

# My Country My Rights And My Responsibilities

A Civic Education  
Handbook for Secondary  
School Students in Uganda





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A Civic Education Handbook  
for Secondary School Students in Uganda

Produced by

**Sensitise Uganda**

*Illuminating Ugandans for Development & Positive Transformation*

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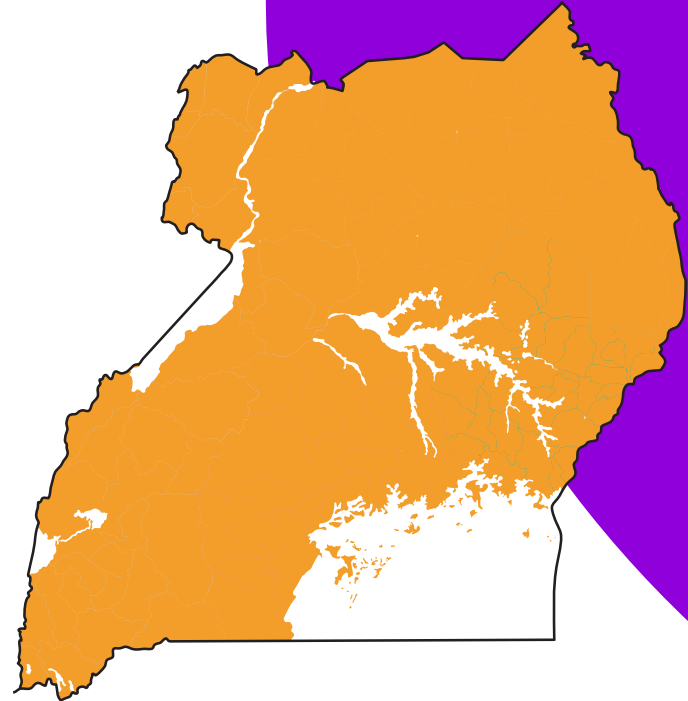
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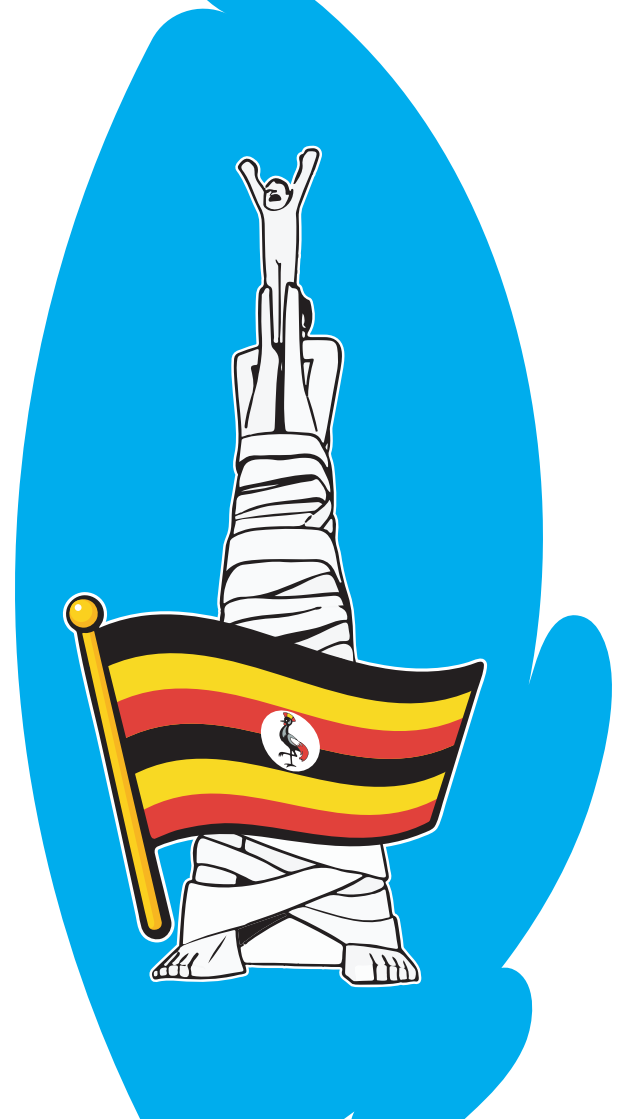
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# FOREWORD

This Handbook: *“My Country, My Rights and Responsibilities”* is designed to support and educate secondary school students to be more responsible and better citizens. We believe that young people have enormous capacity, as individuals and as a community, to learn about and contribute to governance and civic engagement, in a way that enables students to channel their energy and enthusiasm in positive ways.

We also wish to provide the youth, through this Handbook, the guidance and materials about better living in the family, community, country, inter-cultural realities and with nature too. The Handbook uniquely provides material and lessons for secondary schools and students to draw interactive exercises and discussion points through which difficult questions that arise in classrooms could be answered.

Our goal is to help in the development of young people as responsible citizens for their active participation in governance and democratic processes. In this Handbook, we encourage students to think critically about the world around them and their place in it. It is our belief that the skills presented in this Handbook are applicable at multiple levels.

Teachers will be instrumental in the dissemination of the Handbook content through their professional expertise, but more importantly, through their exemplary life and commitment.

We dream of a better Uganda, convinced that it is possible if together we join hands with passion, commitment and dedication.



Executive Director,  
Sensitise Uganda



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Sensitise Uganda is extremely grateful to Voice for the support that made the development of this handbook possible. We are deeply indebted to Voice, the Voice in Uganda team, Oxfam in Uganda and Ministry of foreign affairs of the Netherlands for the technical, financial and social support.

We extend our deepest appreciation to Uganda Human Rights Commission, staff and board of directors of Sensitise Uganda, different individuals and partners that supported the process of developing this handbook.

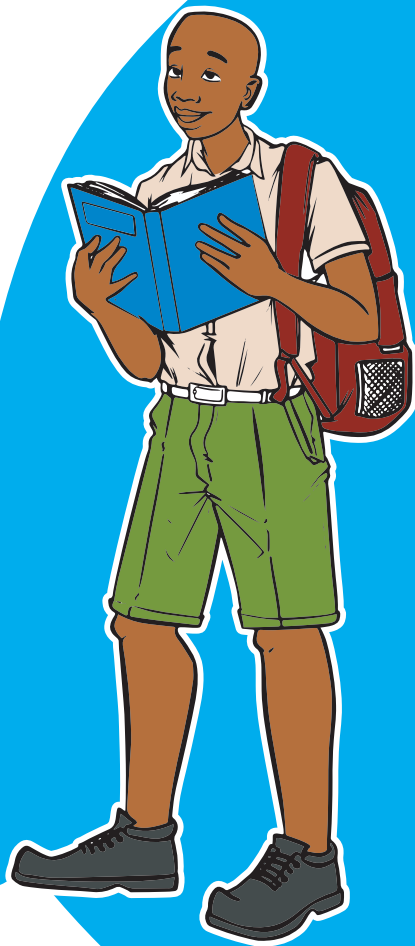
We would like to also extend our sincere gratitude to a team of our consultants that developed, reviewed, edited, illustrated, designed and printed this handbook.

Thank you very much all. May God bless you abundantly.



# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AIDS</b>	Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
<b>CAO</b>	Chief Administrative Officer
<b>CBO</b>	Community Based Organisation
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organisation
<b>FAO</b>	Food And Agriculture Organisation
<b>FBO</b>	Faith Based Organisation
<b>HIV</b>	Human Immuno Deficiency Virus
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced Person
<b>IGG</b>	Inspector General of Government
<b>LC</b>	Local Council
<b>MP</b>	Member of Parliament
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>PWD</b>	Persons with Disabilities
<b>RDC</b>	Resident District Commissioner
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organisation
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children Fund



# PREFACE

This handbook has been prepared under the auspices of Sensitise Uganda with the major objective of enhancing civic education for secondary school students in Uganda. The handbook has been simplified to the extent that students may be able to use it on their own and seek the assistance of teachers occasionally when it is inevitable. Its simple and visual format makes it easily adaptable for use by other beneficiaries such as primary school teachers, community-based organisations, and any other group interested in stepping up civic education awareness amongst the people of Uganda.

The handbook highlights 9 broad topics namely:

1. Uganda, My Country
2. My Rights, Duties and Responsibilities
3. Citizenship and Citizen Participation in Uganda
4. The national emblems
5. Patriotism and volunteerism
6. Understanding Justice
7. Peace Building and Conflict Resolution
8. Understanding Leadership
9. Understanding Good Governance





Civic Education is not compulsory on the national school curricula. This handbook therefore is an additional resource to bridge the knowledge gap, in the nurturing and socialisation of young people into responsible citizens. The topics have been abridged and simplified to the level that secondary school students can relate with. At the start of each topic, there is a brief summary outlining the key learning points under each topic and the learning questions to be undertaken. Even though there are specific sections covering the role of citizens and government, it has also been brought out throughout the handbook. The handbook has provided for participatory discussions that can easily be fitted into the school timetable or even held as extra-curricular activities.

It is anticipated that the handbook will trigger students to find out more about important issues that affect citizens in Uganda as well as stimulate solution-oriented conversations and action.

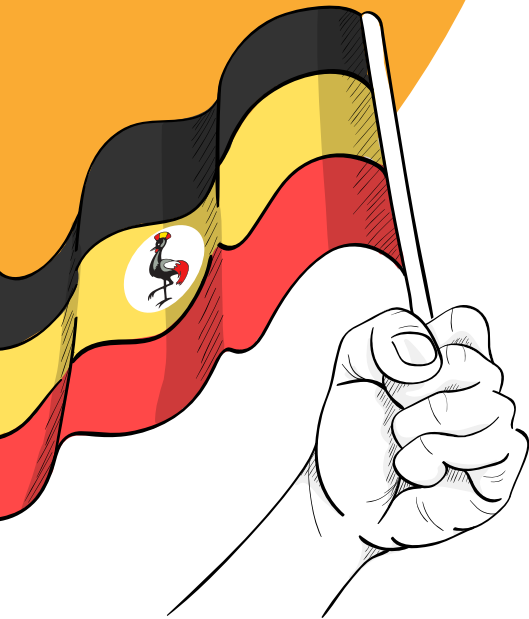
# 1. INTRODUCTION

Sensitise Uganda works to contribute to efforts of promoting participatory democracy and good governance in Uganda. Sensitise Uganda is a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) registered with the Government of Uganda and is non-partisan. The Vision of Sensitise Uganda is “An informed, coherent, sensitised, transformed and a developed Uganda” and her mission is “To sensitise, raise awareness, build capacity to all Ugandans on socio-economic and political challenges through implementing projects and programs in order to raise the livelihoods of Ugandans and also contribute to the development process of the country”.

Sensitise Uganda work is premised on five key thematic areas of;- Civic and Voter education, Democracy and Electoral Governance, Leadership Development, Governance and Accountability and Research, Policy and Advocacy.

This civic education handbook was developed as a resource to bridge the knowledge gap in the nurturing young people especially secondary school students into responsible and active citizens as they grow up. It highlights critical elements for encouraging the participation of young people in civic processes. It has sections on; historical





democratic governance journey of Uganda, Civic Rights, Duties and Responsibilities, Citizenship and Citizen Participation in Uganda, the national emblems, Patriotism and volunteerism, Understanding Justice, Peace Building and Conflict Resolution, Understanding Leadership and Understanding Good Governance.

This handbook is primarily intended for secondary school students as a knowledge bank of key civic areas to support them to grow up informed and as active players in the governance of their communities and the country at large. Engaging young people in secondary schools is a great deal to the country and the world because then the students are supported to form into active and responsible citizens and leaders when they are still young. Secondary schools are a nursery beds for leaders because leaders are picked from citizens.

In Uganda, civic education has not been accorded the importance it deserves in building the civic competence of young people. For young people to grow up as active and responsible citizens and leaders, systematic and continuous civic education is a must.

Civic education is more important than ever in our society today. The basics of civic education help students understand their rights and responsibilities as citizens, and allow them to engage effectively in the democratic process. Civic education also teaches students how to be good neighbours and community members.

Civic education encourages students to understand and be mindful of how the government functions, along with the civil law and civil code, particularly in democratic societies. It ensures we are aware of the values and principles of democracy. It teaches us to be well-informed as well as to understand the values of being a good and responsible citizen.

Civic education is not limited to participation in politics and society, it also encompasses participation in classrooms, neighbourhoods, groups, and Organisations. Under civic education, students learn to contribute to public processes and discussions of real issues. Students are also able to learn civic practices such as voting, volunteering, and joining with others to improve society. Civic education enables students not only to study how others participate but also to practise participating and taking informed action themselves.

Civic education empowers students to be well-informed, active citizens and allows them to change the world around them. It is a vital part of any democracy and equips students with knowledge about our democracy and our Constitution. For example, voting is a major responsibility every citizen should take advantage of.

Civic education leads to increased civic knowledge, civic skills and disposition among students. That is;- students are able to understand the workings of the political system and of their own political and civic rights and responsibilities. The students' ability to analyse, evaluate, take and defend positions on public issues, and to use their knowledge to participate in civic and political processes is increased. Students' traits necessary for a democracy are built.

## 2. UGANDA, MY COUNTRY



### Key learning points:

- Uganda is a sovereign state
- It is located in Eastern Africa and borders 5 countries
- Uganda got independence on 9th October 1962 from the United Kingdom and has since had 8 presidents
- The Constitution is the supreme law of Uganda. Currently, Uganda is governed under the 1995 Constitution which is the fourth since independence in 1962.
- Constitutionalism in Uganda has been a journey; nurtured and supported
- Post-independence Uganda was initially characterised by bad politics, state-inspired human rights violations, until after 1986.



Uganda is a Sovereign State and a Republic. It is located in Eastern Africa with its five boundaries specified in the Second Schedule of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda. It borders with Kenya in the East, Tanzania in the South, Rwanda in the South-West, Democratic Republic of Congo in the East, and South Sudan in the North. Uganda is a member of the international cooperation forums such as the United Nations, the African Union, the East African Community and the Commonwealth.

The President is the Head of State, the Fountain of Honour and Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, while the Prime Minister is the Head of Government business. Uganda has a democratic system with three arms of the State namely: The Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary. The Executive comprises the President, Vice President, Prime Minister and the Cabinet (all ministers); The Legislature is the Parliament of Uganda while the Judiciary comprises the Courts from the lowest Magistrates Courts to the High Court, Court of Appeal which also sits as the Constitutional Court when it is necessary, to the highest which is the Supreme Court. Uganda is currently under a multi-party political system based on a democratic parliamentary system with equal rights for all citizens. In accordance with the Constitution of Uganda, English and Swahili are the official languages. However, any other language can be used in schools, Councils or courts and in administration.





## 2.1 Historical Background

Uganda got independence on 9th October 1962 from the United Kingdom which had ruled it as a Protectorate since 1894. It had developed from the 19th Century Kingdom of Buganda, based along the northern shore of Lake Victoria. At independence, Apollo Milton Obote, the leader of the Uganda People's Congress (UPC), was elected the new Prime Minister. The Kabaka of Buganda Sir Edward Frederick Mutesa II subsequently became the Executive President from 1963 to 1966, when Obote was elected the President of Uganda.

## Uganda's Presidents since independence in 1962

1



**NAME:** Sir Edward Frederick Mutesa II

**YEARS:** 1963-1966

**COMMENTS:**

Suspended and overthrown by Prime Minister Obote in 1966 and he subsequently fled to exile in the UK.



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**NAME:** Apollo Milton Obote

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**YEARS:** 1966-1971

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**COMMENTS:**

Overthrown on 25<sup>th</sup> January 1971 by the Army Chief of Staff, General Idi Amin Dada, who subsequently expelled the Asian Community in 1972 and persecuted intellectuals.



**NAME: Idi Amin Dada**

**YEARS: 1971-1979**

**COMMENTS:**

Overthrown by a combined force of the army of Ugandans in exile under the Uganda National Liberation Front fighting alongside Tanzanian forces.

Dictatorship and gross human rights violations and abuses characterised Amin's regime.



**NAME: Yusuf Kironde Lule**

**YEARS: 13th April 1979 - 20th June 1979**

**COMMENTS:**

After the overthrow of Idi Amin, Lule was named President by the Moshi Conference of Ugandan exiles, held in March 1979 in the northern Tanzanian town of Moshi. A ministerial system of administration was adopted and a quasi-parliament - the National Consultative Commission (NCC) was created. On 20th June 1979, the NCC staged a coup, removing Lule as president for allegedly making wide ranging appointments in government without consulting them. He was President for only 68 days (the shortest term among all presidents in Uganda).

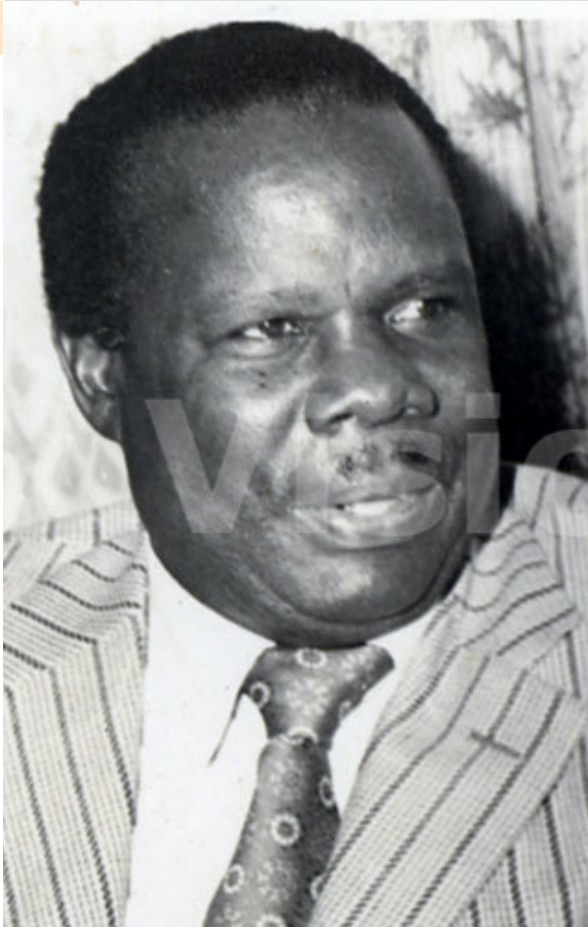


**NAME: Godfrey Lukongwa Binaisa**

**YEARS: June 1979 to May 1980**

**COMMENTS:**

Binaisa had returned home from exile following the overthrow of Amin, and actively participated in the post-Amin political activities from which he emerged as a possible 'figure head'. He was subsequently named President in June 1979 after Lule was overthrown. Unfortunately Uganda was going through a very turbulent time characterised by murders, looting and robberies. He was also resented especially in the central region for replacing their 'favourite' Yusuf Lule as President and faced internal acrimony against his presidency. He was overthrown by the army.



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**NAME: Paulo Muwanga**

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**YEARS: 22nd May to 15th December 1980**

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**COMMENTS:**

On May 12, 1980, Muwanga played a pivotal role when the army overthrew President Godfrey Binaisa. He became the head of a six-man Military Commission, which acted as the de facto president of Uganda for a short period. Later, Muwanga chaired the Presidential Commission of Uganda from 22nd May 1980 thereby assuming the powers of the president during this transitional phase.





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**NAME: Apollo Milton Obote**

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**YEARS: 1980-1985**

---

**COMMENTS:**

UPC's Obote returned to the Presidency after national elections in 1980 but which were also disputed for having been rigged. Consequently a section of Ugandans led by Yoweri Museveni formed the National Resistance Army, went to the bush and waged a five-year guerrilla war against the Obote regime.

Obote's regime was also characterised by dictatorship and gross human rights violations and abuses.

Obote was overthrown by General Tito Okello Lutwa in a military coup in July 1985 following a tribal clash of Acholi and Langi in the army.



**NAME:** Gen. Tito Okello Lutwa

**YEARS:** July 1985 - January 1986

**COMMENTS:**

Took power after a coup and established a military council. However, the National Resistance Army (NRA), led by Yoweri Museveni fought him to victory after the collapse of peace talks and Mr. Museveni ascended to Presidency.



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**NAME:** Gen. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni

---

**YEARS:** January 1986-to date

---

**COMMENTS:**

President Museveni was sworn into power in 1986 after the NRA took power. On 9th May 1996 the first elections under Museveni rule were held and he emerged winner after trouncing DP's Paul Kawanga Ssemogerere and the upstart candidate Kibirige Mayanja. President Museveni went on to win subsequent elections of 2001, 2006, 2011, 2016 and 2021.

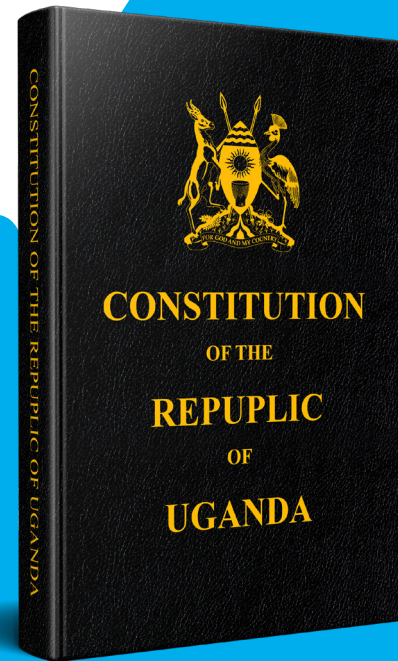
## 2.2 Constitutionalism in Uganda

### What is a constitution?

It is the rule book for the State. Generally, the Constitution:

- Provides the key principles and laws by which the State is governed and how the leaders are chosen;
- Describes the main institutions of the State, that is, the Executive, Legislature, Judiciary and their roles, powers and obligations to the people, as well as other institutions necessary for governance;
- Defines the relationship between these institutions; and
- Provides for and defines the power of the people, their rights and responsibilities.

The Constitution can generally be described as the social contract between those in leadership and the rest of the people on how the governance of the country will be managed, including its human, financial, natural and other resources.



Constitutionalism for purposes of this handbook simply means adherence to the constitution in the governance of the country.

In Uganda, the Constitution is the **supreme law of the land**. This means that any law, policy or practice must comply with provisions of the Constitution. If it contradicts or violates any provision of the Constitution, it becomes null and void. The current Constitution was promulgated on 8th October 1995.

The promulgation of the 1995 Constitution marked the conclusion of a process that had begun in December 1988 when the law establishing the Uganda Constitutional Commission was enacted. The Commission's mandate was to consult widely and make proposals for a permanent constitution based on national consensus. According to the Commission report, the majority of Ugandans preferred a directly elected Constituent Assembly (CA) to debate and pass the new constitution. Subsequently, a total of 284 delegates were elected to the CA in March 1994, of whom 214 were through universal suffrage while the others represented interest groups.

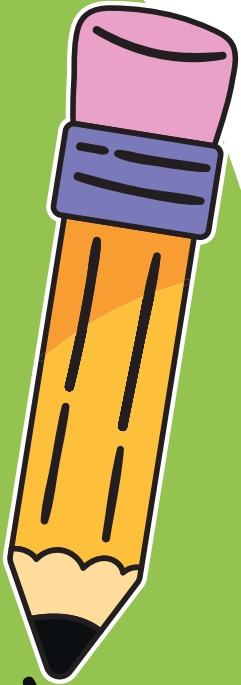
Most of the decisions on the provisions of the draft constitution were reached by consensus except those relating to the national language, land, federalism and the political system. The CA subsequently adopted the new Constitution in September 1995. The highly participatory constitution-making process enabled society to reconcile; reinstitute guarantees for democracy and the rule of law; and limit the abuse of state power.

The 1995 Constitution is the fourth since the country's independence in 1962. The first, which was the independence Constitution, was adopted in 1962 only to be replaced 4 years later in 1966. The 1966 Constitution, which was passed in a tense political environment and without debate, was replaced in 1967. Along the way some decrees, legal notices and statutes were issued, particularly so, when the Constitution would be suspended by a coup or a take-over of government.

## Amendment of the Constitution

An amendment is an addition or a change to provisions, which in this case, may result in revision of the original text leaving it mostly intact or removing it entirely (repealing) with or without substituting it. So the Constitution can be amended. The 1995 Constitution of Uganda provided in Chapter 18, procedures for its amendment which can only be done by Parliament. Some specific provisions require a referendum to be amended, while some others require approval of the District Councils, but the bill to amend has to be passed by Parliament. Since its promulgation, the Constitution has been amended several times.

- In 2000, it was amended to:
  - › Repeal and replace Article 88 on the quorum of Parliament, amend Article 89 on voting in Parliament, repeal and replace Article 90 on the Committees of Parliament, amend Article 97 on parliamentary immunities and privileges, and insert a new Article 257A on Parliamentary procedures. However, this amendment act was successfully challenged in the Supreme Court in a constitutional appeal of 2002.
- In 2005 it was amended to:
  - › Distinguish and provide for Kampala as a capital city of Uganda, its borders and its administration
  - › Provide for new districts of Uganda
  - › Provide for the district as a unit of administration as the basis for the system of local government

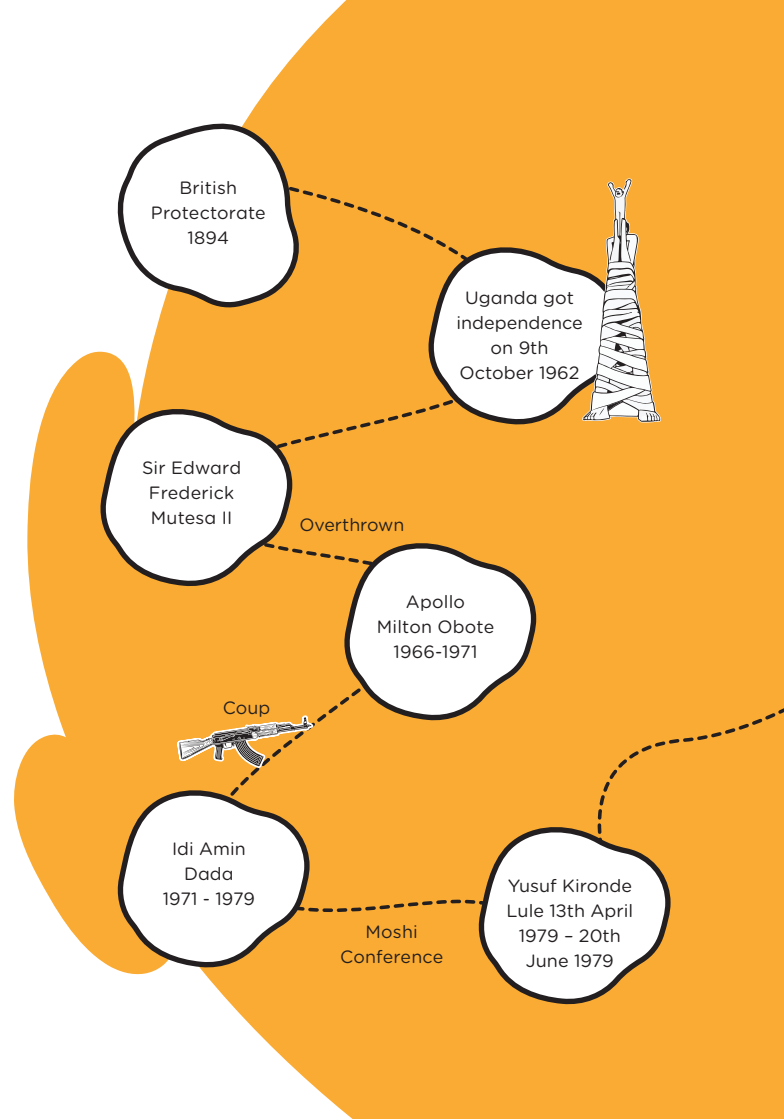


- › Provide for the creation, functions, composition of regional governments as the highest political authority in a region and amend Article 198 to recognise their functions and services.
- › Provide for grants for districts not forming regional governments
- › Provide for Swahili as a second official language
- › Provide for a multi-party-political system and for the Leader of Opposition in Parliament
- › Remove presidential term limits
- › Create the offices of the Prime Minister and Deputy Attorney General
- › Provide for the independence of the Auditor General and the procedure for his/her removal
- › Provide for special courts to handle corruption
- › Establish the Leadership Code Tribunal
- › Provide for the control of minerals and petroleum
- › Provide for the holding of referenda
- › Make miscellaneous repeals to the outdated provisions
- › Provide for transitional provisions in view of constitutional amendments
- › Replace the Fifth Schedule on regional governments
- In 2018 it was amended to provide for:
  - › The time within which to hold presidential, parliamentary and local government council elections;
  - › The term of Parliament
  - › Removal of age limit for a person to be elected as President or District Chairperson
  - › Increase in the number of days within which to file and determine a presidential election petition; within which the Electoral Commission is required to hold a fresh election where a presidential election is annulled
  - › To provide transitional provisions having regard to the amendments made; and for related matters.

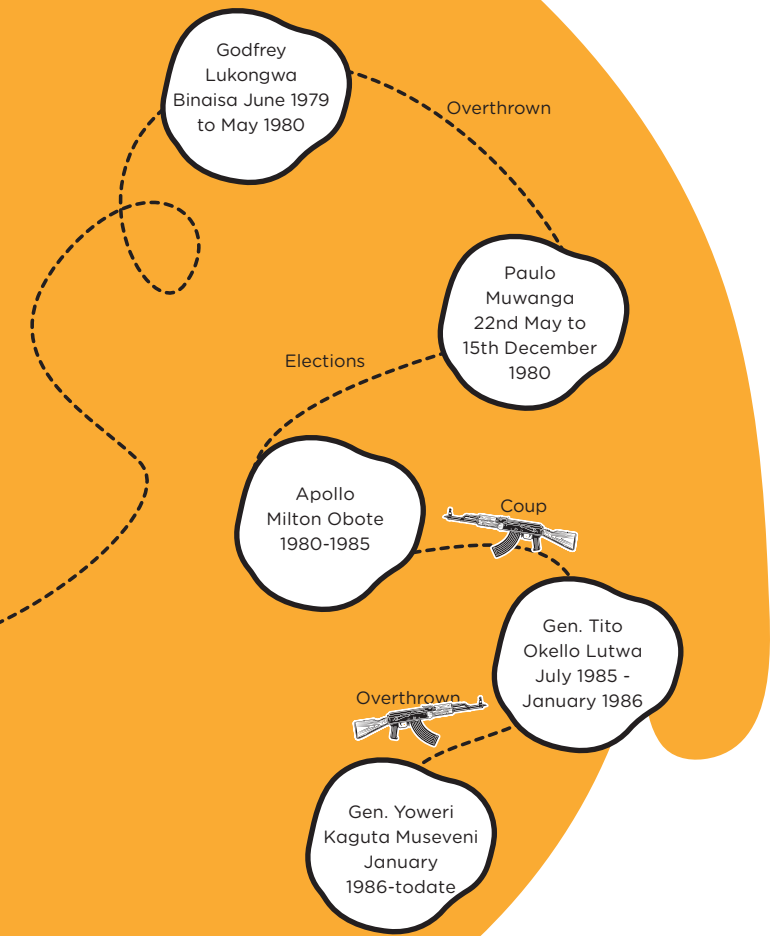
## 2.3 A brief political history of Uganda

Uganda was born out of Buganda Kingdom which was never fully colonised by the British but became a protectorate. After independence in 1962, the political situation in Uganda was characterized by coups, followed by disputed elections in 1980. State-inspired human rights violations were the order of the day. Some examples include President Amin's expulsion from Uganda of members of the Asian community in 1972, and the persecution of intellectuals by the state machinery as well as disappearances and mysterious killings of individuals.

President Amin had staged a coup against President Obote's government in 1971 before he himself was overthrown in 1979 by a combined force of Ugandans in exile and the Tanzanian armed forces. Controversial elections were thereafter held in 1980 which returned President Obote to power.







The elections were disputed and in 1981 a group of Ugandans led by Yoweri Museveni went to the bush in protest and launched a guerrilla war against President Obote's government. The National Resistance Army (NRA), guerilla war lasted 5 years until January 1986 when the government fell. Before that in July 1985, a coup led by General Tito Okello Lutwa had removed Obote from power after a tribal conflict between the Acholi and Langi in the army escalated. Gen. Okello established a Military Council, which was short-lived before the NRA defeated them in January 1986 after the peace talks with the NRA held in Nairobi collapsed. Subsequently, Museveni became the 9th President of Uganda. He stood for elections in 1996 which were Uganda's first general elections in 16 years, and won. He has been re-elected since in national elections every five years in 2001, 2006, 2011, 2016 and 2021.

Presidential, Parliamentary and local council elections were held under the Movement system of governance which meant that political party activities were banned. In a referendum on Political System held in July 2000, Ugandans decided to maintain the restrictions. However, in a second referendum in 2005 Ugandans decided that Uganda returns to a multiparty system. Uganda's first multi-party elections since 1980 were held on 23rd February 2006 and have since been held every five years.

Uganda has an elaborate structure and procedures for challenging the outcome of elections in courts law, to allow for redress when election malpractices have occurred. These are provided for in the respective electoral laws. At the Parliamentary level, petitions are triable only by the High Court. At the Local Governments level, petitions are triable partly by the High Court and partly by the Chief Magistrate's Courts. Petitions on the position of chairperson of a Local Government Council are triable by the High Court at Presidential level, petitions are triable by the Supreme Court.

## QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. When did Uganda gain independence and from who?
2. How many Presidents has Uganda had since independence?
3. The Constitution is the supreme law of the land. What does this statement mean?
4. Why is it necessary to amend the Constitution?
5. Cite five examples of amendments to the 1995 Constitution of Uganda.
6. Describe the political situation of post-independence Uganda.
7. How long did it take before Uganda held general elections in 1996?
8. What is the structure for dealing with election disputes in Uganda?



# 3. My Rights, Duties and Responsibilities



## Key learning points:

- Human rights are entitlements for all human beings irrespective of their differences and conditions
- Every person is a rights holder because they have rights and can claim them from the government
- Some differences such as race, sex, social-economic status, religion or other political opinion have been used to deny some people their human rights. This is prohibited.
- Human rights and freedoms are provided for in the Constitution of Uganda mainly in Chapter 4 on 'Protection and Promotion of Fundamental and Other Human Rights and Freedoms'. However, they are also provided for in other provisions.
- In the exercise and enjoyment of rights and freedoms, citizens have duties and responsibilities, one of which is to respect the rights and freedoms of others.

- The State is a duty bearer on human rights, i.e. it has a duty to guarantee human rights and freedoms. It has an obligation to respect, protect and fulfil human rights and freedoms.
- Some human rights can be lawfully limited by authorised officials and for justifiable reasons such as safeguarding the rights of others, public security, public order, public health and public morality.
- The Constitution of Uganda provides for only four absolute rights that should never be restricted or limited i.e. Freedom from torture, cruel and degrading treatment or punishment, freedom from slavery and servitude, the right to a fair hearing and the right to an order of habeas corpus.
- It is the duty of all persons to protect children and vulnerable persons from abuse, harassment and ill-treatment. Vulnerable persons are those facing a risk but without the necessary ability to overcome it.
- Human rights violations and abuses have consequences because the Constitution and other laws in Uganda provide for accountability for committing them.

Every person, without discrimination on any ground, has human rights and freedoms by virtue of being human. All human beings, irrespective of any differences based on race, colour, ethnicity, sex, age, religion, disability and any other social or economic status, have equal rights and dignity. Every person is expected to be treated as equal before and under the law.

### 3.1 What are human rights?

- Natural, God-given entitlements that are critical for every human being to live a full life and realise his/her potential.
- Inborn entitlements of every person which protect his/her human dignity.
- Legal claims of every person when these entitlements are provided for in the laws and the Constitution, as is the case in Uganda. Therefore, every person can demand them from the State and society.
- Every person is a **rights holder** because they have rights and can claim them from the government or in case of children, from the parents. On the other hand, a person who is charged with the responsibility to ensure, on behalf of government, that people enjoy their rights, is a **duty bearer**.

Human rights and freedoms are all equally important and they stand as one unit to uphold human dignity. They are all connected, related and dependent on each other, such that when one right is violated or abused, it is likely that other rights will also be affected in the process.

Human rights and freedoms go hand in hand with duties and responsibilities. A fundamental duty of every person is to **respect the rights and freedoms of others**.



Human rights are the same for ALL human beings regardless of differences such as these:

- **Race:** Whether black or white or oriental they are all human beings. This is particularly important where people are living/working in a foreign land, are investors or tourist or even when they are in exile or are refugees.
- **Sex:** All males and females, whether men or women, girls or boys are **equal in rights and dignity**. The cultures and practices that discriminate people on the basis of sex; for example giving preferential treatment to the boys and men as opposed to the girls and women should be shunned. Sometimes, this involves educating boys and not girls; or subjecting the girls to harmful traditional practices like Female Genital Mutilation; early and forced marriages etc.
- **Social or economic status:** Rich or poor; with power or without; with disability or not; whether leaders or ordinary; investors or labourers; kings, queens or subjects; and whether young or old; all have the same

human rights and dignity. Factors such as income, physical appearance and ability, position in society, or any other should never be the basis for discriminating people.

- **Religion:** Everybody has a right to practise his or her religion without being persecuted, mistreated or victimised because of that. There are so many religions in the world. It is wrong to despise, disrespect, mistreat or discriminate any one on account of their religion. Some people do not practise any religion but that does not mean that they should not be respected as human beings.
- **Political or other opinion:** People have a right to hold opinions about politics, social life, and any other aspect of life without being punished or mistreated for it. For example, people do not all have to belong to the same political party, but they all have the right to vote for the party of their choice. The best way for people to counter opinions that are different from theirs is to share their own views or provide information, but not to try to force people to accept other opinions through violence, fighting or hate speech.

Human rights and freedoms are categorised as follows:

- **Civil and political rights:** These relate to the freedom of an individual and they are concerned with checking the excesses of the State against citizens so that it does not exceed its legal limits and powers. For one to enjoy these rights, the government should not unduly interfere with one's views or actions. Infact, the government is obliged to guarantee or create an atmosphere conducive for peace and security in which citizens can enjoy their rights without fear of being unduly punished or attacked.
- **Economic, social and cultural rights:** These concern the welfare of citizens and they help an individual develop. For one to enjoy these rights, government has to create an enabling framework by passing relevant policies, laws, budgets and create or ensure supportive infrastructure so that the people can have a reasonable standard of living and live a life of dignity.
- **Solidarity rights or Group rights:** These are enjoyed collectively by the people or enjoyed collectively by particular groups of people.



## 3.2 My rights in Uganda

Human rights and freedoms are provided for in the Constitution of Uganda mainly in **Chapter 4** on 'Protection and Promotion of Fundamental and Other Human Rights and Freedoms'. However, other chapters also provide for other rights and freedoms. The summary of the human rights and fundamental freedoms as provided for in the Constitution is here below:

### Summary of the constitutional human rights and fundamental freedoms

#### Civil and Political Rights



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The right to life

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The right to equality and freedom from discrimination

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The right to personal liberty (to be informed of the reason for arrest, to be detained in a lawful place, to have access to a lawyer, a doctor or medical treatment and to the next of kin, to be brought before court within 48 hours; to apply for court bail and to compensation if wrongly arrested or detained).

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The right to an order of habeas corpus

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Freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

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Freedom from slavery, servitude and forced labour

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The right to a fair hearing

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The right to privacy

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The right to equality and freedom from discrimination

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The right to vote and to stand for elections

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Freedom of speech and expression including media freedom

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Freedom of thought, conscience and belief

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Freedom of religion

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Freedom of assembly and demonstration

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Freedom of association

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Freedom of movement within Uganda, to a passport or travel document

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The right to participate in the affairs of government individually or through a representative

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The right to participate in peaceful activities to influence government policy

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The right to form political organisations

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The right of access to information

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The right to just and fair treatment in administrative decisions

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## Solidarity / Group Rights



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The rights of women

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The rights of children

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The rights of Persons With Disability

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The rights of minorities

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The right to affirmative action in favour of marginalised groups

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## Economic, Social and Cultural Rights



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The right to food

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The right to clean and safe water

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The right to adequate clothing

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The right to education

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The right to marry and found a family

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The right to equal rights at and in marriage and when the marriage is over

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The right to work and rights at work

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The right to health

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The right to own property individually or in association with others

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The right to culture

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The right to a clean and healthy environment

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### 3.3 My duties and responsibilities as a Ugandan

The Constitution of Uganda confers the duty and responsibility on rights holders (which means every person), in the exercise and enjoyment of their rights and freedoms, to respect the rights and freedoms of others. In addition, it provides that every citizen must perform his/her duty to:

- Be patriotic and loyal to Uganda and to promote its well-being
- Engage in gainful work for the good of that citizen, the family and the common good and to contribute to national development
- Contribute to the well-being of the community where that citizen lives
- Promote responsible parenthood
- Foster national unity and live in harmony with others
- Promote democracy and the rule of law
- Acquaint himself or herself with the provisions of the Constitution and to uphold and defend the Constitution and the law.



- Respect the national anthem, flag, coat of arms and currency
- Protect children and vulnerable persons against any form of abuse, harassment or ill-treatment
- Protect and preserve public property
- Defend Uganda and to render national service when necessary
- Cooperate with lawful agencies in the maintenance of law and order
- Pay taxes
- Register for electoral and other lawful purposes
- Combat corruption and misuse or wastage of public property
- Create and protect a clean and healthy environment

It is also the duty of all able-bodied citizens to undergo military training for the defence of the Constitution and the protection of the territorial integrity of Uganda, whenever called upon to do so.

Parliament drawing on its mandate has made laws prescribing penalties for failure to perform any of these duties or obligations.

It is worth noting that in African traditions and customs, the concept of responsibilities is very strong and closely interlinked with values. Children, women and men are all encouraged to work hard, respect elders, live in harmony and promote a clean environment.



### 3.4 State duties on human rights

The State has a duty to **guarantee** human rights and freedoms but it does not grant them because they are inborn, given by the creator. The state has an obligation to respect, protect and fulfil human rights and freedoms.

It does this by ensuring that:

- Human rights and freedoms are enjoyed by ALL persons and not only some individuals or groups.
- Attention is paid to all human rights and freedoms. The State cannot choose to respect some rights and not others.
- Duty bearers such as state agents and entities do not violate rights
- Third parties like the private sector, the civil society including non-governmental organisations and faith-based organisations, the media and individuals in their private capacity do not violate human rights.

- The necessary policies, laws, institutions and infrastructure are in place for the enjoyment of human rights, for example, the State has to ensure that facilities are available for military training for people to be able to defend the Constitution.
- Where some people are in circumstances where they cannot enjoy their rights without help, it comes in to provide. Examples include where people have been displaced by natural hazards or insecurity and the state has to provide food, shelter, healthcare services etc.
- It promotes public awareness of the Constitution of Uganda by translating it and disseminating it widely through providing for constitution education in all educational institutions including those for the police, army, prisons etc and schools for all others; and through the media.

Elected and appointed leaders and government officials in all public bodies are the duty bearers on human rights. Government institutions such as the Uganda Human Rights Commission, the Equal

Opportunities Commission, Police stations, Courts, Directorate of Public Prosecutions, Prisons, Local Council system, the Inspectorate Government, other national commissions and authorities among others, where people whose rights are violated can report and get remedies, are all part of the government's necessary steps to ensure that people enjoy their rights.

### **3.5 Other duty bearers and their duties**

**International and regional bodies** such as the United Nations and all its agencies (UNDP, UNICEF, Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)), the World Health Organisation, the African Union, the East African Community and others are mandated to protect and promote human rights at the different levels.

**International NGOs** such as Amnesty International, World Habitat, Medicines Sans Frontiers (Doctors Without Borders) offer important services to the people in Uganda and monitor the activities of governments to ensure that they fulfil their obligations for all people.

**National and local organisations:** Local NGOs, Faith Based Organisations (FBOs), Community Based Organisations (CBOs) that work within given communities are doing important human rights work in providing the necessary services. They are critical for complementing the government service delivery and monitoring how people's rights are realised.



**Community members:** All people are part of a community, whether it is a school, village, district or a town. Several community members do protect and promote human rights either individually or in collaboration with others. They sensitise others, advise on reporting human rights violations, assist the aggrieved in seeking redress and monitor how Government is fulfilling its obligations. These include the local councils, teachers, religious leaders, the elders, chiefs, traditional leaders, parents, responsible youth, among others. They can also be referred to as **human rights defenders**.

**Parents:** These and guardians are key duty bearers expected to ensure their children enjoy their rights and fulfil their responsibilities, by protecting and providing for them.

### 3.6 Restrictions on human rights

No one has the right to take away another person's rights, except when it is in accordance with the law or it is in the implementation of a court sentence passed for a crime committed and the court process has been followed and exhausted. Nevertheless, some human rights can be lawfully limited by authorised officials and for justifiable reasons such as safeguarding the rights of others and in the public interest. Any limitations must be:

- For enhancing the enjoyment of rights and freedoms so it should not put them at risk;
- Provided for in the law
- Proportional and not excessive
- Necessary
- Applied equally without discrimination
- Demonstrably justifiable in a democratic society which Uganda is.
- Imposed by a person/agency that can be accountable on them.

Specifically, human rights and freedoms are limited to safeguard:

- The rights of others
- Public security
- Public order
- Public health
- Public morality

The following examples illustrate the above. Every person has a right to liberty; however, police can arrest and jail suspected criminals, pending appearance in court in order to ensure the security of the rest of society. In this case, the person's right to liberty and freedom of movement are restricted for public security. The police can change the route or reduce numbers of demonstrators trying to exercise their rights, for reasons of public order such that the demonstration should not disrupt other activities or the businesses along the way.

A traffic police officer can stop a driver for a while as he organises the flow of traffic on a road or at a junction to ensure public order. In order to contain the spread of diseases, a quarantine or curfew or lockdown may be imposed by the government due to an epidemic just like Uganda experienced in 2019

when COVID-19 broke out. In order to safeguard public morality, people cannot be allowed by police and other leaders to move around naked, no matter how hot it may be.

The Constitution of Uganda gives only four absolute human rights that should never be restricted or limited, even when the country might be under a state of emergency. These are in Article 44 which states that there shall be no derogation on the following rights and freedoms:

- Freedom from torture, cruel and degrading treatment or punishment
- Freedom from slavery and servitude
- Right to a fair hearing
- Right to an order of habeas corpus



### 3.7 Human rights and vulnerable persons

It is a constitutional duty of all persons to protect children and vulnerable persons from abuse, harassment and ill-treatment. Vulnerable persons are those facing a risk but without the necessary ability to overcome it. In Uganda, for some reasons of history, culture and tradition, some groups of people were vulnerable and needed protection from society to be able to overcome the risks they are facing and enjoy their rights and full potential. They include children (boys and girls), women, persons with disability, orphans, internally displaced persons and refugees, persons living with HIV/AIDS and ethnic minorities.

Society is required to pay special attention to their circumstances and the risks of violation of their rights and freedoms so that they can be protected from harm, exploitation, neglect, and marginalisation. This is why the Constitution provides for affirmative action in favour of marginalised groups to redress the imbalances created by history, tradition or



custom. It further established the Equal Opportunities Commission to address this matter and outlawed laws, cultures, customs and traditions that undermine the status and dignity of some people/groups rendering them marginalised and vulnerable.

Some of the groups and factors that bring about their vulnerability are explained below:

**Women:** According to cultural and traditional practices, women were regarded as inferior to men. Boys were considered more important than girls who were not provided the opportunities, particularly education, that would ultimately get them out of the vulnerability. Consequently girls remained behind even in their adult life. This was responsible for the gender imbalance which until recently was evident in the social, political and economic life of Ugandans. Fewer women could be appointed to public offices and even in the social structure, land ownership, inheritance of property were the preserve of men and most women did not have significant economic means.

**Children:** The Children Act refers to a child as anyone below the age of 18 years. Children need special protection because of their delicate state of development. They must be protected from deprivation and abuse if they are to grow up happy, upright and productive. Children are vulnerable to abuse and neglect and often do not have means to defend themselves against these wrongs. Many children in Uganda



are suffering all forms of physical and psychological abuse as well as deprivation of their rights including education, healthcare, food, shelter and parental love. Some adults expose children to violence, neglect and exploitation, including child labour, or early and forced marriages, which teach the children bad behaviour.

**People with Disabilities (PWDs):** These face limitations in one way or another in living an independent life because of the disability. It is often the case that such people are shunned by society, laughed at, despised and discriminated against. This seems to get worse with the severity of the disability. PWDs face challenges in attending school, getting jobs, finding love and getting married, getting good and affordable health care or even belonging. Many times, there are inadequate interventions, support systems and facilities to enable PWDs enjoy all their rights. For example, students with disabilities need schools where well-qualified teachers in special needs education are employed; textbooks and learning materials are in Braille for the visually impaired; while some PWDs require public buildings and facilities that are accessible with ramps and lifts as opposed to stairs.

**Persons living with HIV/AIDS:** According to the World Health Organisation, 2003, out of 1.4 million people living with the disease, 860,000 are women and 80,000 are children. They often face stigma and discrimination because the disease is often associated with sexual immorality. However, there are many ways in which HIV is



spread, and it may not be the fault of the person who was infected. People living with HIV/AIDS need special medical attention, access to medicine and protection from discrimination at work, at school and in the community in general.

### **Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs):**

Refugees and IDPs are people who have been forced out of their home area or country by armed conflict or natural disasters such as floods, mudslides and drought. Despite the fact that as human beings they have rights which should be respected by the community, government and individuals, they often face problems such as lack of clothing, food and water or medicine; poor or no education, and no shelter among others. They may not feel welcome among the communities hosting them. Often, they are unable or unwilling to speak out when they are denied their rights.

**Minorities:** These are any disadvantaged ethnic, national, religious, linguistic or cultural groups who are so small in number that the rest of the population dominates and overwhelms them to the extent that their identity is at risk of being

swallowed up. The Batwa of Western Uganda and the Lk in North Eastern Uganda are good examples. Persons belonging to minorities have the right to enjoy their culture, profess and practise their religion, and to use their own language in private and in public; freely and without interference or any form of discrimination. Often, people tend to mistreat or despise members of minority groups because they are different, and this results in marginalisation or mistreatment, which is a human rights violation.

The government has a constitutional duty to put in place appropriate interventions and support systems to enable the vulnerable persons enjoy all their rights. On the other hand, citizens have a duty to respect the vulnerable and protect them from abuse, ill treatment and exploitation. The diversity among human beings should be appreciated and positively harnessed. The least one can do is to speak up for the rights of others, particularly, the vulnerable and marginalised people as the constitutional duty demands.

Students can fulfil their constitutional duty to protect the vulnerable by:

- Refraining from bullying or teasing fellow students on account of being orphans, having disability, being poor or belonging to a particular ethnic group.
- Knowing who the vulnerable in the community are and looking out for them
- Monitoring how they are treated by fellow students, staff and community members so that any violations and abuse can be reported to authorities
- Speaking out for their rights and sensitising others about human rights.
- Involving them fully and enabling them to participate in school / community activities
- Ensuring that they are protected from harm or further marginalisation.



### **3.8 Human rights violations, abuses and accountability**

Human rights violations refer to any actions, conduct or omissions by a duty bearer, who is a person acting in their official capacity, which result in conduct that interfere with the enjoyment of human rights and freedoms. For example, if a policeman beats or shoots a person without any clear or justifiable reason, it amounts to a human right violation. If an individual occupying an office fails to do something he or she is supposed to in order to protect a human right, it amounts to a violation. A doctor in a government hospital who unjustifiably refuses to treat a patient would be violating the right to health.

Human rights abuses are any actions, conduct or omissions by a private individual that intentionally or negligently affect rights and freedoms. A person in his/her private capacity who, for example, tortures, discriminates, kills, exploits another individual or group of individuals or denies a child or employee basic necessities such as food and

shelter commits a human rights abuse. A parent or teacher who beats a child or a person who fails to fulfil his/her constitutional duty to respect the rights of others and protect the vulnerable commit human rights abuses. Human rights abuses can have a criminal element or a civil dispute which affect the enjoyment of human rights. That is why the State has an obligation to protect individuals from human rights abuses by other individuals or non-state third parties.

It may not always be possible to prevent human rights violations and abuses completely. When they occur they have consequences because the constitution and other laws in Uganda provide for accountability for committing them. Therefore, they should be reported to:

- The Uganda Human Rights Commission which is the National Human Rights Institution mandated to protect and promote human rights in Uganda
- The Police
- Local Councils (LCs),
- Courts of law

- The Human Rights Desks/Directorates in many government entities
- Inspectorate of Government
- Any other relevant body that has the power to handle the matters.

Many human rights violations and abuses may not be reported by the victims because:

- They lack awareness about their human rights or where to report any issues;
- They are afraid of the repercussions of reporting.
- They have no confidence in the justice processes which sometimes have challenges that may frustrate victims so and they give up.

Citizens are expected to report any human rights issues and crimes to the relevant authorities in fulfilment of their constitutional duties. Failure to do so can amount to inability to, which comes with consequences. As an upstanding citizen, one is not expected to be involved in harming others or to do nothing about it when others are facing harm.

The law provides for various sanctions as accountability for human rights violations and abuses. There are various levels of accountability from sanctions of an individual up to the level where the Government is held accountable. There are national, regional and international frameworks for accountability for human rights violations and abuse, for example the courts and different tribunals at all levels, the mechanisms at the United Nations, African Union, East African Community, the International Criminal Court, etc.



## QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. Boys and girls have equal human rights. Discuss.
2. Give five examples of each of the categories of human rights
3. Name five constitutional duties of a rights holder in Uganda.
4. What is the role of the Government in protecting Human Rights?
5. What is the role of the Community and individuals in protecting Human Rights?
6. What should you do or not do as an individual to contribute to enjoyment of human rights in the school setting?
7. Why are human rights restricted? What should be considered in restricting human rights?
8. Why do the vulnerable and marginalised persons require special attention?
9. Identify some vulnerable persons in your community and how you can enable them enjoy their rights.
10. Where can human rights abuses and violations be reported in Uganda?
11. What are the only four absolute human rights that should never be restricted or limited in Uganda?



# 4. Citizenship and Citizen Participation in Uganda



## Key learning points:

Citizenship ensures that the member of a defined society is productive, responsible, caring and contributes to the society

- Citizenship in Uganda is acquired by birth, registration and naturalization.
- A citizen by registration can lose citizenship if they join forces hostile to Uganda; or if they spy against Uganda; or if the citizenship was acquired through fraudulent ways.
- Ugandans can acquire dual citizenship i.e. citizenship of another country without losing Ugandan nationality
- Citizens have duties and responsibilities as already detailed in Section 3.3 above
- Citizen participation is paramount for the success of democracy
- Civic education becomes a very critical tool for building the capacity of citizens to play their roles by meaningfully participating in nation-building and contributing to the development of their communities.

A citizen can be described as a member of a defined society, usually a country to which he/she owes loyalty but also has claims and entitlements. As a participating member of a political community, a citizen is entitled to be protected by the State which must guarantee enjoyment of his/her human rights.

Citizenship describes the legal status and relationship of an individual and the state which entails specific legal rights and duties. Citizenship ensures that the member of a defined society is productive, responsible, caring and contributes to the society. Sometimes citizenship is used to describe nationality. Citizenship is gained by meeting the legal requirements of a national, state, or local government. A nation grants certain rights and privileges to its citizens. In return, citizens are expected to obey their country's laws and defend it against its enemies. Living in a country alone does not mean that a person is necessarily a citizen of that country. In other words, there is more to citizenship than just residing in a particular country.

## **4.1 Citizenship in Uganda**

Citizenship in Uganda is regulated under Article 11 of the 1995 Constitution and Section 12 of the Uganda Citizenship and Immigration Control Act. All persons who, at the commencement of the Constitution in 1995, were citizens of Uganda, qualified as citizens.

Citizenship in Uganda is acquired in the following ways:

### **4.1.1 By birth**

- A person born in Uganda one of whose parents or grandparents is or was a member of the indigenous communities residing within the borders as at 1st February 1926. These are 65 communities listed in the Third Schedule of the Constitution.
- A person born in or outside Uganda one of whose parents or grandparents was at the time of birth a citizen by birth.
- A child of not more than 5 years old found

in Uganda but whose parents are unknown.

- Note that in case of death, the citizenship of the parent at the time of death is what is acquired, even when the parent died before the birth of the person applying for it. The parent's citizenship is what is considered even when the death occurred before the 1995 Constitution came into force.

#### 4.1.2 By Registration

- A person born in Uganda whose parents or grandparents were at the time of birth not diplomats, nor refugees can apply.
- A person born in Uganda who has continuously lived in Uganda since 9th October 1962 - Independence Day can apply.
- A person married to a Ugandan citizen, upon proof of a legal and subsisting marriage of three years or other period prescribed by Parliament. It also applies to a person who was married to a deceased citizen of Uganda. A person who acquired



citizenship by this means does not lose it when the Ugandan spouse dies or when the marriage is annulled or dissolved, unless he/she renounces it.

- A person who has legally and voluntarily migrated to Uganda where he/she has been living for at least 10 years
- A person who had lived in Uganda for at least 20 years by 1995 when implementation of the Constitution started.
- A child of not more than 18 years old, whose parents are not citizens of Uganda, but has been adopted by a Ugandan citizen can apply for citizenship by registration.

### 4.1.3 By Naturalisation

- A person should have lived in Uganda for a continuous period of 24 months immediately prior to the date of application and should have lived in Uganda for periods amounting to not less than 20 years in total.
- A person must present proof of good character, financial solvency, knowledge



of English and a local language and his/her intention to continue living in Uganda if application is granted. Comprehensive details of their particulars, including criminal records, are required during application as well as a certificate from a good citizen of Uganda guaranteeing that the applicant is known to them.

## **Loss of citizenship**

A citizen by registration can lose citizenship if they join the army or security forces of a country hostile to or at war with Uganda; or if they involve in spying against Uganda; or if the citizenship was acquired through fraud, deceit, bribery or false declarations during application.

## **Dual Citizenship**

Dual citizenship is defined in the laws of Uganda as: “the simultaneous possession of two citizenships, one of which is Ugandan.” This means that Ugandans can acquire citizenship of another country without losing Ugandan nationality. Both

Ugandans and non-Ugandans can acquire dual citizenship.

- A citizen of Uganda of 18 years and above, who voluntarily acquires the citizenship of a country other than Uganda, may retain the citizenship of Uganda.
- A person who is not a citizen of Uganda may, on acquiring the citizenship of Uganda, subject to the laws, retain the citizenship of another country.
- Persons with dual citizenship cannot hold certain government offices such as the presidency and vice presidency, prime minister, cabinet and other ministers, Inspector General and the Deputy Inspector General of Government, security-related offices and membership of the National Citizenship and Immigration Board.

## 4.2 Citizenship and Democracy

Citizen participation is important for the success of democracy. The decision-making processes at all levels should not exclude the people. For meaningful citizen participation in the politics of their country and, thus, the success of democracy, it is necessary that citizens know their roles and duties in a democracy. Besides this, the task of citizens is to nurture institutions and practices that are compatible with local conditions and conducive to democratic aspirations.

Generally, anyone in Uganda is entitled to enjoy the basic rights and freedoms under the law. However, citizens and residents may have more privileges and opportunities for participation.

**Civic responsibility** is defined as the “responsibility of a citizen” (Dictionary.com) that comprises actions and attitudes associated with democratic governance and social participation. Civic responsibility can include participation in government, church, and voluntary associations. Actions of civic responsibility can be displayed in

advocacy for various causes related to political, economic, civil, and environmental and welfare issues.

Citizens have duties and responsibilities that they are required to fulfil as detailed in Section 3.3 above. In addition, the Constitution under Article 38 provides for the right of every Ugandan citizen to participate in the affairs of government individually or through his or her representatives. In this regard, civic awareness is very critical so that the citizens know their rights and freedoms as well as their duties and responsibilities so that they can fulfil them.

Civic education becomes a very critical tool for building the capacity of citizens to play their roles by meaningfully participating in nation-building and contributing to the development of their communities.

Civic education is expected to:

- Impart knowledge and skills and creates awareness amongst the citizens of Uganda on their rights, duties and responsibilities.

- Enable people to be informed about how their government works; the obligations of government officials towards the citizens and the country; and the areas of the political process which citizens should get involved in.
- Empower citizens to participate in the governance of their country and influence political outcomes.
- Enhance citizen's civic competence which is the foundation for nurturing a culture of constitutionalism in the country. The more citizens participate in government the stronger their democracy becomes.
- Enable citizens to appreciate the values of dialogue, tolerance, diversity, democracy, good governance, accountability, participation and rule of law
- Create citizens who are not just passive subjects of the state but active participants who contribute to democracy and development of their country



Specifically, citizens can be educated among others on:

- Human rights, duties and responsibilities;
- Elections and voter education;
- Constitutionalism and Rule of Law
- Democracy and good governance
- Leadership, Transparency and Accountability
- Nationalism, Citizenship and Patriotism
- Peace building and conflict management
- Community participation
- Ethics and national values
- Gender and equity
- Public health and the environment

## **Participation in electoral processes**

Citizens have a constitutional duty to register for electoral and other lawful purposes. One fundamental way in which citizens participate in the governance of the country is through elections and referenda. Civic education creates awareness about why citizens should participate in elections

while voter education in particular empowers them on how to participate as it focuses on the electoral process. The Electoral Commission (EC) has the mandate to manage elections including voter education. In Uganda, the EC has been accrediting Civil Society Organisations and private companies to carry out voter education. It is also fostered by public interest organisations independent of any mandate by the EC.

Elections are a central feature of democracy. For elections to express the will of the electorate, they must be 'free and fair'. In Uganda, elections are organised by the Electoral Commission. The EC is responsible for organising the elections, maintaining the voters register and conducting voter education. Ugandans can vote for their President, their Members of Parliament and their local council leaders in elections which take place every five years.

Through elections, citizens can vote for their representatives in the governance structures or can stand for elections to represent the people and their interest. Elections have been held at the



different levels of government through:

- Universal suffrage whereby the principle of one-person-one-vote is applied. This is the case with the general (Presidential and Parliamentary) elections in Uganda
- Electoral colleges where a representative vote is cast by a body of voters chosen or appointed by a larger group. In Uganda, this is the case for elections of interest groups e.g. youth, workers
- A secret ballot which keeps the dangers of undue influence and intimidation at bay or open voting whereby the voters line up behind their preferred candidates.

Free and fair elections mean that all those entitled to vote have had an equal opportunity to register and can make their choice without undue influence. In Uganda, every citizen over the age of 18 years is entitled to vote. It is also about how people vote, their access to reliable and alternative information; the circumstances under which campaigns are carried out; and how the vote is counted. It is also about the announced results reflecting the choice of the voters.

## QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. If you are a citizen of Uganda, what kind of citizenship do you have?
2. What other types of citizenship do you know?
3. What is dual citizenship and which public offices in Uganda is a holder not allowed to occupy?
4. In what ways does civic education build the capacity of citizens?
5. What can show that elections are actually free and fair?



# 5. The National Emblems



## Key learning points:

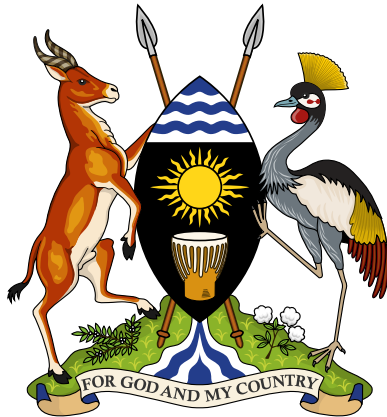
A national emblem represents the country's identity, ideals and values.

- Citizens are required by a constitutional duty to respect the national anthem, flag, coat of arms and currency.
- Uganda's national symbols include the Coat of arms, the National Flag and the Crested Crane.
- The national anthem is the official song/melody that is sung during official functions.

A national emblem is a hallmark that is reserved for use by a specific state as a symbol of that nation. It represents a concept or idea associated with identity, ideals and values. According to the Uganda Media Centre, Uganda's national symbols include the Coat of Arms and the National Flag. Accordingly, the constitution expressly places a duty on citizens to respect the national anthem, flag, coat of arms and currency.

## 5.1 The National Symbols

### 5.1.1 The Coat of Arms



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The shield and spears represent the willingness of the Ugandan people to defend their country.

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There are three images on the shield: those on top represent the waves of Lake Victoria;

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The sun in the centre represents the many days of brilliant sunshine Uganda enjoys;

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And the traditional drum at the bottom is symbolic of dancing, and the summoning of people to meetings and ceremony.

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The shield is flanked on the right by a Crested Crane, a subspecies of the Grey-crowned Crane and the national bird of Uganda. On the left is the Ugandan Kudu, a species of Kudu that here represents abundant wildlife.

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The shield stands on a green mound, representing fertile land, and directly above a representation of the River Nile. Two main cash crops, coffee and cotton, flank the river.

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At the bottom is the national motto: **“For God and My Country”**.

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## 5.1.2 The Uganda National Flag



The Uganda Flag consists of six equal horizontal bands of black (top), yellow, red, black, yellow, and red (bottom); a white disc is superimposed at the centre and depicts the national symbol, a grey crowned crane, facing the hoist side.

The three colours are representative of African peoples (black), Africa's sunshine (yellow), and African brotherhood (red being the colour of blood, through which all Africans are connected).

The flag was designed in 1962 by the then Ugandan Minister of Justice, Grace Ibingira.

### 5.1.3 The Crested Crane



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The Crested Crane is the official bird of Uganda.

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In its plumage, it contains the three colours of Uganda (see flag info above) and is a friendly, gentle and peace-loving bird, characteristics which are certainly true of the Ugandan people

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### 5.1.4 The National Anthem

The National Anthem is an official song sung during public official functions. It was first sung on 9th October 1962 when Uganda attained independence. It was composed by Professor George William Kakoma assisted by Peter G. Wingard. The Anthem is poetic in nature and has special messages in it for all the citizens of Uganda.

## **Importance of the National Anthem**

The National Anthem as a national symbol is important in the following ways.

- Expresses love for one's country and the desire to live together in peace and harmony with everyone.
- Symbolises our national principles, hopes and goals so that citizens work hard to achieve them.
- Promotes unity among the citizens; and togetherness of the people of Uganda.
- Expresses a God-fearing country, since Uganda has strong belief in God and her citizens put God first in everything they do.
- Expresses peace and friendship with neighbours, living together in peace.

## **Occasions when the anthem is sung or played.**

- Before and after official functions such as Independence Day celebrations. Previously two stanzas were only sung in the presence of the President but this changed in 2012 when Uganda was celebrating the 50th independence anniversary when government declared that all the three stanzas should be sung at all functions and gatherings.
- Three stanzas are played during the opening and closure of the day's transmission on the national television and radio.
- All the three stanzas are sung when the head of state dies in office as a sign of mourning and honouring him or her.

## Sing the National Anthem

Oh Uganda!  
may God uphold thee,  
We lay our future in thy  
hand.  
United, free,  
For liberty  
Together we'll always  
stand.



Oh Uganda!  
the land of freedom.  
Our love and labour we  
give,  
And with neighbours all  
At our country's call  
In peace and friendship  
we'll live.



Oh Uganda!  
the land that feeds us  
By sun and fertile soil  
grown.  
For our own dear land,  
We'll always stand,  
The Pearl of Africa's Crown.



## 5.1.5 The East African Community Anthem

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Uganda is a member of the East African Community (EAC) which is an intergovernmental organisation of 6 countries in the Great Lakes region in the eastern part of Africa. The other countries are: Kenya, Burundi, South Sudan, Rwanda and Tanzania. The EAC Heads of State approved the adoption of the EAC anthem to strengthen the process of integration among these countries.

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*The EAC anthem is in Swahili. Both the Swahili version and its translation in English are presented below.*

	Kiswahili Version	English Version
<b>1st stanza</b>	Ee Mungu twaomba ulinde Jumuiya Afrika mashariki Tuwezeshe kuishi kwa amani Tutimize na malengo yetu.	Oh God we pray for the preservation of the East African Community Enable us to live in peace May we fulfill our objectives
<b>Chorus</b>	Jumuiya yetu sote tuilinde Tuwajibike tuimarike Umoja wetu ni nguzo yetu Idumu jumuiya yetu	We should protect/guard our community We should be committed and Stand strong Our unity is our anchor Long live our community
<b>2nd stanza</b>	Uzalendo pia mshikamano Viwe msingi wa umoja wetu Natulinde uhuru na amani Mila zetu na desturi zetu	Patriotism and togetherness Be the pillars of our unity May we guard our independence and peace Our culture and traditions
<b>3rd stanza</b>	Viwandani na hata mashambani Tufanye kazi sote kwa makini Tujitoe kwa hali na mali Tuijenge jumuiya bora	Industries and Farms We should work together We should work hard We should build a better community

## **Who is supposed to play or sing the EAC Anthem?**

- Citizens from these six countries shall play or sing the EAC anthem during occasions of regional importance.
- The vocal version may be sung, or instrumental version played during all EAC occasions.
- Anyone singing or playing it should make sure that both the lyrics and the tune are complete and performed in utmost dignity.
- Citizens should observe decorum as they sing or play the song, and they should stand up to show respect.

## **When should the EAC Anthem be sung or played?**

- During all EAC Council meetings.
- At EAC summit meetings.
- During the commemoration of EAC days.
- Whenever any head of state is addressing the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) which is the East African Parliament.

- During the opening of the EALA sessions.
- During the opening of the Law Year of East African Court of Justice.
- During all the EAC regional events such as sports and cultural events, conferences, exhibitions among others.

## **QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION**

1. Why does Uganda have a national anthem?
2. What is the message in both your school and the Uganda national anthem?
3. When do you sing the national anthem at school?
4. Give examples of where you have seen the Court of Arms.
5. What are the colours in the national flag and their order of appearance?
6. What message do you get from the East African Community anthem?
7. Write down any three symbols of your school?

# 6. Patriotism and Volunteerism



## Key learning points:

- Patriotism is the love of one's country; the attachment and willingness to sacrifice personal gain for the larger public good of the country.
- Patriotism can be a positive driving force for development of the country
- Patriotism is nurtured by values that shape ideology, citizens' attitudes and mindsets for national unity.
- Volunteering is a great way for young people, especially students to get involved in their community activities and make a positive impact.
- Volunteering and social activism support each other in fostering participation by people from varied backgrounds

The concept of patriotism has its origins from two Latin words: *Patria* which means fatherland and *patriota* which refers to countrymen; from which the idea of love for your country was derived.

Patriotism is a “liberal, selfless feeling of love for the country where one was born; that love for and loyalty one has towards his homeland or country” (Johnson 2002). It is generally described as a sentimental feeling and attachment that spur national pride, which make someone willing to sacrifice personal gain for the larger public good of the country. In measuring patriotism the Global International Social Survey looks at how close one feels towards one’s country, i.e. the emotional attachment as well as how strongly one feels about being a citizen of that country, among others.

Patriotism can be a positive driving force for development of the country because it:

- Underpins all forms of nationalism
- Guarantees strategic security of a group
- Creates unity and collective harmony
- Creates among citizens loyalty to the country and therefore responsibility towards it
- Promotes national pride
- Inspires care for the well-being of one’s nation and its people
- Inspires self-sacrifice to fight for one’s

country and its dignity

- Ensures protection of the national constitution from abuse and abrogation
- Fosters accountability when the citizens ensure that those in power do not abuse it but instead act in accordance with the rules that govern their leadership.
- Enables the citizens stand by the nation against bad leaders and public officials
- Recognises that the love for one’s country should not mean blind support, or acceptance and support of its policies and practices that are unjustifiably harmful to other human beings, or other countries.
- Enables citizens question the moral correctness and consequences of government decisions

## **Patriotism Values**

Patriotism is nurtured by values that shape ideology, citizens’ attitudes and mindsets for national unity and development of the country. These are:

- Love, loyalty and sacrifice

- Responsibility, discipline and duty
- Endurance, resilience and adherence.
- Hard work, time management and excellence
- Pan Africanism and East African integration
- National pride, cultural roots and heritage
- Respect for national symbols
- Environmental protection and conservation
- The fear of God

A shared Ugandan culture, which is reinforced by a national value system can spur patriotism because they become the national rallying points for all countrymen and women. This is important in overcoming the situation of divergence in perceptions, mindsets and attitudes that come with diversity as is the case in Uganda. When there is a national rallying point, it makes it easy to have unity, national identity, appreciation and valuing of the common good. The value system would include patriotism, work ethics, integrity, positive attitude and mindsets, national identity, and positive cultural practices and should be subscribed to by every citizen.

Patriotism can inspire students to do the following:

1. Concentrate on their studies, acquire knowledge and build Uganda.
2. Be morally upright and God-fearing
3. Engage in sports and physical exercises (healthy body and mind)
4. Value hard work and engage in gainful work and aspire to be self-sustaining.
5. Respect their parents and help them in household chores
6. Aspire to have prosperous and successful families in future with loving and dependable partners.
7. Obey the law and respects authority
8. Contribute to Society and Community by performing civic duties.
9. Love their country
10. Volunteer for national service
11. Respect the rights of others.
12. Be trustworthy and honest.
13. Be tolerant.
14. Be accountable
15. Have moral courage.

## 6.1 Volunteerism and Social Activism as a Patriotic Pathway

Volunteering is when one freely gives their time, energy and labour to do something for the benefit of others without expecting to be paid for it. Volunteering is a great way for young people, especially students, to get involved in their community activities and make a positive impact. Apart from making them active participants in the affairs of their communities, it also makes them more patriotic and enables them to become change agents.

Volunteering is an important strategy for fostering young people's participation in social change and human development. Like social activism, volunteering can be purposeful and change-oriented; for example, volunteering can be directed at influencing agenda-setting, policy-making, decision-making and representation. It can also promote social change by contributing to personal transformation, whereby individuals change their



beliefs, perspectives and usual behaviour once they have developed a new awareness or understanding about a particular situation.

There are several ways to volunteer and no matter the type of activity, all volunteer work helps build important skills that can benefit students in their future career prospects.

Volunteering and social activism support each other in fostering participation by people from varied backgrounds. Volunteering can help people take their first step to long-term involvement in development. Social activism, on the other hand, plays an important role in providing leadership, defining areas for engagement and mobilising individuals. That said social activism depends on the contributions of volunteers to effect the change it seeks.

Civic engagement in political and social activities is an important way for students to get involved in their communities and make a positive impact. In so doing they can:

- Learn about important issues
- Advocate for change
- Make their voices heard.

Volunteering and social activism have a role in fostering greater participation in society.

This is because civic participation can:

- Help build trust and accountability between citizens and the state
- Ensure that individuals from all backgrounds are encouraged to be part of the local, national and international issues and this contributes to making people patriotic
- Foster social inclusion and cohesion within communities.

Citizen action, no matter how small, contributes to reclaiming and opening up the space for the creation of a more just, inclusive and equitable social reality.

## 6.2 Student Activism: Young people's social action in schools and universities

Young people within schools and universities often challenge power relationships. Students often on a voluntary basis, organise around critical issues within the educational institutions. Actions like tuition fee increases and privatisation have sparked off student movements in Uganda and in other parts of the world. Previous scholars have proposed that student political participation can be through representation and activism.

- **Representation** is when students partake in formal governing processes in higher education such as being part of prefect bodies, student councils, being invited as student representatives on the university's governing boards or working in task forces and adhoc committees.
- In contrast, **activism** is seen as 'claim-making outside of the formal decision-making structures'. This may be, for

example, organising around contentious issues and conducting wider awareness raising and campaigning around them. Students are also leaders in student clubs and student governments and volunteer to help with university open days, graduation activities as well as in university-led community projects. Student volunteering is also often seen as a learning experience framed within the university's service-learning programmes where young people acquire skills and knowledge, formally and informally.

Examples of volunteer civic engagement activities for students include:

- **Voter Registration Drives:** Encouraging eligible voters to register and participate in elections is an important civic duty. Students can help organise voter registration drives to increase voter turnout in their communities.
- **Participating in Political Campaigns:** By volunteering for political campaigns, students can learn about important issues



and help candidates who share their values get elected.

- **Community Organising:** Students can help organise and participate in community events and protests to raise awareness about important issues and advocate for change.
- **Serving on School and Community Boards:** By serving on school and community boards, students can provide valuable input and help make decisions that affect their peers and neighbours.
- **Advocacy and Lobbying:** Students can advocate for policies by writing letters, making telephone calls or sending messages to elected officials and lobbying for positive change.
- **Participation and Serving on School Leadership Structures:** Students can participate in school campaigns and set up mock elections once in leadership positions at their respective schools.

## QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. Describe a patriotic student.
2. Explain why blind love for one's country may be counter-productive.
3. What does patriotism inspire students to do?
4. In what ways can student civic activism be encouraged for positive outcomes?
5. Suggest some of the issues that students care about and ways in which students can participate in civic engagement activities.
6. What kind of support and resources do young volunteers and activists require to enable them effectively participate in decision-making processes?



# 7. Understanding Justice



## Key learning points:

- Justice is about impartial, fair, proper and reasonable treatment by the law and by the arbiters of the law.
- The law ensures that no harm befalls anyone, but where it does, redress is sought and granted.
- Civil justice is where an individual wrongs another and the case is taken to court. Criminal justice is when an individual breaks the law and commits an offence against the state or society.
- Injustice in society may be caused by political, social, economic or other factors.
- Protesting against injustice is a valid way for citizens to show that they are dissatisfied with some governance issues.
- All injustices should be reported to the relevant authorities. At no time whatsoever, should any one seek to take the law in their hands.

According to the Legal Information Institute, justice means that people are treated impartially, fairly, properly, and reasonably by the law and by the arbiters of the law. It also means that the law ensures that no harm befalls any one, but where it does, redress is given for there is a just consequence for the actions of both the accuser and the accused. Justice ensures that someone gets either a benefit or a burden depending on the reality on the ground, when the law is applied.

Justice is often used interchangeably with the word “fairness.” It means “giving to each person what is due.” In any given situation, be it in a courtroom, at school, the workplace or at the restaurant, we want to be treated fairly. As discussed in the section on human rights, we are all equal. No one should be judged more harshly because of their skin colour, or paid less at work because of their sex/gender, and the poor should not be treated worse than the rich in any institution or community. For example, in hospital, at the police or in church everyone deserves equal and impartial treatment.



There are two systems of justice under the law: Civil and criminal justice. Civil justice is where an individual wrongs another and the case is taken to court. Criminal justice is when an individual breaks the law and commits an offence against the state or society. Under criminal law, offences are punished. However, while the offender may be taken to jail, the victim is often not compensated. In a defilement case, for example, the victim may even become pregnant, but receives no help from the government.

When any crime or abuse is committed, there should be justice, both for the offender and for the victim. For the offender, justice means that the punishment fits the crime. Therefore, the system should treat differently a 13-year-old who steals compared to a grown man who steals, because the child is considered vulnerable and under-age. For a victim, justice may mean imprisonment for the criminal or compensation and/or an apology from the offender.



**Retributive justice** is based on the principle of ‘an eye for an eye’ or revenge. In this form of justice, a person who breaks the law must be punished by imprisonment. However, it does not see the offender as a person with rights and dignity, who should be given an opportunity to reform and become a good member of society after being released from prison.

**Restorative justice** is concerned not so much with revenge and punishment, as with making the victim, the offender and society function as a whole. Restorative justice often aims at reintegrating the offender into society. Attempts may be made to bring an offender and their victim together, so that the offender can better understand the effect his/her offence had on the victim; apologise and seek to change his/her ways.

The best example of this is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa that took place at the end of Apartheid starting in 1995. Perpetrators of offences confessed their wrong doing and asked for pardon in order to heal the hurting members of society. In Uganda, the

community service programme in some districts, where offenders who commit light offences e.g. stealing, fighting, instead of being taken to prison, are allowed to work in the community on various projects e.g. building schools, roads and hospitals. They give back to the community by offering free services, and they have to apologise.

## 7.1 Addressing injustices in society

Injustice in society may be caused by political, social, economic or other factors.

### Political injustice:

- Civil and political rights of citizens are suppressed or violated e.g. the right to move freely; to assemble with like-minded people; and to march in protest against injustice.
- Police violently dispersing people who are demonstrating peacefully.
- Denying people their right to vote

- Imposing unnecessary curfews thereby affecting the right to move freely
- Arresting people for speaking out freely and expressing their views

These injustices can be fought by taking cases to court or seeking mediation and dialogue between the citizens and those in political positions.

## Social Injustice

- This is where injustice manifests in social relations and where the actions or omissions impact negatively on the social aspects of the communities.
- Could be individuals harming one other or groups harming each other through collective actions.
- Evictions of one tribe by another from its region, which leads to displacement of several people.
- Wife beating, denial of inheritance to orphans, female genital mutilation, defilement and early pregnancies as well as forced marriages are other common



injustices upon which action is rarely taken to protect the victims.

- Issues of tribalism, ethnic divisions, and discrimination against vulnerable groups such as Persons with Disability, women and children.
- Targeting civilians in times of war or armed conflict by those fighting. Indeed this has happened several times in Uganda since independence.

To address such, the public must be educated on the existing standards, the laws and policies to abide by and the expected conduct. The Government must also be ready to promote social justice by monitoring the activities of individuals and using the law to protect those being harmed or under threat of harm.

Perpetrators of war crimes and crimes against humanity including harm to civilians by combatants or genocide must be tried by the respective courts and punished. This was why the International Division of the High Court of Uganda was set up to try among other things, the atrocities that were committed in the war in Northern Uganda.

## **Economic Injustice**

- People may be poor because the government may not have fully created a good environment for all people to have access to education, health and work; not because the rich are so because they work harder.
- Some situations are manifestations of bigger underlying causes that may not be so obvious. The lack of good healthcare when young, for example, can result in illnesses that affect one's education, by impacting on grades and consequently one's ability to get good employment, and therefore the ability to earn a good income.

This means that although one has a responsibility to work hard to improve their personal situation, the Government must put in place good economic and social programmes. Examples are some of the recent economic empowerment programmes like the Parish Development Model, the Entandikwa scheme, or the social programme of the Universal Primary Education, that the Government has designed for enhancing incomes and for job creation in the public and private sector.

## 7.2 Reporting injustices

All injustices should be reported to the relevant authorities. At no time whatsoever, should any one seek to take the law in their hands. Often people commit mob injustice by accusing and punishing the people they suspect of causing injustices. This is unacceptable because it is an injustice in itself not to let the law take its course. Mob action has serious consequences because it violates rights such as fair hearing, freedom from torture and ill treatment, right to health, right to life, among others. Justice for the accused implies that they are innocent until proven guilty by a competent court or when they plead guilty in court; must be taken through the court process and be given a fair punishment based on the law.

The main institutions for the administration of justice in Uganda include:

- The Judiciary - Courts
- The Judicial Service Commission
- Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions
- The Uganda Police Force

- The Uganda Prisons
- Probation and Welfare Department

The different Courts are outlined below:

- Supreme Court
- Court of Appeal (also sits as the Constitutional Court). It also hears appeals from decisions of the High Court.
- High Court - has powers to hear any case and also decides appeals against decisions made in the Magistrates Courts
- Magistrates Courts (Chief Magistrate, Magistrate Grade 1 and Grade 2) - these are the most accessible and used courts in the country. All districts have Magistrates Courts.
- Local Council LC Courts
- Qadhi Courts
- Other courts established by Parliament which include the Industrial Court, Tax Appeal Tribunals and Military Courts

Other entities that complement government work in delivery of justice include:



- The Uganda Law Society – helps, protects and promotes lawyers
- Civil Society Organisations and Non-Governmental Organisations – complement government work by providing different services within the communities.
- The media – provide information, educate the people and expose injustices

There are other bodies established by the Constitution or other laws to hear complaints:

- The Uganda Human Rights Commission – human rights
- The Equal Opportunities Commission – matters of discrimination
- The Inspectorate of Government - corruption and abuse of office
- The Judicial Service Commission – disciplinary matters of judicial officers

## 7.3 Responsibility and roles of citizens in promoting justice

It is important to note that:

- Protesting against injustice is a valid way for citizens to show that they are dissatisfied with governance in particular areas.
- Protests should be done peacefully and without arms and not involve violence or illegal activities.
- Citizens have a duty to report any injustices to relevant authorities and/or sharing information with others on where to report. They should avoid reporting the same issue to the different institutions and when they do, they should disclose it.

There are various options available to citizens who wish to fight for social and economic justice. These include:

- **Petitions:** A petition can be written to Parliament or another governing body such as the District Council or Sub-County

Council asking for the relevant changes. As many signatures can be obtained from influential people, opinion leaders and ordinary citizens to show that the proposed changes are supported by the people.

- **Court:** If there is a violation of human rights, a petition can be made to the respective court of law.
- **Lobbying:** Groups can lobby members of Parliament to do something about a specific matter. There are some caucuses in Parliament that support different issues. For example, Uganda Women's Parliamentary Association supports women's rights issues, and the MPs representing Workers in Parliament support workers' rights.
- **Information and Education Campaigns:** Leaflets, posters and other educational materials to create awareness in society about the desired changes.
- **Media campaigns:** The independent media is a useful ally in trying to bring about change. Issues can be raised in newspapers, on radio, TV and social media to encourage change.

## QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What are some of the consequences of injustice?
2. Reflect on these kinds of injustice in our communities: Land grabbing, widow inheritance, child marriages, unfair taxation policies, mob justice etc and suggest how they can be handled.
3. Where should a student report any injustices suffered or witnessed at school?
4. How can a student play his/her role as a citizen to promote justice?



# 8. Peace Building and Conflict Resolution



## Key learning points:

- Conflict refers to disputes and disagreement over crucial issues.
- The most extreme form of conflict is violence, so conflicts should be handled before they escalate.
- Conflict can occur at the family, community/institutional and national level.
- Conflicts can be political, economic, social or psychological. They can be inter-personal i.e. between individuals, or they can be between groups of people
- Conflict can have negative and harmful effects on society.
- Peace is the absence of war but it is also successfully managing conflicts.
- Peace-building requires a deep understanding of the causes of conflict and violence.
- It is in everyone's interests to promote peace-building and conflict resolution. All people, groups and institutions in a nation are responsible for peace building.

## 8.1 What is Conflict?

A conflict refers to a dispute or disagreement over crucial issues. The Free Online Dictionary defines conflict as the disharmony between ideas or interests. The common issues that people disagree on include resources (natural, material and financial), oppression, identity (gender or ethnicity), politics and many others on which people have different views and approaches. In other words, when people have differences in viewpoints, values and priorities, and the matter is not handled in a manner that can allow people to co-exist despite that, clashes can occur and escalate into violence. The most extreme form of conflict is violence.

Conflict can occur at the family, community/ institutional and national level. At the family level, failure to agree can lead to domestic violence, child abuse and exploitation, as well as neglect of family members. At the community level, conflict can exist at institutional level in schools, workplaces, and political entities. At the national level, conflicts can occur between governmental institutions and the citizens, or between the organs and institutions of



government, for example, there have been conflicts in Uganda between the judiciary, the legislature and the executive. In addition, certain groups may attack one another over water, land and other resources, leading to violent conflict.

## 8.2 Types and causes of Conflict

**Political conflicts:** Failure to ensure good leadership and governance can lead to injustice, and if solutions are not obtained, this can lead to political conflict. The National Resistance Movement, for example, waged a war in 1981 against oppression and tyranny caused by bad political governance. Sometimes, an institution may lack good leadership, which may result in anarchy, lack of discipline and order, hence causing conflict.

**Economic conflicts:** When people faced with severe economic injustices e.g. poverty, debt and lack, it can result in conflict. Often in some regions, clashes happen between individuals as a result of extreme conditions. The lack of land for people who were displaced in Northern Uganda has led to

disputes and fights. There have also been several demonstrations by people who are protesting against harsh economic situations and these have often resulted in clashes.

**Socio-cultural conflicts:** When people are ill-treated because they are vulnerable, disadvantaged or minorities, it can result in an uprising. In colonial times, for example, the colonised people often rebelled, e.g. the Hehe rebellion. In South Africa, the apartheid system led to conflict that lasted for a very long time. Conflicts have also arisen over issues such as religion and cultural practices between different social groups.

**Psychological/individual conflicts:** Individuals' characters and traits can also cause conflict. Some people by nature are troubled, and they go about causing problems between individuals or within society in general. Such people have anti-social behaviour such as fighting, committing crime or stirring up disagreements. Some individuals go about promoting discriminatory behaviour such as hatred for a certain group, for personal reasons. For example, they may promote the views that certain

tribes, gender or religions should be targeted for violence, and promote hatred of those groups, based on personal biases.

Conflicts can be inter-personal i.e. between individuals, or they can be between groups of people. Conflicts between groups can escalate into civil war, and sometimes the fighting can be cross-border between different countries. Sometimes a civil conflict can turn into an international conflict, for example, the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo which began as a civil war but later other countries like Uganda and Rwanda became involved.

### **8.3 Consequences of conflict**

Conflict can have negative and harmful effects on society. When there is disagreement and conflict, development is hindered. Conflict between individuals or communities can lead to long and expensive court cases and depletion of scarce resources. Extreme forms of conflict can lead to armed violence such as riots and wars, which are

harmful to peoples' lives and society in general, causing displacement of people internally or even externally as refugees. In times of armed conflict, fighting groups can target crops and important government development projects as well as infrastructure for destruction such as roads, buildings, telecommunications and electricity. All this results in wastage of life and resources, setting back the development of a community or a nation. To prevent such negative consequences requires communities to focus on Peace and Peace building programmes.

### **8.4 Understanding Peace and Peace-building**

Peace sometimes is taken to be the absence of war but it is more than that. Successfully managing disagreements, hostilities and quarrels is also peace. In the context of conflict resolution, peace-building refers to the long-term project of building harmonious and, stable communities and societies, hence achieving peace. Peace-building and development are also very closely linked.

Both have the same goal, which is to help build or repair societies that are broken economically, and socially. Peace-building focuses on the relationship aspect of nation-building. Peace-building aims to prevent, reduce, transform, and help people to recover from violence in all forms.

Peace-building requires skills in building relationships between different people so that they can manage conflicts without resorting to violence. While conflict is a natural part of all relationships, people can learn skills as children and adults about how to relate to others in ways that increase the quality of life. Communication, dialogue, mediation and negotiation skills are central to peace-building processes.

Peace-building requires a deep understanding of conflict and violence. Before deciding what to do about conflict and violence, people must first of all, understand its causes.



## Approaches to peace-building

**Waging Conflict Non-violently:** This puts civil society at the forefront of causing change, rather than armed or military groups. Civil Society actors seek to gain support for change by increasing a group's power to address the issues of concern. For example, they engage in education campaigns and lobbying to bring about the change they want.

**Reducing Direct Violence:** Efforts to reduce direct violence aim to stop parties that practise violence, for example, through calling for ceasefire and disarming those who have weapons. Sometimes, an offer of amnesty can assist to end the violence. However, there are many occasions where those who commit war crimes are put on trial. The aim is to end armed attacks and create a safe environment so that peace-building activities can begin in other categories that address the root causes of the violence.

**Transforming Relationships:** Efforts are made to change people and their relationships using methods such as traditional forgiveness and reconciliation ceremonies or truth and reconciliation commissions. This has been done in societies such as Rwanda, where the Hutu and Tutsi engaged in Truth telling as a way of healing over the past. It has also been done in South Africa and Sierra Leone.

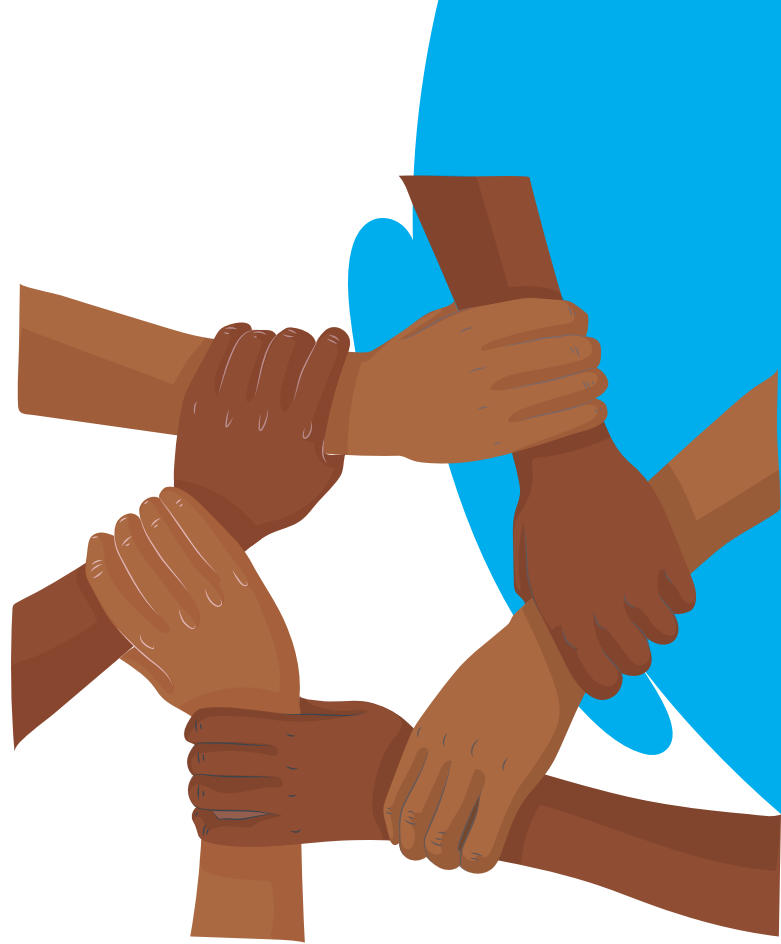
**Capacity Building:** Longer-term peace-building efforts aim to reduce conflict by ensuring that every person's needs and rights are met and that people do not feel that they are being treated unjustly. Efforts are made to prevent violence through education and training about the causes and effects of violence, ensuring development through better service delivery and transforming the military. Such activities help to improve justice in society and to ensure a sustainable culture of peace.



## 8.5 The Role of Society in Peace-building and Conflict Resolution

Society is part of all conflict, either as perpetrators or victims, or observers. It is in everyone's interests to promote peace-building and conflict resolution. All people, groups and institutions in a nation are responsible for peace building. The following activities are examples of what can be done to reduce conflict and improve peace-building in a society:

- **Advocacy:** Speaking out against oppression and injustice, even if one is not directly suffering or affected. For example, one does not have to have a disability to promote the rights of Persons with Disability, or a child to promote the rights of children. In advocacy, people talk to decision-makers and people in positions of leadership to influence positive changes to adopt peace and avoid conflict.



- **Monitoring:** Everyone has a responsibility to monitor how individuals, communities, local and national governments are keeping the peace and mediating conflict. This may be done in a systematic manner, or it may be done whenever any person, group or civil society organisation notices that there is a conflict building up. Monitoring should be ongoing to ensure that early signs of conflict are picked up, rather than wait until conflict breaks out, as prevention is much better than solving the effects of conflict.
- **Accountability:** Where conflict has occurred, there are usually perpetrators and victims. It is important for people everywhere to come forward as reporters of crime, witnesses and advisers on the best way to resolve conflict and restore peace. Accountability is important in establishing the facts, and helping to prevent future occurrences of conflict by coming up with useful recommendations.
- **Mediation and arbitration towards reconciliation:** When a conflict is about to break out or has already broken out, there is need often for mediation in order to avoid more harmful effects. Mediation refers to peaceful means of solving disagreements with a view to reconciling the individuals or communities who are in conflict, and may involve dialogue, apologies and restoring the situation to the pre-conflict environment if this is possible. Mediators are ordinary people who are interested in promoting peace, and they may be religious people, elders and traditional leaders, NGOs or another nominated go-between. Every effort should be made to have continuous dialogue so that people can freely express themselves and notice when situations require addressing; this is better than waiting for discussions to break down.

## QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. Discuss in a group an experience of a conflict you could have faced at home and the procedures taken to resolve it.
2. Outline what you can do as a student to reduce conflict at school and improve peace-building in the school community
3. Take interest in what is going on in your family and community by listening to or reading news and learn how to promote peace
4. Take interest in mediation activities in your community and be determined to always ensure that people who are in conflict get to a point of agreement.
5. What steps can you take to prevent conflict; or avoid promoting conflict at school and at home?



# 9. Understanding Leadership

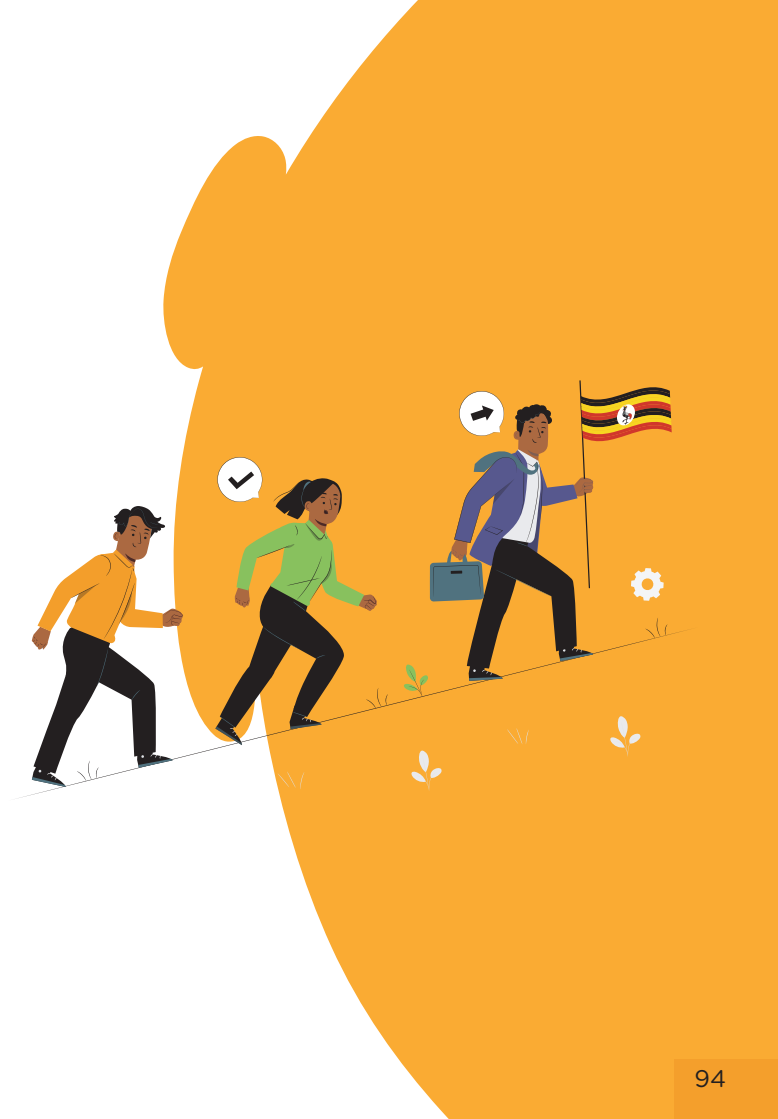


## Key learning points:

- Leadership is about influencing and motivating others to accomplish an objective and directing for cohesion and coherence
- Leadership can be formal or informal, traditional, bureaucratic, charismatic, autocratic, democratic, participatory, servant or laissez faire.
- The reality today is that leadership does not revolve around a single person; it is based on teamwork.
- In modern leadership those who are led play an active role and it is a shared leadership. Those who have the ideas, energy, vision and skills work with all people to ensure that certain goals are achieved
- The leader's responsibilities are to organise the people, assign responsibilities, supervise the different tasks assigned, promote feedback, maintain discipline, protect, empower and give opportunities to the weak ones on the team and ensure transparency.
- Society roles in leadership include identifying the right leaders, participating in agreed-on activities and monitoring and holding the leaders accountable.

Leadership is a process by which a person influences others to accomplish an objective and directs the Organisation/government in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent. It is also the act of motivating a group of people to act towards achieving a common goal.

In society, there are many different concerns, problems and needs. This calls for interventions to address these issues. In addition, every person has a view, opinion and perspective and these differ from person to person. It requires a leader to connect these different ideas and opinions to form a common vision and objective considering the views of the majority. Leadership can make a project succeed or fail, depending on the qualities of the leaders we choose.



## 9.1 Types of Leadership

- **Formal Leadership:** Formal leadership is organised, and a leader emerges either through election or appointment. In a school, some prefects may be elected, or the school authorities may appoint a prefect, head boy or head girl. It is the same in government, e.g. Parliamentarians are elected, as well as LC officials. However, leaders such as the IGG, Ambassadors, Judges, and the CAO are appointed by government.
- **Informal leadership:** Informal leadership is not related to a position or structure. A person who has the qualities of a leader may find that people come to him or her for help or guidance. In a family setting, the father and mother are leaders. Religious institutions have people who may be recognised as leaders and provide leadership as a result of the important role they play.
- **Traditional Leadership:** In Uganda, kingdoms and chiefdoms are recognized under the Constitution. These are traditional institutions with positions and structures of leadership, and are widely respected in the societies where they exist. While they may not have formal powers of leadership e.g. to collect taxes, pass laws and policies, they provide important leadership to their communities. The Government of Uganda often works through these leaders to promote important government programmes such as maintenance of law and order, community mobilisation on social issues such as immunisation and care of the vulnerable and poor in community.
- **Bureaucratic Leadership:** This is a very structured leadership that is based on the position one holds, and the rules and regulations of such a position; but it does depend on the qualities one may have.
- **Charismatic Leadership:** Some leaders are by nature very dynamic and charismatic. They inspire and energize

others easily to achieve common goals. Their personality and character makes people want to follow them.

- **Autocratic Leadership:** This is where only one person or structure makes the decision, with little or no participation or consultation of those being led. The people under an autocratic leader have to follow his or her exact instructions or directives.
- **Democratic Leadership:** Those who are led choose their leader through participatory and transparent processes, and the choice of the majority wins the day. Leaders consult those they lead, and design programmes, activities and policies after seeking views of the population.
- **Participatory Leadership:** Leaders consult those they are leading quite frequently, and are guided by their views. This kind of leadership also recognises that leadership is not only for one person, and allows other people to share and exercise leadership and report to an overall leader. It is commonly used where people are working in teams.



- **Servant Leadership:** This refers to situations where a leader serves all the people following him or her, and is common in the Church and in missionary organisations.
- **Laissez faire Leadership:** There is little guidance from the leader, who mostly provides information, material, financial resources and other forms of support. People are free to make their own decisions, determine the strategies they will use and the goals they wish to achieve, with little or no direction from the top.

## 9.2 Leadership Styles: Two Different Approaches

### 9.2.1 Top-down style of Leadership

This is the most common, sometimes also known as the “command style.” Here, a group is defined by a single, supreme leader or structure that “rules” overall. The leader’s main responsibility is to direct

and command members of a group. To carry out these command functions, the supreme leader must possess multiple skills:

- Serve as spokesperson for the group (through speaking and writing).
- Function as the group’s chief negotiator with other groups.
- Serve as the group’s planner or strategist.
- Promote internal group cohesion and motivate the membership.
- Be the ultimate decision-maker.

This is the traditional approach; a leader is a strong and powerful individual - someone who makes decisions, commands others, and speaks with charisma. This is the type of leadership that is found in the police, the army, in Kingdoms and even in some companies and organisations.

However, in reality, even in today’s corporations, governments and the military, leadership does not revolve around a single person. It is based on teamwork. A General, an Executive Director, a school prefect, a local councillor, Minister or even a President becomes an effective leader only if



she/he is able to work well with others. Success as a leader depends on being able to work with people from all walks of life and identify how they can contribute to society and inspire them to do it well. The days are long past when a leader is seen as one individual with all the qualities required for leadership.

### 9.2.2 The alternative: The grassroots approach of Shared Leadership

Under this model, people in a community function collectively. There are different levels of leadership, each being able to contribute to the running of the group and managing the various tasks and responsibilities. This type of leadership encourages everyone to be a leader and develop their leadership skills. It does not necessarily involve a long chain of command of various leaders with increasing levels of power but encourages equality, consensus and sharing ideas.

In a school setting, for example, the head girl / head boy does not lead on his / her own, but works with the Prefects' Council, Class Monitors, Dormitory Leaders and other people to ensure the smooth running of the school. This encourages many more students to develop and exercise their leadership potential.

Top-down style of Leadership



The grassroots approach of Shared Leadership



Shared leadership is the ability of a person to work well with others as part of a team. It requires strengths and abilities not normally associated with the traditional leadership: the capacity to care for others, build them up with the required support to bring out their best attitudes, views, skills and talent.

Shared leadership requires the quality to express compassion for, and educate others on achieving a shared or common objective while upholding one's core values and principles. Shared leadership is based on a commitment to dignity, equality, democracy, and transformation in human beings. In fact, managers of organisations and companies look for shared leadership as the number one quality of a good employee and define leadership in terms of the capacity of an individual to work together with others.

It is important to embrace the new model of shared leadership; to constantly recognise the ways that many different leadership styles exist within a group and that all members contribute to the leadership of the group.

### 9.3 What are the Qualities of a Good Leader?

<b>L</b>	Loyal, Listener, God fearing, Learned
<b>E</b>	Exemplary, Enterprising, Empathetic, Exceptional,
<b>A</b>	Approachable, Active
<b>D</b>	Determined, Decisive, Dedicated, Disciplined, Dependable
<b>E</b>	Educated, Energetic
<b>R</b>	Responsible, Reliable
<b>S</b>	Social, Simple, Smart, Sees ahead / visionary
<b>H</b>	Honest,
<b>I</b>	Intelligent, Integrity, Inspirational, Innovative
<b>P</b>	Patient, Presentable, Punctual, Principled

## 9.4 Responsibilities of a Leader

A leader has several responsibilities which vary depending on the mandate he or she has. However, there are general responsibilities that leaders will have such as:

- Organising the people, he or she leads to make a common plan
- Assigning responsibilities to the different people he or she leads
- Supervising tasks that have been assigned to the different people he or she is leading
- Making sure that he or she is promoting feedback and communication to all the people and among the people being led
- Maintaining discipline to ensure that he or she leads by example,
- Ensuring that the weak people in the community are helped by those more able, to fulfil their roles and meet their needs
- Being honest and ensuring transparency in everything that he or she does on behalf of the community or society.



## 9.5 Challenges of leadership

The following misconceptions and assumptions or errors are usually made by people when conceptualising leadership:

- There is one and only one style of leadership for a group.
- For any group, there is one and only one leader. A few members of the group are 'developing leaders,' while the rest are 'followers'.
- Leaders are born, and not trained; a person either has leadership ability or does not
- Even when people recognise the existence of different leadership styles, they tend to believe that, one style (usually the 'command style') is more important than other styles.

## 9.6 The Role of Society in Leadership

In modern leadership those who are led play an active role and it is a shared leadership. Those who have the ideas, energy, vision and skills work with all people to ensure that certain goals are achieved. This means that we all have a role to play. These roles may include the following:

- **Making sure that we identify the right leaders.** This can be done by nominating leaders, electing them or supporting other peoples' nominations to ensure that the right leaders are in place. However, if you support a certain candidate and he or she is not successful, be prepared to work with the leaders who are elected, as they are all working for the common good.
- **Participation.** Make sure that you support programmes that your leaders have put in place by participating in activities that are agreed on or communicated. Leaders cannot do everything; they rely on you to play your part so that they can play theirs.

- **Accountability.** Monitor what your leaders are doing, give them honest feedback through the right channels of communication and ask for them to give a proper record of what they have achieved since they became leaders.

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What are the qualities of a good leader?
2. What makes someone a bad leader?
3. What should you do to support your leaders?
4. Do you consider yourself a leader? Why or why not?
5. What is (are) your main strength(s) as a leader? What is your “leadership style”?
6. Reflect on how to stand up and be a leader in your school, community or country.
7. Identify one new aspect of leadership that you would like to develop this term through a class project.



# 10. Understanding Good Governance



## Key learning points:

- Good Governance is the process by which government institutions conduct public affairs, manage public resources and guarantee the realisation of human rights in a way that is free of abuse and corruption, and following established laws.
- The features of good governance include: participation, rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus-oriented, equity and inclusiveness, effectiveness and efficiency and accountability.
- Institutional framework for governance in Uganda has about 9 different institutions both government and non-government.

**Governance** refers to processes, structures and systems through which governments make and implement decisions as well as manage their affairs.

**Good Governance** is the process by which government institutions conduct public affairs, manage public resources and guarantee the realisation of human rights in a way that is free of abuse and corruption, and following established laws. The signs of “good” governance are the extent to which civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights are realised. This means institutions of governance effectively guaranteeing, say, the right to health, adequate housing, sufficient food, quality education, justice and personal security.

## 10.1 Features of Good Governance

- **Participation:** Participation by both men and women is important for good governance. Participation could be either direct or through legitimate institutions

or representatives. Participation needs to be informed and organised. This means freedom of information, association and expression on the one hand and an organised civil society on the other hand. All people and groups, including the vulnerable groups, minority groups, the weak and the powerless, should be involved in managing the country either directly or through representatives.

- **Rule of law:** Good governance requires fair laws that are enforced impartially by the law enforcement institutions. It also requires full protection of human rights, particularly those of minorities, the poor and the vulnerable. Impartial enforcement of laws requires an independent judiciary and an impartial and incorruptible police force. All the leadership in place should be appointed or elected according to already existing laws. All decisions taken by leaders and those managing national programs should be based on existing laws. Everybody must abide by the laws of the country and no one is above the law. Rule of law ensures that

corruption and abuse of power is minimised, the views of the minorities are considered and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making. It is also responsive to the present and future needs of society.

- **Transparency:** Transparency refers to the openness with which (public) matters are conducted. Proper procedures should be followed by all people in authority or power, and should be based on the existing laws or policies. This means that decisions taken and their enforcement are done in a manner that follows rules and regulations. Information should be freely available and directly accessible to all people who wish to know about existing programs and decisions taken. This information should be easily available and understood.
- **Responsiveness:** National programs and projects in place should be made in such a way that they promptly meet people's needs. To ensure this, people must be consulted on what they need. Needs may





differ from community to community, but as much as possible, the priority needs of the community should be met over time or immediately as the situation calls for. Good governance also requires that institutions and processes try to serve all stakeholders within a reasonable time frame.

- **Consensus-oriented:** There are several interest groups, needs and viewpoints in any given society. A perfect democracy based on the consent of all the people and operated by way of decisions enjoying the same quality and extent of consent is regarded as very difficult to achieve by any modern government. Nevertheless, many pre-colonial societies in Africa, known as egalitarian societies, were based on a consensus-oriented model where decisions were discussed and debated until a consensus was agreed upon. In a similar way, good governance requires that the different interests in society be balanced to reach a broad agreement in society on what is in the best interest of the whole community and how this can be achieved.

It also requires a broad understanding of what is needed for sustainable human development and how this can be achieved. Decisions made by the rulers or authorities should as much as possible be based on agreement of all people. In most societies, decisions are made by the majority; for example, when the Uganda Parliament passes a law, it must be agreed to by the majority of the members. However, checks and balances ensure that minority views are not completely over-ruled. For example, before a law is passed by Parliament, it is scrutinized by a Committee which is responsible for ensuring that the law is just and fair for all the people.

- **Equity and inclusiveness:** A society's Publishing depends on ensuring that all its members feel that they have a stake in it and do not feel excluded from the mainstream of society. This requires all groups, but particularly the most vulnerable, have opportunities to improve or maintain their well-being. For example, the Uganda Parliamentary structure reserves seats for

the women, youth, PWDs, and workers. In this way, the system promotes fairness and respect for the views and participation of all concerned.

- **Effectiveness and efficiency:** The resources that are used to run programs should be correctly identified and used. Resources refer to money, equipment, workers, information and any other assets needed to make a program effective. Corruption leads to money being wasted and programs not being implemented and do not promote effectiveness nor efficiency. Good governance means that processes and institutions produce results that meet the needs of society while making the best use of resources at their disposal. It also covers the sustainable use of natural resources and the protection of the environment.
- **Accountability:** Accountability is a key requirement of good governance in which an individual or Organisation has an obligation to explain the nature of its activities and the results and to disclose

the results in a transparent manner and accept responsibility for them. Government, its agencies and public officials have an obligation to provide information about their decisions and actions and to justify them to the public and those institutions of accountability responsible for oversight. Not only governmental institutions but also the private sector and civil society Organisations must be accountable to the public and to their institutional stakeholders. In general, an Organisation or an institution is accountable to those who will be affected by its decisions or actions. It is also necessary that public or the institution responsible for accountability can punish whoever has used resources in an illegal way or take other measures such as recommending that a public official should be sacked. Accountability cannot be enforced without transparency and the rule of law. Leaders or rulers in power should explain to the people they are leading how and for what they have used public resources, what programs are in place and how they have promoted people's well-

being.

## 10.2 The Institutions of Governance

There are various institutions of governance in the country. These include:



### Political Institutions:

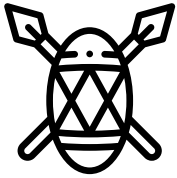
These institutions have powers to create and enforce laws, and they represent the people. Here we are talking about institutions dealing with political rights and issues in the country. Examples of these are Political Parties, LC 5 Chairpersons, RDCs, trade unions etc



### Judicial Institutions:

Judicial institutions refer to formal and informal courts, headed by judges or lay persons. Hence a formal court has judges and magistrates, and the LC courts and other administrative courts such as the Administrator General have ordinary persons or legal officers heading them.

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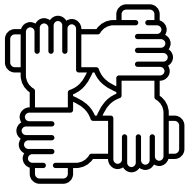
### **Traditional Institutions:**

Traditional institutions such as kingdoms and chiefdoms are recognised as being institutions of governance only in the social and cultural arena in Uganda.



### **Spiritual Institutions:**

These include churches, mosques, temples etc. They are places where spiritual teachings and principles are highlighted as a way of helping people govern their spiritual lives.



### **Non-Governmental Institutions:**

Non-Governmental institutions are those Organisations that are not part of government, but they are very important in developing people's lives, in getting resources and helping people in decision-making.

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### **Executive Institutions:**

These are the institutions that handle the governance of the country, and include the Cabinet, Local Councils and Ambassadors.

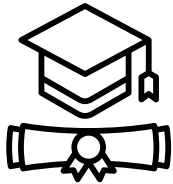
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### **Legislative Institutions:**

This is the Parliament and all its Sessional as well as Permanent committees.

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### **Academic Institutions:**

These are institutions that govern how people are educated and what academic qualifications they will receive in life.

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### **Family Institutions**

In a family, the head of the home may be a father or mother or both. The family is the smallest unit of governance as the household head (s) make rules about how the family will be run, utilisation of resources and important decision about family members' lives.

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## 10.3 Decentralisation and governance

Before 1993, governance in Uganda was centralised. There were districts in Uganda, but not local governments. Planning, budgeting and programme implementation were done centrally at the ministries, and all public service officials were employed through the Ministry of Public Service. The Ministries would plan and budget for programs and send officials to the different districts to implement these programs.

During the early 1990s, decentralisation was adopted as one way of promoting good governance. This was part of the lessons learnt by development organisations like the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme that centralised governance had challenges in bringing about development to the grassroots level because they were too far away and out of touch with the people. Decentralization, which is the transfer of authority from the central level of government to lower tiers such as districts, towns or municipalities, was thus recommended and adopted.

Decentralisation was recommended to:

- Improve efficiency in development projects and in the provision of services in communities;
- Support community self-help development initiatives;
- Strengthen the role of regional and district level administration by transferring all key functions for development planning, coordination, and management to the districts and sub-counties;
- Strengthen grassroots participation in governance; and
- Improve the quality of public service delivery, particularly to the poor by involving the people in decision making so as to promote good governance and reduce poverty.

Decentralisation focuses on four key areas, namely: Political, administrative, financial and legislative management.

### Political:

Transferring powers to local governments, to plan and budget, set the rules for the councils and other organs of the local governments such as committees of councillors.

### Administrative:

- Hiring local government staff from the districts instead of the national Ministries;
- Paying staff at the district level; and
- Getting goods and services at the local level.

### Financial:

- Granting the local governments more financial powers to collect taxes and raise local revenue; and
- Allowing local governments to make and approve their own budgets according to the local priorities based on local conditions and needs of residents.

### Legislative:

- Granting local government powers to make ordinances governing a particular district. This helps Districts to handle and solve district-specific problems.
- Granting Sub-County and Village Councils powers to make by-laws. By-laws can only be applied in a specific locality, that is, the village council which passed the by-law.

It is clear that good governance is difficult to achieve in a short time. Very few countries and societies have come close to achieving complete good governance in every area. However, to ensure sustainable human development, actions must be taken to work towards establishing good governance with the aim of making it a reality.

## 10.4 Democracy and Participation

**Democracy** means “government by people.” This means that all the people should be able to have their say (express themselves) in one way or another in decisions that affect their lives. The right to have a say can be exercised directly:

- By every member of a community having the possibility to express personally, his or her position on a particular issue into the decision-making process, or
- Through representatives (members of legislative bodies or elected representatives like Local Councils).

In a representative democracy, the representatives should make decisions only after consulting and obtaining the views of their constituencies on a particular issue. After this, the representatives should try to accommodate the views as best as possible. Unfortunately, in practice, this does not usually happen. In Uganda, people vote their representatives to Parliament and to the Local Councils every five years. However, after the representatives are voted into office, they rarely return to consult their constituencies.

**Participatory democracy** strives to create opportunities for all members of a community to make meaningful contributions to decision-making. Technological development is having a great impact on allowing more and more people to participate directly in government, through





mobile phone technology and the Internet. People can also participate in governance through Civil Society Organisations.

## **THE PILLARS OF DEMOCRACY**

- Sovereignty of the people.
- Government based upon consent of the governed
- Majority rule.
- Minority rights upheld.
- Guarantee of basic human rights.
- Free and fair elections.
- Equality before the law.

The rule of law i.e. governing according to the established law.

## **10.5 Role of Civil Society**

Civil Society Organisations are the organised citizens groups outside of the family, the state, and the business arena that seek to influence government policies and programmes and are

non-profit oriented. People associate to advance common interests and are independent of the state by choice. This includes non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) but also independent institutions such as media, universities, FBOs, CBOs, and social and religious groups. Civil Society is a very important part of a democracy, but just because it is independent of the state does not mean that it must always criticize and oppose the state

In a democratic environment, CSOs are concerned about how the nation, the district, the community or the kingdom is being governed. Civil society members monitor how state officials use their powers and raise public concern about any abuse of power. They can also play the following roles:

- Lobby for access to information, including freedom of information laws, and rules and institutions to control corruption. For example, you can ask your LC Chairman in your home area what he or she is doing to protect children and to prevent crime.
- Expose corrupt public officials and lobby for such officials to face the legal

consequences. For example, if the Global Fund allocations to Uganda for treating HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria have been stolen, you can write newspaper articles or raise awareness in public meetings about the negative effects of such actions, and not try to protect such people.

- Raise awareness and educate people about their rights and obligations as democratic citizens, and encourage them to listen to election campaigns and participate in the voting. NGOs, FBOs and CBOs can also help develop citizens' skills to work with one another to solve common problems, to debate public issues, and express their views.
- Encourage people to develop the values of democratic life: tolerance, moderation, compromise, and respect for opposing points of view. Choose to be an example to others by disciplining yourself to have these values.
- Develop programmes for democratic civic education in schools. They can call for

curricula review, rewriting of textbooks, and re-orienting and retraining of teachers to educate young people about the governance challenges of the past and teach them the right/correct principles and values of democracy.

- Lobby the government for the needs and concerns of their members, e.g. women, students, farmers, environmentalists, trade unionists, lawyers, doctors, and so on. NGOs and interest groups can present their views to parliament and provincial councils, by contacting individual members and testifying before parliamentary committees. They can also contact relevant government ministries and agencies to discuss their interests and concerns
- Strengthen democracy by choosing to work with people of different tribes, religion, nationalities and gender. When people of different religions and ethnic identities come together on the basis of their common interests it helps people to appreciate each other's views and be more tolerant and nationalistic.

- Identify and train new leaders who can deal with important public issues and can be recruited to run for political offices at all levels.
- Inform the public about important public issues and promote public debates on them at all levels. They can also organise peaceful marches, demonstrations, and raise petitions to relevant offices on issues that affect the public.
- Mediate and help in resolving conflict. For example, they can find ways to relieve political and ethnic conflict and teach groups to solve their disputes through bargaining and accommodation.
- Monitor the conduct of elections and other political processes, for example as election observers to ensure free and fair elections.

A democratic state cannot be stable unless it is effective, respected, and supported by its citizens. Civil Society should monitor what the government is doing and can be a vital partner in the relationship between the democratic state and its citizens.

## QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What is your role as a student in the promotion of good governance in the country?
2. Outline the 9 features of good governance.
3. Discuss the possible situations in a school setting where good governance is upheld.
4. Cite examples of where schools have not done well on good governance.
5. Uganda is a true democracy. Discuss. Hold a class debate on this topic.
6. What are the advantages of decentralization?
7. Explain how you can participate in governance issues at your school, in your community and in other national processes.



# Annex A: A Deep dive into Uganda's Political Journey

Uganda gained her independence on October 9th 1962. Since 1894 she was a British protectorate that was put together from some very organised kingdoms and chieftaincies that inhabited the lake regions of central Africa. At independence, Dr. Milton Apollo Obote, also leader of the Uganda People's Congress (UPC) became the first Prime Minister and head of the government.

The Republican leaning UPC came into power through an “unholy” alliance with a pro-monarchy party called the Kabaka Yekka (KY), which had a stated aim of protecting the institution and power of the kingdom of Buganda. The UPC had earlier on, one year before independence, lost the first ever general election to the Democratic Party (DP)

and now needed the strategic partnership of allies to avoid another defeat.

In November 1963, Kabaka Mutesa II King of Buganda was elected ceremonial President of Uganda thus seemingly sealing the political alliance of UPC and KY. However, this marriage of political convenience was short lived since both Obote and Mutesa and their following had differing agendas.

In 1964, Obote championed a bill in Parliament providing for a referendum on the belonging of the counties of Buyaga, Bugangaizi and Buwekula then of Buganda but claimed by the neighbouring kingdom of Bunyoro. This culminated in two of the counties opting to secede from Buganda and revert back to the Bunyoro Kingdom. As Kabaka of Buganda and President of Uganda, Sir Edward Mutesa II, was placed in an invidious position of signing the two acts pertaining to the “lost counties”. It was upon accusations of dereliction of duty by the President, not to mention other fabricated reasons, that Obote suspended the 1962 constitution on 22nd February 1966 and took over all powers of State, thus giving rise to what came to be known as the 1966 Crisis.

On 15 April 1966, in a Parliament surrounded by troops, Obote introduced without notice a new constitution to be voted upon that very day. It was passed without debate and the Prime Minister informed Members of Parliament (MPs) that they would find their copies in their pigeonholes. This constitution came to be known as the Pigeonhole Constitution. Amongst other things, the federal constitutional status of kingdoms was abolished and the office of Prime Minister merged with that of the President and all executive powers became vested in Obote. Uganda was declared a Republic.

The Kabaka and his kingdom establishment at Mengo refused to recognize the supremacy of the pigeonhole constitution, insisting on the 1962 version. This culminated in the 24th May 1966 storming of Kabaka's palace by the Uganda army under the command of General Idi Amin but on the orders of Obote. Although the Kabaka managed to escape, he was exiled in Britain where he later died.

In 1967 Obote abolished all monarchs. Parliament became the constituent assembly and later all political parties were outlawed, except UPC. In a move to the left, Uganda became a one-party-state.

## **Idi Amin**

It was against this background that Idi Amin led a disgruntled section of the army to overthrow Obote on 25th January 1971. This coup was met with great jubilation but was to begin an era of terror and enormous tribulation for the people of Uganda. This dark period would last 8 long years. It was also during this period that all Asians, mainly Indians, were expelled from Uganda.

As a result, the economy of Uganda suffered tremendously. The fiscal mismanagement and insecurity that followed did not help the situation. An estimated 300,000 Ugandans lost their lives through indiscriminate extra judicial killings during Idi Amin's regime.

## **The Fall of Idi Amin, the UNLF and Obote II**

In April 1979, a combined force of Ugandan exiles, under the umbrella of Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLF), and the Tanzania Peoples Defense Force (TPDF) overthrew Amin's regime. The UNLF was created through the patronage of President Nyerere of Tanzania at the Moshi Conference. It brought together a disparate group of Ugandan Organisations and individuals with a common goal of ousting the Amin regime. The first UNLF government was led by Prof. Yusuf Lule as President and though well liked only lasted 68 days.

President Lule was followed by President Godfrey Binaisa, and then Paulo Muwanga who chaired the ruling Military Commission which organised the December 1980 general elections. UPC was declared winner of those elections though they were marred by multiple irregularities and generally considered rigged. For a second time, Obote became President of Uganda.

During Obote's second tenure as president, Ugandans went through a very trying period.

Insecurity, fuelled by the government's own security organs as well as an ongoing liberation struggle devastated the country. An estimated 500,000 Ugandans lost their lives in just 5 years of Obote's reign. The economy was shattered and so was the people's faith in government.

## **NRA liberation struggle**

In direct protest against the marred elections of 1980, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, then Vice Chairman of the Military Commission and President of the Uganda Patriotic Movement, launched a liberation struggle. It was on February 6th, 1981 and with only 26 compatriots organised under the banner of the National Resistance Army (NRA) that the war of liberation started.

As the NRA made staggering advances towards Kampala, having already cut the country off into two different administrative zones, elements of the UNLA on July 26th 1985 ousted Obote in a bid to find better negotiating ground. The Military Junta of Generals Bazilio and Tito Okello replaced Obote II's government.

By February 26th 1986 the “Okellos Junta” had fallen and shortly after the entire country was under control of the NRA.

The NRA’s struggle was unique in that, for the first time in post-colonial Africa, a home-grown insurgency, with no rear bases in a neighbouring country and little external support, was ultimately successful. It was essentially an uprising of oppressed Ugandan citizens.

Yoweri Kaguta Museveni was sworn in as the President of the Republic of Uganda. The audious task of rebuilding the entire country and its human fabric from scratch began. To enable this task, political parties were suspended and Uganda was governed by an all-inclusive Movement system. A lot was to be achieved over the next eight to ten years.

The NRA/M however continued to face the challenge of reactionary UNLA forces especially in the northern part of the country.

## **The Movement System of Government**

In 1995, a new constitution was promulgated creating a non-party all inclusive Movement System of government. Under this system, political parties remained in abeyance. Elections to most political offices was by universal suffrage. Marginalised groups like the women, the disabled, the youth and workers were given special slots on all administrative units of Government. The military was also given representation in parliament. The aspect of keeping this system was to be reviewed by referendum every 4 years.

General elections were held in 1996 under the Movement System and Yoweri Museveni was returned as President of Uganda. By this election, he became the very first Ugandan to be directly elected to the post by universal suffrage. In 2001, he was again returned by popular mandate to the Office of President

## **Return to Multi Party Politics**

In July 2005 a national referendum was held in which the people of Uganda resolved to return to multi-party politics. The result of the referendum in effect marked an end to the Movement System of government. On February 23rd 2006, multi-party elections were held for both the office of president and for parliament. President Yoweri Museveni of the National Resistance Movement (NRM) won the presidential elections and the NRM took the highest number of seats in parliament.



# Annex B: LINKS FOR FURTHER READING

For further information on the content of this handbook, please refer to the following:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948, available at <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>
- The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda 1995 as amended in 2005, at [http://www.ugandawiki.ug/images/Constitution\\_1995.pdf](http://www.ugandawiki.ug/images/Constitution_1995.pdf)
- Amnesty International Website: <http://www.amnesty.org>
- Human Rights Watch Website: <http://www.hrw.org>
- The Art and Science of Leadership, at <http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/leader.html>
- Alliance for Peace-building, at <http://www.allianceforpeace-building.org/>
- Catholic Relief Services (Peace-building), <http://crs.org/peace-building/>
- Uganda National Environment Management Authority [www.nemaug.org](http://www.nemaug.org)
- United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) [www.unep.org](http://www.unep.org)
- Catholic Social Doctrine of the Church (CSDC)
- Centre for basic Research, 2019, Policy Brief No. 12: Patriotism and citizenship
- Uganda Vision 2040
- Annual reports of the Uganda Human Rights Commission
- Citizen's Handbook on Law and the Administration of Justice in Uganda, 2020 (4th Edition)







### Call Us

Phone: +256 775 663980

Phone: +256 704 503410

### Write to Us

E-mail: [admin@sensitiseuganda.org](mailto:admin@sensitiseuganda.org)

Facebook: [/sensitiseuganda](https://www.facebook.com/sensitiseuganda)

Twitter: [@SensitiseUg](https://twitter.com/SensitiseUg)

### Visit Us

Plot 844, Mbogo Road, Block 193 - 2nd Floor

Najjera 1 - Adjacent to Najjera Police Station

Kira Municipality, Wakiso District

Kampala Metropolitan Area (KMP).

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