

What are ward committees?

The Local Government Act (2004) says that ward committees should be established and are made up of citizens, councilors, and chiefs. Up to 10 citizens can be elected by the community to become members of a ward committee (half women and half men). Ward committees are responsible for mobilizing community members to implement development projects, educate citizens on their rights and responsibilities related to local government, and learn about community needs and problems. You can participate in your ward committee as a member. You can also participate in your ward committee by regularly attending meetings. All ward committee meetings are open to the public.



Local Government is for Everyone

Everyone should participate in local government, including youth, the elderly, women, men, and per-



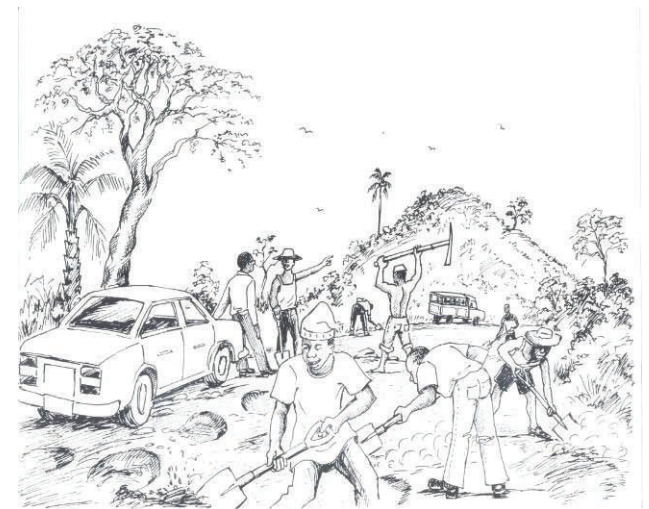
Remember that local councils belong to the people!

Your local council is accountable to YOU, so PARTICIPATE!

Please read this brochure out loud to community members who cannot read.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT BELONGS TO THE PEOPLE

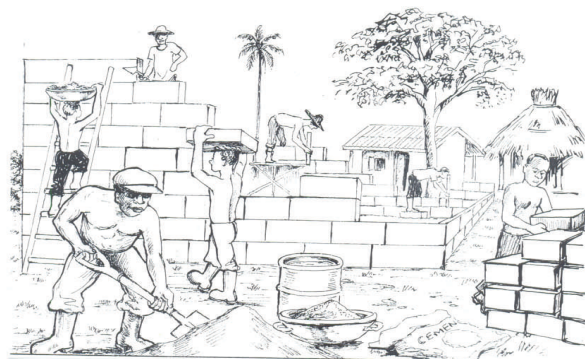


What is local government?

Local government is for everyone. Local government is a way for communities to take more direct control over local issues and decision-making to improve health facilities, schools, agricultural production, roads, and quality of drinking water. Local councils have a responsibility to work with citizens to make choices about community needs and the best use of resources. Local government is responsible to EVERYONE, including young people, old people, women, men, persons with disabilities, those who are literate, and those who are illiterate.

What powers does my local council have?

Your local council plays an important part in making decisions about local needs and how to deliver services to you and your community. According to the Local Government Act (2004), local councils can manage financial resources at the local level, including income from local taxes, shares from mining revenues, and licenses for trades.



How do local councils undertake development?

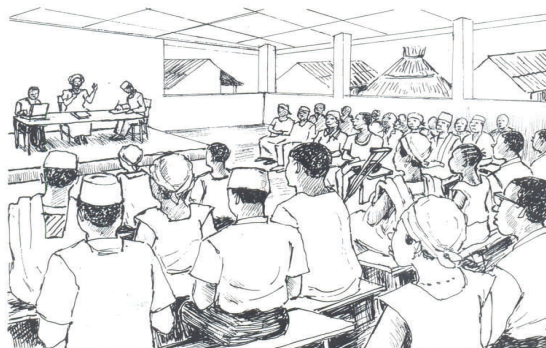
Your local council should work with community members to identify the needs of your community. These needs should be prioritized. What is the most important need? What is the second most important need?

Then, your local council should work with community members to identify what assets your community has. The local council can then make a plan of how to use existing assets and community resources to address the needs.

How can I participate in my local government?

There are many ways you can participate in your local government according to the Local Government Act (2004). When you participate in local government, you help make your council accountable to you and your neighbors.

Attend meetings. Local councils and ward committees should have public meetings. Attend public meetings, ask questions, and offer suggestions.



Ask questions. Community members should ask questions about issues. Ask your local council what is happening. Ask to see regular financial reports and budgets. Think about how funds are being spent, and ask questions if you aren't seeing results or better service delivery in your community.



Check the notice board. Your local council should have a public notice board with information about what local government is doing, including any notices of public meetings, the local council's schedule, and financial reports. Check the notice board regularly to learn how to participate and monitor the activities of your local council.



Volunteer to participate in community development projects. Community members can volunteer to participate in local development projects, helping to make things better for everyone.

Pay taxes. When you pay your local tax, market dues, shop licences, and water and house rates, your local council can provide better services to you and your community.

