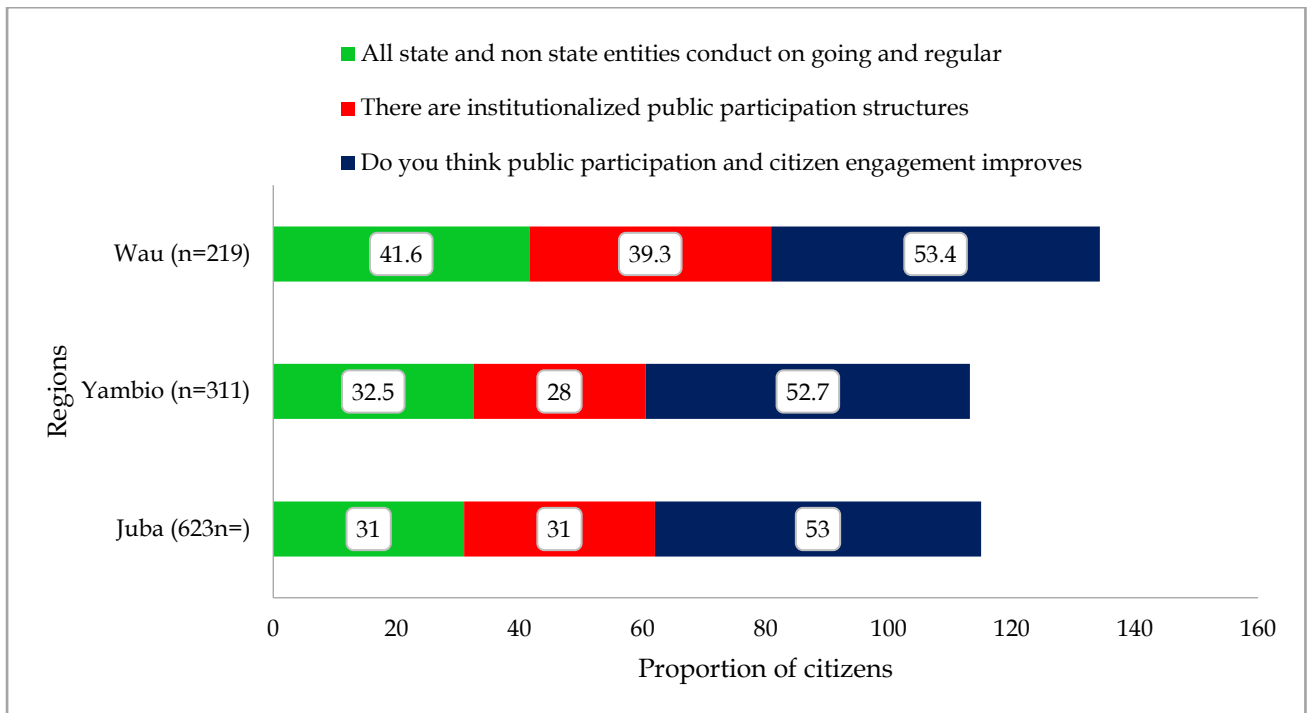


Engagement forums for knowledge and information sharing: 31.0% in Juba, 32.5% in Yambio and 41.6% in Wau say that all state and non-state entities conduct on-going and regular engagement to increase knowledge sharing and mutual trust which leads to ownership and collaboration.

Participation structures: 31.0% in Juba, 28.0% in Yambio and 39.3% in Wau believe that there are institutionalized public participation structures where information and feedback are shared on the budget making process. Effective feedback mechanism contributes to trust and confidence building between government and citizen.

Public participation, citizen engagement and accountability: 53.0% in Juba, 52.7% in Yambio and 53.4% in Wau think that public participation and citizen engagement improves accountability.

Figure 4-25: Principles of participatory budgeting 5



There are a number of mechanisms for public participation and citizen engagement such as being involved in the committees, voting, advocacy meeting, campaigns and demonstrations increases the effectiveness of existing governance and accountability systems both undertaken by government and non-state actors.

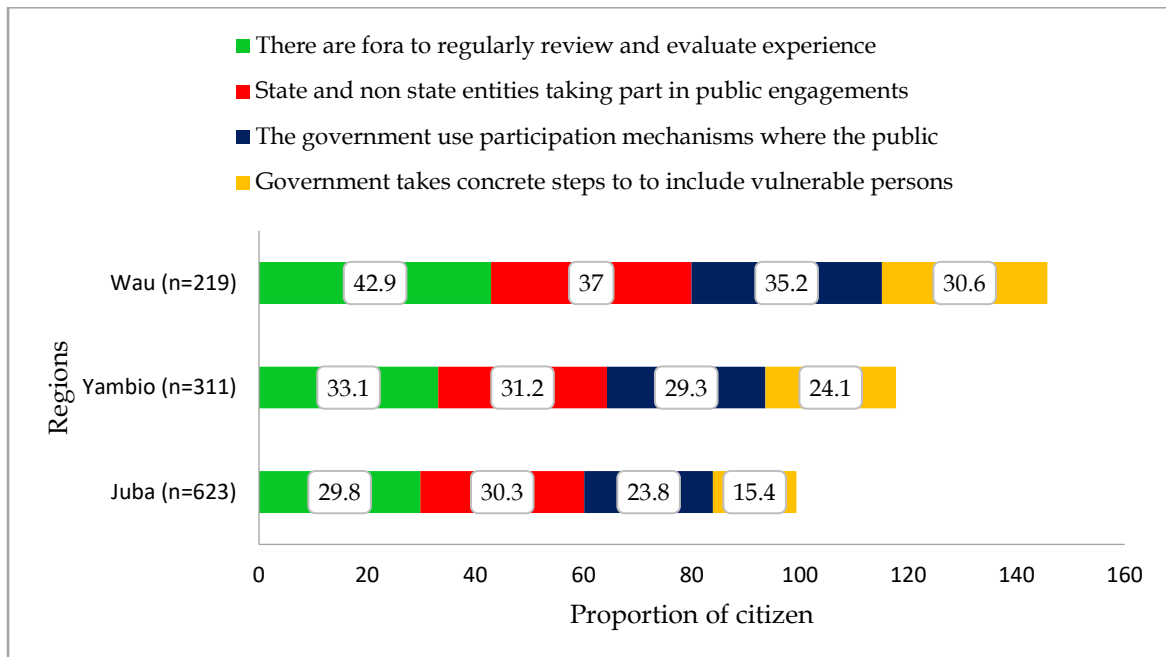
Fora to regularly review and evaluate experience; 29.8% in Juba, 33.1% in Yambio and 42.9% in Wau believe that regular reviews increase the effectiveness of existing governance and accountability systems.

State and non-state actors taking part in public engagements: 30.2% in Juba, 31.2% in Yambio and 37.9% in Wau believe that public engagement of both state and non-state actors increase accountability and improves good governance.

Governments use participation mechanisms: 23.8% in Juba, 29.3% in Yambio and 35.2% in Wau believe that the state uses participation mechanisms to engage accountability and good governance.

The government takes concrete steps to include vulnerable persons: 15.4% in Juba, 24.1% in Yambio and 30.6% in Wau believe that the government is deliberate and take concrete steps to include vulnerable persons in the budget making process.

Figure 4-26 : Principles of participatory budgeting 6



Topics for engaging the citizens by the government during the budget implementation stage.

Changes in microeconomics circumstances: This was the most mentioned topic for engagement. In Juba, 31.4% Yambio 25.0% while in Wau, 22.4%.

Delivery of public services. This was the second most mentioned topic. With Juba 22%, Yambio 16.1% and Wau 22.6%.

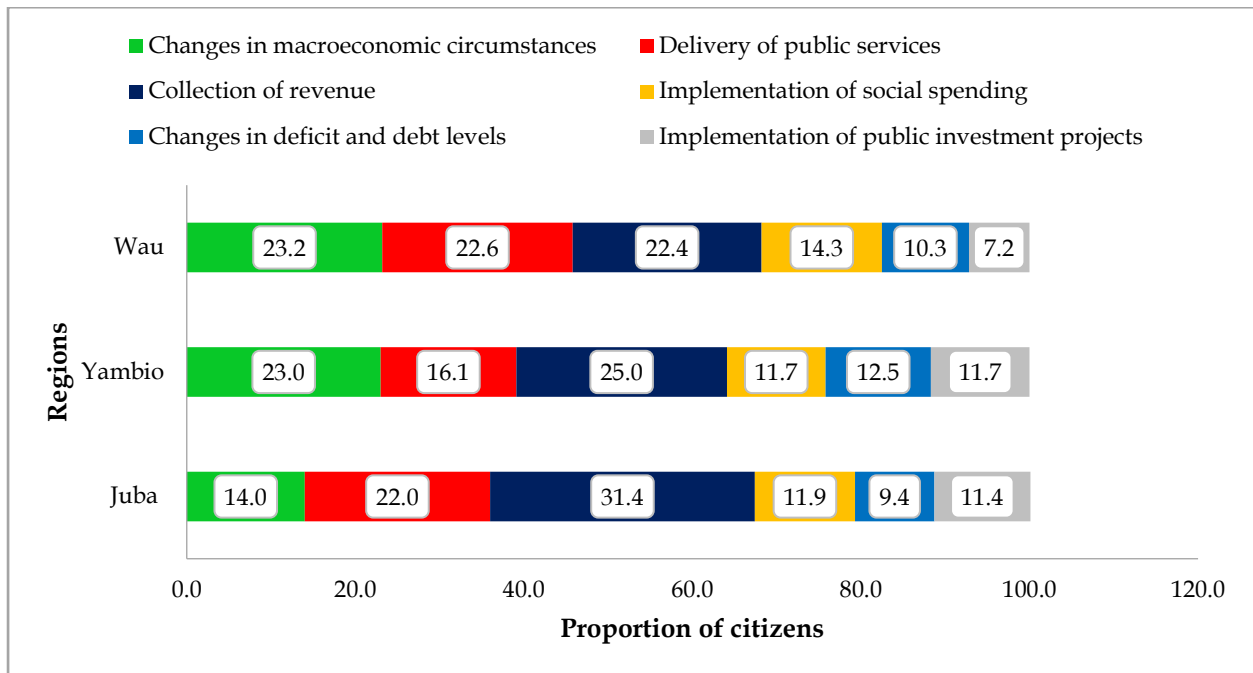
Changes in macroeconomic circumstances. Another topic highly mentioned by the respondents with Juba 14%, Wau 23.2% and Yambio 23%

Implementation of social spending: Juba 11.9%, Yambio 11.7% and Wau 14.3%

Changes in deficit and debt level; Juba 9.4%, Yambio 11.7% and Wau 14.3%

Implementation of public investments projects: Juba 11.4%, Yambio 11.7% and Wau 7.2%

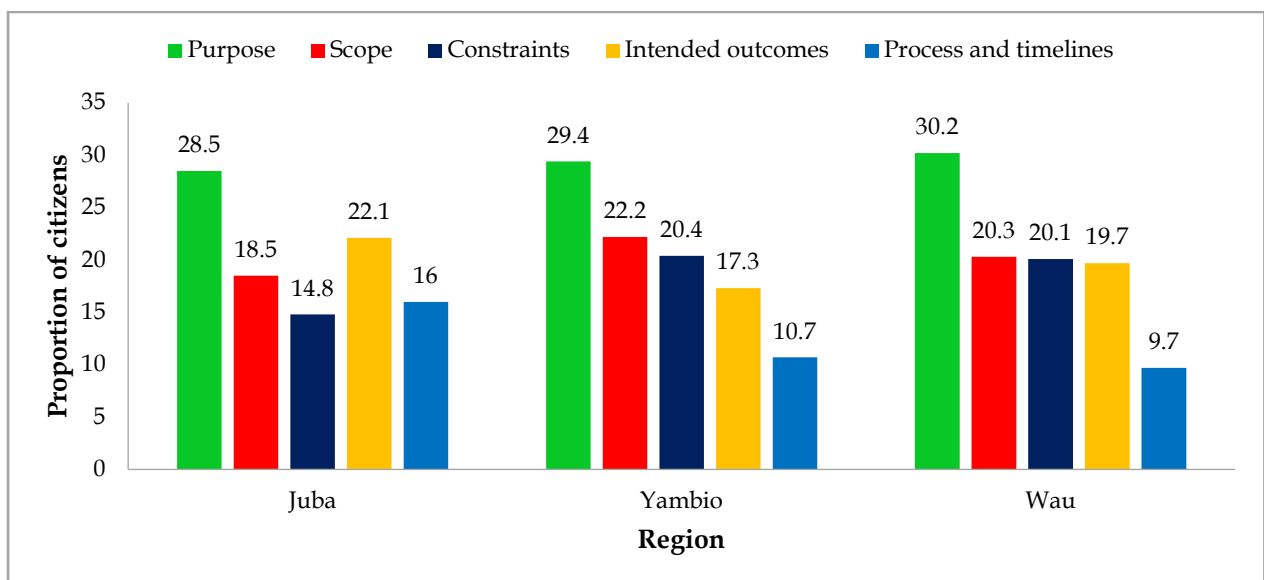
Figure 4-27: Topics for engagement during budgeting process



Comprehensive information in budget making process must include at least three of the following elements:

Main elements in comprehensive information for budget making: Main element mentioned by the participants across board is the purpose; Juba 28.5%, Yambio 29.4% and Wau 30.2%. Other elements mentioned include scope, intended outcomes and constraints as shown in figure 4-26 below.

Figure 4-28: Comprehensive information in budget making process.



CHAPTER 5 : CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This chapter presents the general inferences and recommendations towards improving citizen's participation in budget making process.

5.1 Conclusion

The budget making process should be inclusive and participatory. From the opinion poll it's clear that the government and other non-state actors are making efforts to engage and have meaningful participation of citizens but the platforms of engage are still restrictive to a few who are able to access budget making information. Citizen engagement in the budget making process is dependent on access to information, access to spaces and participation platforms. Participation in budgeting process is still very low and access to spaces should be enhanced through awareness creation and provision of information using media channel that are open and easily accessed by communities. This calls for targeted civic and human rights education to different segments of communities.

Some the citizens still feel that that they are excluded and disfranchised and therefore not getting information about the process and feedback on their proposal from the government on the badger making process, this calls for deliberate and consistent capacity building programs to improve their understanding of the process of the budget making process while also having clear mechanisms for inclusion. The government should also provide timely and relevant information to citizens.

The citizens also have the opinion that participation is undertaken as a procedure but not embedded in the budget making process. To improve participation, the government should develop and work with community structures that have their roots from the ground in the community. Ultimately, the South Sudanese government must prioritize the public interest and aim to meet the need and aspirations of its citizens through a transparent, inclusive, and accountable budget making process.

5.2 Recommendations

The recommendations are organized in three areas.

1. Recommendations to Policy makers

- a. In order to enhance transparency and public participation, policy makers should prioritize increasing transparency in the budget making process by providing accessible and comprehensive information about revenue sources, expenditure plans and budgetary allocation.
- b. Support Inclusive mechanisms such as public consultations, accessible community meetings and online platforms can be used to solicit input and feedback from citizens, allowing them to actively participate in the decision-making process.
- c. In improving fiscal discipline and accountability, policy makers should work with established mechanisms within the communities such as committees that are inclusive.

- d. Build capacity of oversight bodies such as the parliamentary budget office to evaluate budget proposals, monitor spending and assess the performance of public programs and ensure that public funds are utilized for their intended purpose.
- e. Given the Country's developmental needs, policy makers should prioritize sector such as education, healthcare, infrastructure, and agriculture in the budget allocation process. By promoting investments in in these critical areas, the government will have facilitated economic growth, improve living standards and support poverty reduction efforts.
- f. Increase revenue diversification: South Sudan heavily relies on oil revenues which makes its economy vulnerable to global oil prices fluctuations. To reduce this dependence and increase revenue stability, policy makers should focus on diversifying revenue sources by exploring other sectors such as agriculture, tourism, and mining, additionally, implementing sound taxation policies can help to enhance domestic revenue generation.
- g. Policy makers should actively engage in regional and international forums to exchange knowledge, foster collaboration, and gain insight on effective budgetary practices.

2. Recommendations to CSOs

- a. CSO should anchor the advocacy and lobby to influence citizens driven National budget making process to enhance accountable and transparent process to build trust and confidence between citizens and government.
- b. CSO should enhance dissemination progress of the inclusive national budget making process and approved budget and its expenditure matrix.
- c. CSOs should invest in capacity building programs for government officials involved in the budget making process. This includes training in financial management, cost- effectiveness, evaluations, and project appraisal.
- d. CSOs should undertake budget tracking, monitoring, and evaluation of the budget outcomes. Monitor and evaluate budget outcomes to assess the effectiveness of spending and ensure efficient resource allocation.
- e. Undertake periodic reviews of the budget cycle to ascertain progress and impact of budgetary plans, make adjustments to the budget process and learn lessons from success and failures.
- f. CSO should conduct massive civic education on civic rights to monitor the budget allocation process.
- g. CSOs should be deliberate initiatives to create interface between the citizens and their representatives in the parliament, both at the national level and State. This will influence civic space and orderly service delivery process.
- h. CSOs should support information sharing and feedback mechanism for mobilization, awareness, civic education, and coordination purpose by national budget making process.

3. Recommendations to citizens

- a. Citizens should be involved in the budget making process through community organized mechanisms and groups.
- b. Advocate for timely information and accessible platforms for providing budget proposals.
- c. Existing community structures should be strengthened to monitor the usage of public and natural resources, effectively advocating for more transparent and accountable revenue generation.

4. Recommendations to Media.

- a. Media should coordinate with the public finance committee and key stakeholders to strengthen civic education through media outlet on matters of National Budget making process and importance of citizens' engagement.
- b. Media should forge linkages with wider CSO to disseminate the budget making process.
- c. Media should strengthen its advocacy and lobby for civic space in line of citizens' participation and budget making process in South Sudan.
- d. Media fraternity to be trained on the procedures of budget making process, monitoring, and tracking of expenditures and reporting process on National budget making process in South Sudan.

5. Recommendations on National Revenue Authorities.

- a. Both National and State Revenue authorities should proactively coordinate with the finance department to ensure the fiscal budget is in line with the projected income or revenue of the Country.
- b. Both National and State revenue should as per the schedules monitor and follow up the remittance of revenue and the transfer, which should be informed by the budget plan for the year.
- c. Media should step up to facilitating citizens and public engagement on the fiscal policies and budget making process.
- d. Legislation on oversight hearing schedules be made accessible to the citizens to enhance citizens centered budget for effective and efficient execution.
- e. The spending agencies and ministries on spending and implementation should publish what we pay and publish what we earn for transparent and accountable process in budget making, monitoring implementation and follow up on budget allocation.
- f. Spear head the review of the budget circles in the government agencies at both state and national.

6. Recommendations to the Council of State specialized committee on finance in both National and State parliaments.

- a. Advocacy and lobby for the National Ministry of Finance to communicate on the budget ceiling as early as March 31 of each year, to enhance the states be able prepare their budget and its allocation on time.

- b. Coordination to ensure the state passes early budget inclusive of % of the grant, like 5% to enhance early budget and its allocation early.
- c. Both National and State's Specialized committee and other parliamentarians to lead the advocacy for bottom top approach of Budget making process and allocation (from Boma to County and state and subsequently to national) to increase citizens' engagement and participatory in the entire process.
- d. A joint and coordinated engagement led by the specialized committee and council of state to engage and coordinate with the Business, CSO, Media and state actors and direct interaction with public authorities on the matter of earning, spending, and management of the of public asset, Liabilities, Resource allocation, taxation and revenue collection.

7. Recommendation to Business community.

- a. The business community should be involved in the budget making process to enable them to have clear knowledge of the taxation (as source of income) policy and procedures.
- b. The business community monitors the spending of the income through taxation and coordinate with chambers of commerce to enhance trust and confidence.