![DGF Democratic Governance Facility]

# A STUDY ON THE POTENTIAL RISKS OF ELECTION RELATED VIOLENCE BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER 2016 GENERAL ELECTIONS IN UGANDA

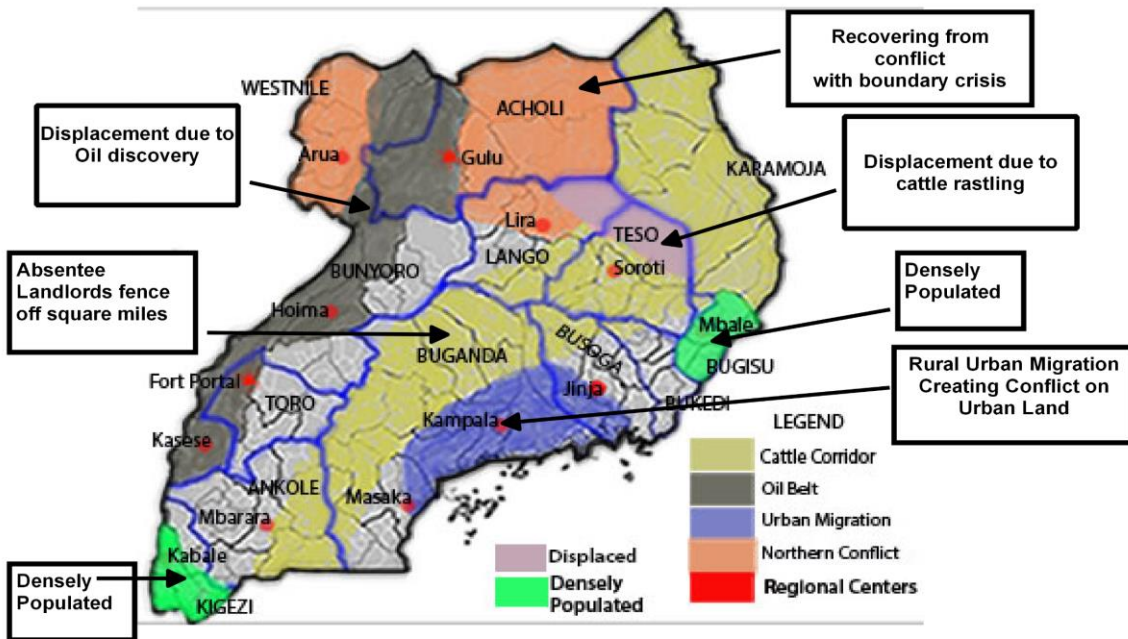## An action-orientated participatory appraisal

BY

LEONARD OKELLO
JUNE 2015

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Figure 1: Map of Uganda showing underlying issues for potential of election related violence**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

# ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| BODA-BODA | Motorcycle transporters in Uganda (widely used in Eastern Africa) |
| CCEDU | Citizen's Coalition for Electoral Democracy in Uganda |
| CP | Conservative Party |
| CSOs | Civil Society Organisations |
| DESCO | District Election Security Committee |
| DGF | Democratic Governance Facility |
| DISO | District Internal Security Officer |
| DP | Democratic Party |
| DPC | District Police Commander |
| EC | Electoral Commission |
| EMB | Electoral Management Body |
| ERTDS | Election Results Transmission and Dissemination System |
| EVAW | Election Violence Against Women |
| FDC | Forum for Democratic Change |
| FGD | Focus Group Discussion |
| FM | Frequency Modulation |
| IPI | International Peace Institute |
| JLOS | Justice, Law and Order Sector |
| KCCA | Kampala City Council Authority |
| KII | Key Informant Interview |
| LC | Local Council-I-V |
| MDGs | Millennium Development Goals |
| MMP | Mixed Member Proportional (election system) |
| MP | Member of Parliament |
| NAADS | National Agricultural Advisory Services |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| NRM | National Resistance Movement |
| OC | Officer In-Charge |
| PMU | Program Management Unit |
| RDC | Resident District Commission |
| SACCO | Savings and Credit Cooperative Organisations |
| SWOT | Strength Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats |
| TUI | The Uhuru Institute for Social Development |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Fund |
| UPC | Uganda People's Congress |
| UPDF | Uganda Peoples Defense Forces |
| UPF | Uganda Pólice Force |
| UPS | Uganda Prisons Services |
| USAID | United States International Development Agency |

VAWIP     Violence Against Women In Politics

*"Anything that involves elections goes with violence, and it's like sounding a distress call. Whoever comes to your rescue is fully armed to fend off the attackers."*(Voice of a male participant in the Youth FGD, Kanungu District, March 2015**)**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This executive summary of the study on assessment of potential risks of election-related violence in Uganda covers methodology, key findings and recommendations. The study was conducted between 3rd March and the 31st of May 2015. It was funded by the multi donor Democratic Governance Facility (DGF) and carried out by Leonard Okello.

The aim of the study was to provide an action oriented perspective on factors likely to cause election related violence before, during and after the 2016 general elections in Uganda, and make specific recommendations that would help DGF and other stakeholders in the design, implementation and management of future elections in Uganda.

The specific objectives of the study were to identify, assess and prioritize risks of election-related violence before, during and after the 2016 general elections; determine the level of preparedness to avert election-related violence in the 2016 general elections; identify further prevention and mitigation strategies and measures to address the risks of election-related violence identified.

The study covered 10 purposefully selected Districts of Uganda; 28 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and 27 key informant interviews; a total of 2160 respondents. Data collection tools included reading lists, semi-coded questionnaires, interview question lists, observations and checklists. For data entry and cleaning, the epi-data and analysis and excel spreadsheets 2013 were used.

**Key findings of the assessment of risks of election related violence in the 2016 general elections:**

**Underlying issues and tensions in Uganda's electoral democracy**
i.   There is deep frustration among the Youth that make up about 62% of the jobless and chronically poor population aged between12-30. Those engaged in petty trade are often arrested and their merchandise confiscated by the authorities. In 2016  about 7, 300,000 youth voters between the ages of 18-29 years will be illegible to vote; a volatile target for politicians to exploit for support that often involves their being deployed to carry out election related violence activities.

ii.  Ugandan citizen are frustrated over corruption and poor quality of social services in health, education and roads sector, and poor access to credit. The public debates over who is responsible for poor quality of social services are emotional and can potentially turn violent in context where it takes place between supporters of rival candidates.

iii. The perception from many of the Focus Group Discussions (FGD) is that the politicians, once elected, amass wealth for themselves while their electorate suffers from "biting" poverty. These politicians are delinked from the impoverished communities and do not connect with the poor voters until their next election campaign cycle. The desire by electorate to change such political leadership meets resistance from the politicians who will stop at nothing to use all means to regain office often resulting into violence at election time.

iv. Most politicians try to win women's support because they believe that women are loyal mobilisers and voters. This opportunistic and gender biased targeting increases the vulnerability of women and susceptibility to gender based violence in domestic and in public spaces, which is often not reported and appropriately addressed. This is likely to re-occur in the 2016 general elections.

v. Due to increasing population, pressure on land for agriculture, human settlement, mineral exploitation and infrastructure development, a crisis is building around landlessness. What is emerging is that unscrupulous, politically connected elite are exploiting this to dupe unsuspecting peasants to sell land at giveaway prices.

vi. The politics of kingdoms and traditional institutions driven by personal economic interest of key players manifests in form of succession disputes such as in Busoga. In West Nile it is expresses as border conflicts between the Kebo and Alur Chiefs and as jurisdictions between the Bakonzo & Bamba in Ruwenzori. Rival politicians in these areas attempt to leverage on these disputes and conflict-prone development to promote their electability.

vii. The colonial historical divide-and-rule schisms condemned Uganda into a socio-political balkanized state exacerbated by ethno–regional and religious delineations. The failure of successive post-independence governments to heal these axes of discord crystallized political discontent and risked election violence.

viii. The military have been central in expediting regime change since the independence of Uganda with four military coups and two liberation wars overthrowing sitting governments. Since 1980 the military have been actively involved in electioneering processes but most respondents want to see this role changed.

ix. Political parties and democracy are a foreign and young concept, giving credence to ethnic identities as the most viable form of voter mobilization. That pits poorly financed struggling political parties against powerful individuals fighting for control of the parties. This also weakens the party's capacity to discipline such members, risking violence during campaigns.

x. Public perception of electoral democracy by citizens is closely associated with money and violence and the military. A key informant predicted that the 2016 election campaigns are likely to be driven by money and the public perception of the election management body is generally negative across the country.

xi. The increasing instant power and reach of social media has enabled information sharing and increased mass access to once exclusive information. The use of Emails, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, What-app, SMS services, the mobile phone with the increasing availability of affordable smart phones means message and evidence can be shared instantly as a strong mobilization tool for violence across the country among the youth.

**Immediate/short term risks and triggers points for 2016 general elections**

xii. During focus group discussions, youth expressed openness to engage in violence because they are frustrated. Their frustration stems from lack of opportunities to be gainfully engaged and paid. More male youth than females reported outright willingness to indulge in electoral politics within and across political party divides for quick gain such as accepting/taking bribes even against empty promises for jobs and scholarships just for self-gratification of their valor. Cases in point are the emerging antagonistic political youth camps within major political parties (UPC, DP, NRM and FDC) as we approach the 2016 election campaigns.

xiii. Intra-political party based conflict over internal democracy characterized by manipulations by top leadership interests and rumors of interference by the incumbent's ruling party agents is causing perpetual mistrust and intrigue which is likely to risk election related violence in the run up to the 2016 elections.

xiv. Political party primaries rather than general elections are more likely to lead to violence. The lack of well-defined and predictable succession mechanism and the fear that President Yoweri Museveni will monopolize power beyond even the 2016 general elections are creating more tensions.

xv. Political party financing appears inadequate, erratic, uncoordinated and not member supported. Party leaders are expected to provide all the funding and although the law in Uganda provides for funding of political parties, this legal provision was only actualized in May 2015.

xvi. Political parties lack well developed and tested conflict management mechanisms and there are no provisions for standard political behavior; even where they exist, some cannot stand the necessary legal test as was the case of the "NRM rebel MPs".

xvii. Failure to institute legal and constitutional reforms is increasing political discontent in the country especially amongst the youth. This displeasure is a risk that is likely to manifest violently on voting day and negatively affect public perception of final results in February 2016.

xviii. The culture of impunity in the electoral process is great risk that fuels election related violence as extremist supporters, campaign agents from all major parties and government operatives violate legal provisions and practices for electioneering in a bid to out-do others to impress the leaders in anticipation of promotions and political favors.

xix. Media conduct during the election period is wanting and journalists and news reporters are compromised due to lack of requisite training and professional etiquette, management pressure and outright corruption. Some go overboard to excite and incite the public in order to cash in election campaign money from politicians.

xx. Unfulfilled promises of compensations of ex-combatants and auxiliary forces like the Uganda National Rescue Front I&II and West Nile Bank Front in West Nile, the Arrow boys in Teso, Amuka in Lango, despite their role in successfully mobilizing support for NRM in past elections increases their frustrations risking election related violence.

xxi. External threats to national security such as the Al Shabab of Somalia are still real and increase vulnerability especially with a police force that is too overstretched to adequately

and effectively do policing during campaign rallies, and manage street demonstrations and polling stations. This is risking violence.

**Likely triggers of election related violence for 2016 general elections**

xxii. Election violence can be triggered by threats and intimidation of civilians. This can be by showing threatening war films and over-deploying of military on polling days. The intention is to send the message that in case people do not vote in a 'strong' leader synonymous with the 'incumbent caliber' they are likely to lose out.

xxiii. Another trigger of election violence is the use of foul abusive, sexist vulgar language especially against women candidates. Rival politicians are likely to take advantage of the sentiment and emotions associated with mudslinging and vote winning potential it comes with to foment election violence.

xxiv. Political Party primaries are likely to set the stage for further violence in the election processes for 2016. There are already crevices and there is clashes that have manifested in physical fights between factions in UPC and DP for the control of party headquarters.

xxv. Clash of campaign programmes causing rival campaign teams to meeting in the same centers or along procession routes could trigger emotional displays of political power and hostile exchanges that can degenerate into physical fights in the campaign trail result into violence.

xxvi. Management of election results on Election Day, during vote counting, tallying and declarations of results is a long wait including monitoring results to make sure that there are no attempts to manipulate them. This causes tension where small suspicions easily turn into violence.

xxvii. Behavior of security agencies such as the police already perceived to be partisan and biased in favor of a candidate of the ruling NRM. So their attempt to enforce law and order or arrest errant youth especially belonging to opposition parties is often not read objectively precipitating violence.

**Hot spots**

The study team ranked hotspots based on analysis of the perceptions of FGD participants and key informant interviews that identified the flash points. Here below are the hot spots in order of ranking according to intensity and coverage:

xxviii. Buganda sub-region: Ranking No.1. Because of its location in the heart of the country, highest population density (voter block) and the cosmopolitan demographic composition of the country and the prime destination for rural urban migration in Uganda. Key flash points include Kampala City and its suburbs of Nansana and Kasangati where one of the most vocal opposition leaders resides and greater Masaka that is strongly Catholic, the engine agitation politics in Buganda include Nyendo suburb of Masaka Municipality, Bukoto East (Buwunga, Mukungwe), Sembabule District and Bukomansimbi District. It also has the highest concentration of unemployed and frustrated youth.

xxix. Busoga sub-region: Ranking No. 2. The region has been embroiled in a succession dispute since the death of Kyabazinga Muloki of the Bulamogi lineage and Prince Gabula Nadiope of the rival Budiope lineage. Poverty in the region increases the people's vulnerability to manipulation and potential of election violence. The study team did not come across any clear mechanism for supporting a framework for initiating a dialogue between political rivals to mitigate election violence to effectively and efficiently carry out the anti-violence campaigns in the Busoga region.

xxx. Ruwenzori sub-region: Ranking No. 3. Violence is manifested in the recent attacks on the army and police barracks in Bundibugyo, Ntoroko and Kasese. The tensions between central government and the Rwenzururu Kingdom and mobilization of youth (Esyamango) for the defense of the kingdom interests could be an active risk of election violence toward 2016 elections. Concerns over what is seen as unfair land allocation by central government, the unfulfilled promises to the Rwenzururu veterans and Uganda Wild life Authority versus local communities neighbouring protected area will continue to be very important risks in this region. No clear framework for resolving political conflict in the region has been developed to resolve the tension between the various ethnic groups (Bakonzo versus Basongora etc.) so tension persists. Local leaders have approached The Uhuru Institute for support and Kabarole Research Centre organizes annual Kasunga Conference for peace and development.

xxxi. Lango sub-region: Ranking No 4. This region has maintained a uniquely passionate, "religious" support base of UPC for over 20 years. This means any tension at party headquarters easily filters into local UPC factionalism in Lango. Such tensions have also entered the religious and cultural institutions in the region. The 153 Clan Leaders in Lango (The Awitong) wield a lot of influence in this community and are respected by the sons and daughters of the soil, and working jointly with religious leaders. They could form a strong mitigation framework for peaceful election.

xxxii. Bugisu sub-region: Ranking No 5 The political risk is the ill-informed decision by central government to interfere with management of Bugisu Cooperative Union only to step back leaving behind major losses. The degree of risks in the region will be on how best one manages relationship with the cooperative union and the coffee business in the region. The

Bugisu cultural institution, *"Inzu ya Masaba"*, expressed willingness to promote unity and anti- election violence in the region.

xxxiii.	Kigezi sub-region: Ranking No. 6. This region is home to two Prime Ministers (Hon. Ruhakana Rugunda (present) and Hon. Amama Mbabazi (former) who has declared interest in wrestling the presidency from his long time buddy of 40 years President Yoweri Museveni. It is also home to the opposition leader and the three time presidential candidate Dr. Kizza Besigye. There was no clear framework for mitigation between the former Prime Minister and the President's supporters, probably because no one expected this level of acrimony between the big political "guns" in the region. The Banyakigezi Convention, a local community dialogue with local, national and diaspora membership was strongly recommended as the right platform to handle it.

xxxiv.	West Nile sub-region: Ranking No 7. This region is just recovering from rebellion following negotiation of peace with central government; the region took advantage of its geo-strategic location to benefit from international trade with Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and South Sudan. Risks for violence in West Nile region are associated with the consistent contestation between the FDC and NRM and the lingering question of the unfulfilled promise to compensate the Ex-combatants of the various fighting groups that negotiated peace with central government but have not been compensated.

These contestations have more often than not resulted into violence especially within Arua Municipality. In order to avert potential electoral related violence and conflict, a number of intuitions were identified as quite influential in mitigation of violence in the sub-region. These include the Cultural institution- Lugbara-iKari, the media and the Ex-combatants of the defunct Uganda Army and West Nile Bank Front. The traditional institution known as Lugbara-iKari and the Ex-Combatants Association have been strongly recommended as the key institutional frame work for mitigating electoral related violence in the upcoming 2016 elections. They are only constrained by limited resources to cover the entire region.

xxxv.	Ankole sub-region: Ranking No. 8. This is home to the Banyankole peoples and the home ground of the incumbent President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni. Although president Museveni has been the strongest proponent of re-activating cultural institutions and return of their property in other parts of the country, he has firmly refused to see the same in his own backyard. The main risk in this region is probably the attempts to block the existence of decent political opposition in the region, and the attempt by the opposition to enlarge its membership and in this region. There seems to be no existing mitigation measures or formal conflict moderation framework but what was reported is that the Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC) initiative strongly recommended as the most neutral mitigation framework. A targeted media campaign to avert violence during elections is key.

xxxvi.	Teso sub-region: Ranking No. 9. Teso is slowly recovering from insurgency, and coming to terms with Karimojong cattle rustling that destroyed all its cattle wealth. Once proud of a highly educated people and civil service community and well known for being the best administrators and teachers in the country, Teso is now shadow of its former self. Risks in the region include unmet promises of restocking unlikely to be honored in time for the 2016 elections. This is keeping many people bitter. The people are still recovering from the defeat

of the LRA incursion, and the impact of illegal arms that came from that adventure continue to be a challenge in the region with the potential of becoming a tool for violence 2016.

**Mitigation of election related violence**

xxxvii.  Existing mitigation measures are potentially in the ambit of Cultural institution and Elder's readiness to take on actions already in place to promote violence free elections. These are further supported by, for example, former militia (Arrow boys, Amuka, Frontier guards), all who expressed willingness to provide election security through the community policing frameworks.

xxxviii.  District Security Committees have devised a strategy to identify and recruit the radical Youth as key informers to security agencies to ensure they are not recruited into political party camps to cause violence

xxxix.  The study team also met key security informants who expressed their readiness to deal with election related violence in their areas of responsibility. In addition, the police have recruited and trained additional manpower and auxiliary forces like the community crime preventers that are ready to respond to any threats.

xl.  Election management body has done a better job by investing substantially in being part of the National Identity Card joint task force, thus extracting the voter registers in each parish/ward from the joint national identity data bank, and then rolling out its plan and road map to the 2016 elections for all processes that hopefully would guarantee successful violence-free elections.

xli.  Civil Society initiatives and faith-based organisations are also active in the pre-election period to prepare citizens for elections. Civil society and government through the EC are already running the "votability" campaign to interest more Ugandans into voting in 2016. The religious leaders have and continue to caution politicians against making inflammatory political statements that can divide communities as well politicizing land disputes.

xlii.  The Media houses have been actively promoting public dialogue on electoral reforms (e.g. NTV Fourth Estate, On the Spot, Situation Room) on talk shows at national level   and some of them in collaboration with development partners and NGOs.

xliii.  Political parties, have developed a draft code of conduct, but the study team noted that the disciplinary measures proposed in this draft code of conduct like caution, warning, naming and shaming comes very close to condoning rather than deterring politicians from engaging in election related violence.

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

**Conclusion**

Based on above findings, the study concludes that election related violence in Uganda has been recurring since independence. With time it has gained "sophistication" in planning and execution that is supported by modern technology such as FM radio stations, mobile phones, social media and ease of transport such as Boda-Boda motor cyclists; to the extent that some areas are highly endemic in vulnerability to election violence. All political parties' at all electoral levels are potentially culpable of fueling violence and it requires special soul-searching for individual and collective action to end election related violence in Uganda. Collateral damage and overall impact of election related violence goes far beyond the targets with severe consequences to families and society at large.

**Recommandations**

**In the short term:**

xliv. Under the oversight of the Electoral Commission and leadership of the police, a collaborative effort for the election of security and intelligence gathering systems by the police and ISO, ESO and CMI should be strengthened.

xlv. Efforts should be put in place to streamline the command and control structure of these auxiliary forces and ex-combatants including by co-opting the support of LCs defense secretaries.

xlvi. Police to work hand in hand with other security agencies and designated political party officials in charge of security work to demobilize Political Parties' Youth Brigades starting with the hotspots.

xlvii. Election conflict early warning system and documentation of incidences of election violence should isolate Election Violence Against Women(EVAW)from other forms of election violence so that exact level of prevalence of EVAW as a form of election violence can be established

xlviii. In the short time available, the regulatory media agency should implement election specific media monitoring guidelines with special focus on monitoring and preventing hate speech, inciting media campaigns in print, electronic and social media provocations while maintaining high standards of integrity and non-partisanship.

xlix. The Electoral Commission in collaboration with the police, CSOs and development partners to design and promote "Election Security Training Tool Kit "and integrate it into the civic education and voter education manuals used by CSOs, the media and other agencies around the country. Popular versions to be translated in local languages should be widely circulated around the country.

l. The Electoral Commission to curb the power and exercise of incumbency and guarantee a level playing field between the competing candidates and political parties.

li. Institute structural, institutional, and normative democratic conditions to absorb and resolve tensions that might arise during and after the electoral process, and windows of vulnerability that introduce real risk of violence.

lii. Ministry of Finance to increase financing of the districts election security committees.

liii. The Ministry of Finance to improve financing for the Police logistics in a bid to strengthen intelligence gathering and timely response to election related violence reports.

liv. CSO in collaboration with the Electoral Commission to implement an online SMS early hate speech monitoring systems based on the Ushaidi model and supported by a national network of trained Boda-Boda cyclists and working in community "election peace teams" similar to one recently applied in Nigeria by CSOs.

**In the medium term:**

lv. Parliament urgently needs to implement the legal and constitutional reforms provided for in the Citizen's National Compact for Free Fair Elections presented to government and parliament by CSOs and political parties in December 2014; consider addressing recommendation item 1 of the Citizens' Compact1 (demanding a new independent electoral commission) and proactively launch a public media campaign to explain the roles, successes and limitations of the Electoral Commission throughout the election cycle.

lvi. The electoral commission and all other election stakeholders should acknowledge the prevalence and adverse effects of Election Violence Against Women(EVAW) a sub category of Violence Against Women In Politics(VAWIP),on the integrity of elections and taken steps to formalize effective complaint and response mechanism to mitigate the vice.

lvii. The Judicial Service Commissions strengthen the election tribunal to be operational throughout the election cycle period and expeditiously handle all cases brought to the bench.

**In the long term:**

lviii. The election security component of elections should be amplified and adequately prepared to deal with perpetrators as well as supporting victims of violence. In this regard, legal aid should be initiated by the electoral management body and rolled out in partnership with the civil society organization promoting human rights.

lix. Support for election related violence, prevention and mitigation measures should be designed to pay particular attention to electoral violence against women and ethnic and religious minorities, and determine mechanisms for resolving local conflicts that have potentials for causing or escalating electoral violence.

**The Development partners should support the following initiatives:**

lx. Funding local, regional and national civil society organisations with experience, capacity and good knowledge in preventing election violence and mitigation programs in the different local contexts.

lxi. Development, production and distribution of election security training tool kit and the integration of election security tool in already ongoing civic and voter education programme fund under DGF.

---

[1] Citizens National Compact for Free and Fair Election

lxii. The establishment of an independent CSOs online SMS election monitoring based on the Ushaidi model of Kenya through a national network of trained Boda-Boda cyclists.

lxiii. Funding for election security monitoring and law enforcement including funding the costs of district election security committees.

lxiv. Organize regional dialogue for election of security and peace for political parties, and politicians active in the election campaign to address potential and actual tensions similar to the peace and reconciliation dialogue that The Uhuru Institute is conducting around the country.

lxv. The establishment of an Independent Elders Mediation Group with high standing persons with integrity akin to the "Ogola" group that attempted negotiation following the 2011 elections.

lxvi. Establishment and strengthening of election violence early warning system as part of the election violence prevention mechanism.

lxvii. Local civil society organisations in each of the hot spots to build and/or support local peace infrastructure to mediate local electoral disputes and promote a culture of peaceful elections because of their perceived political neutrality, and trust by local communities and politicians.

*"One of the people in power says he has the army and money, therefore elections are useless. That is using threats that lead to violence."(Member of media fraternity, Iganga, March 2015)*

# 1.    INTRODUCTION

Electoral processes and outcomes lie at the center of the challenges facing new democracies worldwide. The center of focus almost invariably lies on the debates on the 'bumpy' road to democratic governance in Africa and especially the challenge of institutionalizing and sustaining peaceful regime change – through free and fair elections - in most African countries (Hyden, 2011, Diamond and Plattner, 2010, Karl, 1986; Collier, 2009; Lindburg, 2006; and Sorenson, 2008). The UN International Peace Institute (IPI) in one of its recent publications notes that, multiparty elections are relatively routine in West African countries in recent years. The report notes that elections have partly led to successful transfer of power in countries such as Senegal, Ghana, and Niger has in recent times also experienced election – related crises, and election-related violence remains a concern (IPI, ibid). Matlosa and Shale (2013) argue that the quality of elections and especially the abounding environment in which they occur matters most. For example, while regularity and frequency of elections are crucial, of themselves, the quality of elections is even more fundamental for the sustainability of multiparty and participatory democracy in the continent (Ake, 2000, Matlosa, Khabela and Khadiagala, 2010; Omotola, 2011; Mkandawire, 2008; and Hyden, 2011). Given the fact that general elections cannot be separated from the political Pandora box; it is important that management of elections considers also the political environment (political considerations) under which it is executed. This, among other things, entails assessing the electoral laws and frameworks and in their view these specifics would include:

*"...the constitution and electoral laws; authority, structure, scope and responsibilities of the election management bodies (EMBs); resource capacity of the EMBs (material, human, technical, financial); administration of the logistics issues; the competence and autonomy of the EMBs and related state agencies; preparations prior to the polling day, as well as monitoring and evaluation mechanisms" (Mutahaba and Kweyamba, 2012:3).*

For that matter, whereas it is the case that periodic and genuine elections enhance the legitimacy of a government and strengthen the social contract between citizen and their governments, elections are only one component of the democratic and legitimization process. Furthermore, in the absence of other structural, institutional, and normative democratic conditions to absorb and resolve tensions that might arise during and after the electoral process, elections can present windows of vulnerability that introduce real risk of violence (IPI, 2012). The UN, IPI brief "Elections and Stability in West Africa stated as follows:

*"Given their competitive nature, in certain circumstances elections can increase the salience of ethnic, religious, and other societal differences, allowing actors to mobilize for partisan purposes, triggering violence"* (UN, IPI: 2012).

Since election-related violence can in turn undermine democracy by eroding people's faith in the democratic process, electoral – assistance providers have started to make peaceful, credible,

and sustainable elections a priority. A broad consensus is emerging around the idea that, we quote:

*"In order to prevent violence, elections should be viewed as a process rather than an event. In other words, an election cannot be viewed as an end in itself, but must be part of a larger and longer-term process of democratization"* (UN, IPI, 2012).

## 1.1. WHY THE CONCERN OVER POTENTIAL RISK OF ELECTION VIOLENCE IN UGANDA 2016?

This study picks a queue from this analysis of the recurring incidence of electoral violence before, during and after elections as we approach the 2016 general elections in Uganda.

Ugandans are heading for a hectic period of the 2016 general election that will effectively end in post-election activities in early 2017. The 2016 elections will be Uganda's sixth general election following 1962, 1980, 1996, 2001, 2006 and 2011. Broadly speaking, the 1995 Constitution revised in 2005 recognizes that elections are a powerful mandate for citizens to influence political trends and outcomes by voting leaders of their own volition and choice to manage their national development aspirations. In Art 1.4, the Constitution states that 'the people shall express their will and consent on who shall govern them and how they should be governed through regular, free and fair elections.'

However, it is well documented that Uganda's electoral experience has been checkered by electoral violence. The past polls always ended in contention, with defeated contestants seeking redress in the courts (2001, 2006) or in the 'court of public opinion' (2011). Judicial rulings and electoral observation missions have noted serious flaws, not just in the administration of the elections, but more importantly, in the wider electoral environment ('playing field'). The electoral turnout, while still relatively high nationally (59% in 2011), is on the decline. The declining voter turn out to some extent is caused by fear of election violence rather than voter apathy. Accordingly, 'improving the integrity and credibility of the electoral processes has been identified as a key DGF objective, and a number of initiatives, ranging from electoral reform advocacy to voter education, are being supported by the DGF as a result.

It is worth noting that the grounds for violence caused during the past elections have not changed much. For example, according to the European Union Election Observer Mission 2011 Report, "...the 2011 Ugandan general elections showed some improvements over the previous elections held in 2006". However:

- The electoral process was marred by avoidable administrative and logistical failures which led to an unacceptable number of Ugandan citizens being disenfranchised;

- The power of incumbency was exercised to such an extent as to compromise severely the level playing field between the competing candidates and political parties;

The "walk-to-work" street violence was largely caused by dissatisfaction with the 2011 general elections. Restraint in campaign rhetoric contributed to this improved campaign environment. With genuine political commitment by all stakeholders, further progress towards a fully pluralistic and multi-party democracy can be achieved (EUEOM, 2011: 44-46).

## 1.2. DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

**Election violence:** *"Electoral violence can be defined as acts or threats of coercion or physical harm perpetuated to affect an electoral process or that arise in the context of electoral competition. When perpetuated to affect an electoral process, violence may be employed to influence the process of elections, such as efforts to delay, disrupt, or derail a poll and to influence the outcomes: the deterring of winners in competitive races for political office or to secure approval or disapproval of referendum questions."*[2] This definition fits well into the election related violence stories that the study team across the country documented in the findings stated below. Uganda's political history is no stranger to political violence related to elections. The 1966 Buganda crisis took place when the country was going for election in 1967, the 1971 military coup was at the heels of the election expected later that same year, the 1980 elections ended up in a 5 year "Luwero Triangle" war and the 1985 coup preceded an election that never was to be in the same year.

Three aspects of electoral violence can be identified namely:

- Electoral violence is a subtype of political violence, but is distinguished by its timing (close to elections) and its goals (to impact elections, either by changing outcomes or disrupt the elections themselves;

- Election violence can be physical violence but can also include threats and intimidations; and

- Election violence can be aimed against people (candidates, voters, and officials) or at objects (e.g. ballots, or elections facilities)

The causes of electoral violence are multifaceted, and can be divided into two broad categories:

- First structural factors related to the underlying power structures prevalent in new and emerging democracies, such as informal patronage systems, poor governance, exclusionary politics, and the socio-economic uncertainties of losing political power in states where almost all power is concentrated at the center.

- Second, factors related to the electoral process and the electoral contest itself, such as failed or flawed elections, election fraud and weak or manipulated institutions and institutional rules governing the electoral process (the Nordic African Institute, 2012:2)

**Electoral Security**: The process of protecting electoral stakeholders such as voters, candidates, poll workers, media, and observers; electoral information such as vote results, registration data, and campaign material; electoral facilities such as polling stations and counting centers; and electoral events such as campaign rallies against death, damage, or disruption.

**Motives**: Those factors incentivizing perpetrators to employ violence as a means to achieve a political objective.

---

[2] EC and UNDP(2011)Joint Task Force on Electoral Assistance Thematic Workshop; Elections, Violence and Conflict Prevention Summary Report, June 20 – 24, 2011 Hosted by Barcelona International Peace Centre, Montjuic Castle, Barcelona, Spain

**Perpetrators:** The leadership and their agents who carry out acts of electoral conflict and violence categorized as state and state proxies, political rivals, and coalitions of opposition parties, criminals, or insurgents.

**Tactics:** The means and weaponry employed by perpetrators to intimidate, assault, displace, or murder targets of electoral violence.

**Victims:** The human, facility, event, or material targets of electoral violence (USAID, 2013).

**Risk Factors:** These are key factors/influences that can result in violent conflict and thus must be addressed in order to avert conflict. These key factors include triggers.

**Triggers:** These are immediate events that accelerate the outbreak of violent conflict (Akijul, 2011).

**Hotspot:** Refers to an area that has the potential to turn into a scene of violent conflict during the period leading up to and/or during the 2011 elections. Specifically, in this study, potential hotspots have the following characteristics:

- Areas where there are underlying tensions as outlined in the previous section of this report;
- Areas with a history of violent and/or tense confrontations over elections;
- Areas where dispute-resolution mechanisms are weak and ineffective;
- Areas where there is likely to be tightly contested races both at the primary and the national levels

## 1.3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

It is from the above definitions that we derived clarity of the conceptual framework for this study. Thus understanding election violence must include a process analysis throughout the electoral cycle before elections (about 18 months before election day) during elections (voting day up to declaration of results) and after elections (up to the swearing in of winning candidates), which manifest in various forms for specific purposes. To understand electoral violence at each of these stages in the election cycle, one needs to understand who the perpetuators are and who are the victims, targets, the motives, triggers, causes and conditions, effects and mitigations methods as each plays out in the electoral cycle as in Figure 1 below:

**Figure 2: Conceptual Framework for Analysis of Election Violence**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Who is responsible for the violence?** | This should not necessarily be limited to those actually committing the violence, "the men with the guns", but also those responsible for orchestrating the violence. This could include, for example, ruling or opposition politicians, security forces, militias, insurgents or criminals. |
| **Targets or victims:** | Who is the violence aimed at? Candidates and/or their family members? Campaign workers or supporters? Voters? Staff or the infrastructure of the electoral management body? |
| **Method or intensity:** | How is the violence perpetrated? How do "suppliers" of violence — armed or youth gangs, militias, criminals — link to "demand" (the politicians or others who orchestrate it)? Is the violence spontaneous or planned? The intensity can range from a threatening phone call to a candidate or a family member to clashes that leave hundreds dead |
| **Location:** | Where does the violence take place? In the capital city or remote areas where the government and state security forces may exercise little control? Are key (or "swing") districts targeted? Is violence predominantly concentrated in areas dominated by the opposition, where there is pre-existing armed conflict, or insurgent control? |
| **Motives:** | What drives the violence? Why do perpetrators use violence? Motives can be broad (to change the electoral outcomes, to protest against the electoral results, to disrupt the elections, to skew the playing field) or narrow (to stop an opponent's campaign, or halt a rally.) |
| **Triggers:** | What particular incident or event has triggered the violence? A campaign rally during which inflammatory language is used? An EMB decision? The announcement of results? |
| **Causes and conditions:** | What conditions allow the violence to take place? Again, these can range from very broad, contextual or structural drivers of violence — weak rule of law, impunity, inequitable distribution of power and resources, societal divides, high stakes of gaining or losing power, high levels of unemployment, the availability of weapons and so forth — too much narrower enabling conditions such as the corruption of individual officials. Electoral or constitutional arrangements often also play a role, frequently in combination with other factors. |
| **Effects:** | What effect does violence have on the elections, on democracy, on peace? Does it change the results, affect the electoral preferences, and undermine the legitimacy |
| **Mitigation** | What mitigation strategies can be adopted to deal with election violence in Uganda |

*Adapted from: Phillip Alston, UN special report on extrajudicial killings- UN 2010*

## 2.    STUDY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This 'action-oriented' research will serve as a basis for key stakeholders in the electoral process – security forces, political parties, Electoral Commission, civil society organisations, observer groups, development partners – to identify potential corresponding measures to prevent the occurrence and/or mitigate the effects of these identified risks of election-related violence, and provide specific recommendations for the DGF. The assessment is therefore meant to help DGF assess the risks of elections-related violence before, during and after the 2016 general elections to inform its *"promotion of violence-free / peaceful 2016 general elections"* project for better results and outcomes.

The specific objectives of the study were as follows:

• Identify, assess and prioritize risks of election-related violence before, during and after the 2016 general elections;

• Determine the level of preparedness to avert election-related violence in the 2016 general elections;

• Identify further prevention and mitigation strategies and measures to address the risks of election-related violence identified above.

## 3.    METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 STUDY DESIGN AND GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE

The study was largely qualitative in orientation, relying mostly on in-depth interviews and focus group discussions for data collection dwelling mostly on factors causing and replicating electoral-related violence before, during and after elections. It was designed as an action study built on a rapid appraisal of wide ranging public opinion from women and men of varied age groups and social standing from high and low incomes areas encompassing urban, peri-urban and rural areas in 10 districts[3]. The 10 were purposefully selected across divergent regions of Uganda characterizing a continuum of election – related violence indicators, which included:

• Election violence 'hot spot' areas;

• Moderate election dynamics areas, and

• Violence free or 'neutral' district of the country.

### 3.2. TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTION

A number of tools were used namely in-depth interview guide and focus group discussion guide. In order to clarify the opinions from in-depth interview and focus group discussion guides, a semi-coded questionnaire was also developed and administered to 60 key informants.

---

[3] These regions and districts therein are: Central region (Masaka, Kampala); Eastern region (Iganga, Mbale, Soroti); Western region (Kanungu, Kasese, Mbarara); West Nile sub-region (Arua) and Northern region (Lira).

Questionnaire respondents came from a cohort of mid and senior level district and national level officials working in the registered political parties, EC officials and associated election-related central and local government staff, members of development agencies and CSOs, cultural and religious leaders and heads of security and armed forces across the country. In each study area different social categories of Ugandan across income, professional and party affiliation orientations were included.

This semi-coded questionnaire provided the window for undertaking some quantitative analytical approach to the opinionated views shared on electoral-related violence from in-depth discussions. That data was analyzed and is presented in the form of descriptive statistics to enrich voices from discussions. It has been noted that the use of quantitative analyses in qualitative research lends greater credibility to the views expressed and enhance the degree of confidence in the research results (Sayitiri, 2001)[4]. These results were complemented with reviews of secondary sources from policy documents to literature from various libraries mostly on local, regional and international experience with elections and associated violence.

In addition to the 60 questionnaires, 28 FGDs were implemented comprising an average of three purposefully selected FGD categories (one group male Boda-Boda motor cycle riders, one group of female market vendors and a group of mixed sex youth) per district. Each FGD had a maximum of 8 randomly selected participants. This amounted to a total of 2160 mostly self-employed female and male youth and adults who participated in the FGDs. A copy of the instruments has been attached (Annex Two and Three). The corresponding tools of data collection included: reading lists, semi-coded questionnaire, interview question lists, and observation check – lists. For statistical data, data entry and cleaning as carried out using Epi-data and analyzed using Excel Spreadsheets 2013.  The qualitative narratives were categorized and coded thematically in accordance with key issues that informed the key variables under review.

## 3.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The major limitation of the study was a substantial delay in obtaining research permits. As a result, the fieldwork was stretched beyond the initial 22 days mark to span over a period of one and a half months between (3rd March – end of April 2015). Some key relevant national headquarters of government departments (Uganda Police Force and the Electoral Commission) were not forthcoming despite repeated attempts to interacting with them during the study. This limited the study team's ability to assess the documents and views on trends, strategies and level of preparedness at the national level. Security sensitivity hampered the study team access to respondents in Hoima district due to oil and related land issues.

---

[4] Sayitiri Abeyasekera (2001) "Quantitative analysis approaches to qualitative data: why, when and how", Statistical Services Centre, University of Reading: UK.

# 4.  FINDINGS

## 4.1. IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT AND PRIORITIZING RISKS OF ELECTION RELATED VIOLENCE BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER 2016 GENERAL ELECTIONS

A risk is defined as situation involving exposure to danger or a possibility that something unpleasant will happen or thing regarded as a threat or a source of danger. Therefore, this study focused on the likely occurrence of unpleasant happenings before, during and after 2016 general elections that may cause election related violence. The study identified that the risks of election related violence rotate around underlying issues and tensions that have been persistent in Uganda as discussed below. The risks were carefully analyzed and ranked according to the concerns and emphasis expressed by key informants and participants in the focus group discussions in all the areas visited.

### 4.1.1 Underlying issues and tensions in Uganda for potential risks to election related violence - 2016 general elections

This subsection presents and analyses a number of long-term underlying issues and tensions that have in the past influenced the political landscape; and related potential risks to election related violence for upcoming 2016 general elections in Uganda:

**(i)  Frustrations of the Youth**

According to a study "Lost Opportunity" conducted by Action Aid International; Uganda National NGO forum and Development Research Training in 2013 found that 62% of Uganda youth are jobless. The study also found that 12% of youth aged 12-30 are chronically poor. Thousands of University students continue to roam the streets without any hope of employment in the foreseeable future. This is a potential reserve for violence. There is another larger group of the youth trying to eke out a living from petty trade in urban centres and cross border trade, who unfortunately are often arrested and their merchandise confiscated by the local government law enforcers and the Uganda Revenue Authority. This discontent may escalate into violence. Those who have opted for agriculture complain of the very expensive inputs, uncoordinated and low quality extension services, lack of market and poor returns from farming. This reality increases Youth susceptibility to manipulation and use for election violence during campaign periods and after elections is higher than for the elders. There is a sizeable number of unemployed youth who feel they have been cheated out on employment opportunities in government positions and are often subjected to harassment and those in cross-border trade have had their merchandise confiscated by the National Revenue Authority. In response to the above youth frustrations, government has set a youth livelihood fund to enable youth groups initiate micro enterprises, with limited accessibility to many youth. Most of these youth said they feel they are the most discontented with the status quo of election mismanagement systems like an incomplete voter's register and the poor governance of the Election Commission. These youth also feel manipulated and abused during campaigns and yet more often than not, they are not paid for working as mobilisers, so they end up seeking revenge in election

violence. Moreover, youth also felt that past elections have not had any serious direct benefits for them as an interest group, nor have MPs or other political office met their aspirations.

In 2016 about 7, 700,000 youth voters between the ages of 18-30 years will be illegible to vote; these fall in this category of frustrated voter and every political group will be targeting them for support, making them potential actors for election violence.

**(ii) Citizen frustrations over corruption and poor quality of social services**

With high levels of poverty there is an increasing level of public disgust with corruption and poor service delivery in health, education and roads sector. Frustration was also expressed on poor access to credit for market vendors mainly women and youth who are trying to work for a living from petty trade and transport business. Anger is often directed at local government officials who themselves complain of limited supplies and poor conditions of service for staff because of very limited disbursements from central government. These situations provide fertile ground for voter mobilization along the lines of promises for better services. The ensuing debate is often loaded with provocative rhetoric evoking emotions and the potential for violence between supporters of rival candidates at times degenerating into violence. In 2016 general elections, unfulfilled promises on improving social services from previous elections are likely to become central as evidenced from FGDs in Kanungu, Arua, Lira, Soroti, Iganga and Kampala in the response from most parts of the country especially amongst youthful voters.

**(iii) Widening socio-economic gaps**

In spite of the significant GDP growth rates since 1987 through most of the 90s, many of the FGDs youth and female respondents reported biting poverty in their communities. There is a visible and widening gap between the few rich and majority poor and this has created anger within the electorate that could potentially explode into violence in future elections. One of the prominent perceptions that featured in the FGDs in Kanungu Township is that politicians, once elected, amassed wealth for themselves and no longer connect with their voters until the next election campaign period. Increasingly local people believed that politicians, once elected, get rich by increasing their remunerations and through other corrupt avenues. Often such politicians use all means, including violence, to force voters into getting them re-elected.

**(iv) Gender and election violence**

The study found out that most politicians believe that women are loyal mobilisers and voters once they are convinced. Consequently, every politician or political party tries to win their support, increasing their vulnerability to gender based violence in domestic and in public spaces especially during elections. At home if the women openly demonstrate support for a party or candidate that their husbands or other older male relations do not support, they are molested. For example, a woman commented as follows:

*"My husband is a soldier and he instructed me not to even point a finger at where Besigye is standing or his poster. Me, I love Besigye as the person and will vote for him" (Female participant-FGD market woman, Mbarara District).*

In Iganga District, women reported being intimidated by the presence of heavily armed police-men and soldiers and strange military vehicles deployed in places near polling stations during voting periods. Women vendors in Soroti and Mbarara municipal markets also reported intimidation and harassment from FDC youth supporters for perceived loyalty to the incumbent Yoweri Museveni. Unfortunately, such cases of violence against women often do not get reported and instances where they are reported are not appropriately addressed.

Therefore, gender based violence is likely to re-occur during the 2016 general elections as the political contenders scuffle over this numerically large constituency.

**(v) The emerging crisis of landlessness in Uganda**

Land is the main source of livelihood in Uganda and over 80% depends on land for agriculture to earn a living. With increasing population there is pressure on land for agriculture and human settlement, mineral exploitation and infrastructure development.

Government acquires land for infrastructure projects like roads and housing, government offices, military installations (Katakwi and Amuria districts) the oil industry (Kabale oil refinery in Hoima); quite often-poor people displaced by these projects are not well informed or adequately compensated. There is also acquisition of land by senior government officials and military officers and politically connected business elite with ordinary people disposing of this land at giveaway prices in fear of saying no to the rich and mighty.

With creation of new districts, communities that once lived in peace and harmony found themselves at the opposite sides of district boundaries such as the case in the recent Amuru and Adjumani and the ongoing Nebbi-Nwoya districts border disputes. In urban centres we have also seen land disputes in Kampala with the evictions by Kampala City Council Authority (KCCA) in various areas notably Nakivubo, Naguru, and greater Kampala City.

Large scale acquisition of land for commercial farmers, industries and other ventures by private investors are factors contributing to landlessness with local people getting a raw deal on the land they sell due to lack of knowledge of market value of their land.

After 20 years in internally displaced persons camps, many families returning to the original home at the end of the war could not clearly verify boundaries of their land causing conflict between families, communities and tribes in Lango, Acholi and Teso sub-regions. There is tension between roaming cattle keepers in search of pasture and local residents who fear that such people will take their land away and their farmland damaged by the cattle. This is common problem along the cattle corridor, rivers and lakes areas.

**(vi) The politics of Kingdoms and Traditional Institutions**

Modern Uganda was birthed out of the 1900 Buganda Agreement that established British colonial rule over Buganda Kingdom, which was the main legal instrument used to expand British colonial administration to the rest of modern Uganda. At independence, Buganda Kingdom and other kingdoms retained some degree of quasi-federal authority with institutional property and jurisdiction on their subjects. Political power tensions between Buganda and central regions over the 'lost counties'[5] resulted in the 1966 Kabaka Crisis in which central government deposed and exiled President Kabaka Mutesa I. This was followed by the promulgation of the 1967 Constitution, declaring that Uganda was adopting a republican system of government during Obote I administration. In 1993 the NRA/NRM administration restored the Kingdoms including the return of the exiled King of Buganda Kabaka Ronald Muwenda Mutebi II and later the Kingdoms of Toro, Bunyoro, Busoga but not Ankole. Elements in Buganda particularly have since agitated for the return of land and other properties that belonged to the Kingdom and have consistently increased demand for political jurisdiction over the Kingdom. In an apparent attempt to moderate the tension with Buganda, the central government has returned land titles of local administrations facilities of the Kingdom. Similarly, the Kingdom of Toro recently organized a youth protest march to Kampala to demand the return of lost property. In Kasese, it was stated that government officials use positions recklessly to even manipulate voter populations before and during election periods. For example, we quote:

*" A government official labeled those of us who live on the hills, the Bakonzo, as anti-government, therefore some of us who are sympathetic to government have been pushed against the wall; if that is what is perceived of us that is what we will do"*(KII-member of the Obusinga bwa Rwenzururu, Kasese District). Such expressions, generates agitation and hostility to central government, for taking their community for granted and not respecting their own political standing.

Central government has also encouraged the formation of cultural institutions and smaller kingdoms by several communities around the country. These cultural institutions are also facing conflicts associated with cultural leadership in Acholi, Alur, Busoga, Lango (with two rival paramount chiefs aligned along UPC-NRM political lines) and Rwenzururu kingdom issues of Wisley Mumbere. In Nebbi, the Okebo ethnic group is claiming ownership of an area they had emigrated away from. This is where the Alur are located now. This is now causing tension. These tensions between Kingdoms and within Cultural Institutions and between these institutions and central governments are likely to increase as the 2016 elections draw nearer with rival politicians and political groups using it to their advantages.

**(vii) Historical 'divide and rule' schisms of the North–South divide in Uganda**

Uganda's colonial legacy carries the ubiquitous "Lugard Curse" that condemned former British colonies to social and political balkanization often informed by ethno–regional and religious delineations. For example, in Uganda, Captain Lugard's classic 'divide and rule' policies pitted

---

[5] The Monitor Newspaper, 16th June 2015 People and Power, Uganda's failed coups.

the central (Buganda Kingdom), which collaborated in the colonization process against belligerents like the Bunyoro Kingdom, and other non-centralized social formations in eastern, northern and northeastern Uganda. These axes of discord sprout and create political tensions up to today. Since, independence, the failure of successive governments to heal these ethno-regional axes of discord has led to the crystallization of a north south divide. Partly as a result of the above deliberate approaches to government in pre-colonial and post-colonial Uganda, some imbalances became apparent in the spread and quality of essential social services. Consequently, this has created a perception of relative development in central, western and southern Uganda and the converse of less serviced areas of northern and northeastern Uganda. Implicitly these perceptions of socio-economic imbalances have also informed political discontent and potential risk of election related violence.

### (viii) The role of the military in elections

From the time of Capt. Lugard to date, the military have played a central role in the establishment and maintenance of central authority in Uganda's politics. The military has also been very central in regime change since the independence of Uganda in 1962. In 1971, 1979, 1985 and 1996 four governments were overthrown in military coups. In 1979 and 1986 two liberation wars overthrew sitting governments in Uganda making the military an undisputed institution in the political power play in the country. These also involved the manipulations of the military by the political elite of Uganda, including the creation of personal armies that later on metamorphosed into a national army. Throughout the post-colonial era, the military found itself highly involved in elective and representative politics. Since 1980 the army (UNLA) and 1986 (NRA and now UPDF) maintained ten representatives in parliament of Uganda, making them actively involved in democratic processes of the country.

Two national armies (Uganda Army 1979 and Uganda National Liberation Army 1986), who suffered defeat, retreated into the countryside or transformed in insurgency groups in the north and east. Following negotiations and some peace agreements, granting of amnesty, many members of these armed groups have surrendered and have since returned home into civilian life. One outstanding concern that keeps resurfacing towards election time is the issue of unfulfilled promises of compensation and retirement packages of ex-combatants from these previous armed groups. The most prominent of these cases are the former UNRF II and the WNBF that claim that they have been deceived and taken for a ride by the government who did not keep her side of the bargain. Ex-combatants in West Nile reported being used to mobilize support for particular politicians and political parties, especially the ruling NRM with tacit promises that their grievances will be handled after election, but to no avail.

In Lango, Teso and Acholi regions, respondents reported that many former volunteer militia groups (Frontier Guards in Acholi, Amuka in Lango and Arrow Boys in Teso) were promised packages after the end of insurgencies in the areas of operation. However, many of them complain of being fleeced off by their leaders and responsible military officers. At the time of elections, they are often a fall back force for the politicians who use them as mobilisers and the security officers that seek their support; yet some militia like the Arrow boys are known for their indiscipline and brutality against the opposition supporters and politicians.

From 1980, the military has been actively involved in electioneering processes often under the guise of providing additional security. While this has been necessary under certain circumstances, in real terms this has meant being part of the machinery for manipulating elections processes and the ultimate results. Increasingly, during election time there is heavy military deployment in hotspots areas such as Lira, Mbale, Iganga, Kampala and Arua. Some study participants reported heavy military vehicles in their areas, ostensibly to scare voters into submission to "vote correctly". In Kasese, women market vendors reported getting scared away by such heavy deployment in areas perceived to be opposition FDC strongholds. Presence of state security agencies during elections, even when well intentioned, tilts the balance of power in favor of pro-ruling party violent gangs and emboldens them to be provocative to opposition leaning gangs; causing election violence.

**(ix) The political parties and electoral democracy**

The concept of political parties is foreign to the culture of governance in the tradition of most peoples of Uganda. Society was mainly managed in a patrilineal format with men providing leadership by virtue of being the father, and women providing the administration of the home as the mother. Society was not yet organized in distinct classifications that would build a strong national agenda from a class based ideology. The absence of class based political programmes gave space to ethnic identities as the most viable form of citizen political formations. Unfortunately, by the time of independence, ethnic based politics especially in Buganda played out prominently, giving birth to political parties such as Kabaka Yekka (the King Only) in defense of Buganda nationalism. The emergence of an alliance between Kabaka Yekka and the Uganda People's Congress was really to stop the Democratic Party from winning elections rather than clear principles and values. Following the 1966 crisis and the promulgation of the 1967 constitution, Uganda quickly drifted towards a one party state under the UPC government. The 1971 coup put political parties into limbo for 10 years until the 1980 general elections, organized under insecure and tense context. In effect one can safely argue that multi-party democracy is still very young and unstable in Uganda.

Upon ascending into political power, President Museveni signed Legal Notice No. 1 in February 1986 which banned political parties from opening and running party branches in the country, stopped anybody in Uganda from contesting elections on any party ticket and introduced individual merit in Ugandan politics undermining political parties' growth. This situation only changed in 2005 when, through a referendum, constitutional changes reintroduced multi-party political dispensation again in Uganda.

Individual merit strengthened the influence of powerful rich and often military elites in Ugandan politics, gradually weakening the institution of political parties in Uganda. To date political parties in Uganda are struggling under the weight of powerful individuals fighting for control and further weakening institutional growth. Individual merit also meant that individual interest rather than political ideology became central in citizen political formations in Uganda. Individual merit gave birth to the political parties and organisations act which provisions covered the registration of political organisations, based on individual interest rather than ideologically founded parties.

Political party financing is largely limited and uncoordinated in Uganda, with nearly all opposition parties unable to raise any substantive resources from membership fees and or contributions. This situation puts political parties at the mercy of powerful individuals in the party and the leadership is unable to discipline such errant members during the heat of political campaigns. The above realities present political parties as one of the weakest citizen formation in Uganda. The 2016 elections are likely to see an increase intra-political party indiscipline, which could lead to violence at the peak of the campaigns.

### (x) Public perception of electoral democracy

As stated above, Uganda's electoral democracy is young and its political history is no stranger to political violence related to elections. At independence, Uganda had three political parties (Kabaka Yekka-KY, Uganda People's Congress-UPC and Democratic Party-DP) that contested the political space. KY and UPC went into an alliance of convenience to defeat DP and successfully formed the first independence government. This election was characterized by a lot of intimidation of DP members in Buganda, at the time seen as anti-Buganda nationalism and defiant to the Kingdom agenda. The 1966 Buganda crisis took place ahead of expected election in 1967; the 1971 military coup of Gen. Idi Amin was at the heels of the election expected later that same year; the 1980 elections was held in a very fluid military situation and thereafter the 5 year Luwero triangle war started; the 1985 coup preceded an election that never was to be.

Two general elections held in 1996 and 2001 under the movement system (non-party), where individual merit was touted, were equally marred by violence. In 2001 Dr. Kiiza Besigye challenged the election results in the Supreme Court, which upheld President Museveni's re-election. Multiparty dispensation was ushered in by 2005 referendum following pressure from donors, henceforth, political parties were free to operate and to officially participate in the 2006 elections. That year, presidential and parliamentary elections were held amid outcries of un-levelled playing field for the candidates and their parties, and open intimidation by the incumbent.

One of the key informants (a political commentator and media analysts) predicted that the 2016 are likely to be driven by 'illicit' financing. Often this undermines the principles of fair play in elections, compromises democracy and renders the atmosphere volatile, at times ending up in protests and physical fights. In Mbale, the perception of women in FGD indicated that the propensity for election violence increases with overt open vote buying in the vicinity of some polling stations. This happens across the spectrum of all big political parties. The figure 2 below illustrates this perception some of the key informants interviewed using semi-structured questionnaires.

**Figure 3: Perceived level of corruption during elections**
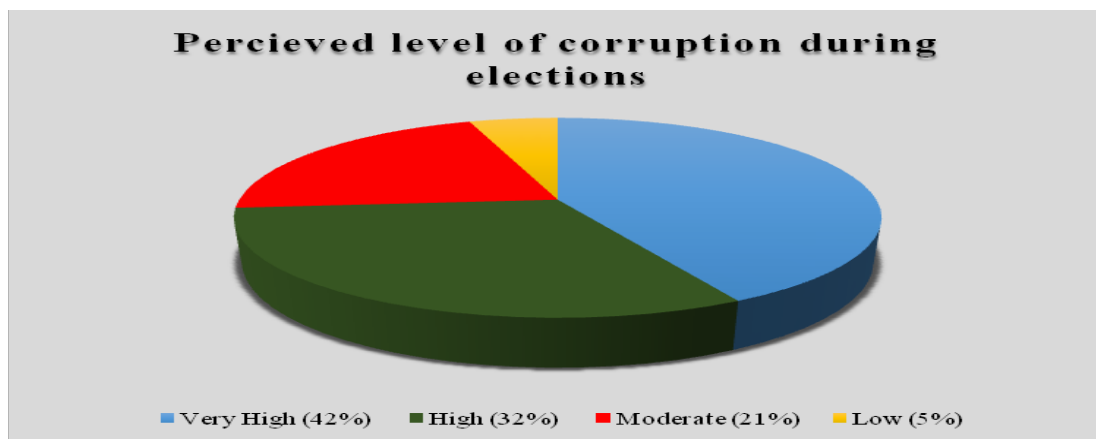


*Source: Election and Violence Study 2015*

Although most participants reported voting to get their preferred leaders, the flaws in elections processes often yielded unintended outcomes. This is because elections are manipulated through the vote buying and other malpractices such as ballot stuffing, and intimidation, swapping of results at tallying centres. Hence many voters are looking forward to 2016 with apprehension that, like it was in the past elections; 'old' leaders would still find ways for getting back into leadership, even when they lost in the ballot. For example, the 2011 elections saw the post-election period spent in courtrooms, battling alleged vote rigging almost in all the hot spot areas for example in, among others, Rubaga North in Kampala Central. Some participants found that what they voted for was manipulated through vote buying, for example:

*"Bribery of voters has tarnished the image of the vote. Money is the key issue. Even the electoral commission itself has failed to sensitize people on what to do."(KII-Prisons Mbarara)*

Respondents in FGDs also reported an increasing practice of imposing candidates on the voters was common, especially during party primaries of NRM and FDC. Such practices made voters feel that their efforts were worthless, and generated conflict that can erupt into violence during elections.

Public perception of the election management body is at stake and the election that will be conducted in 2016 general elections by the current team risks serious negative perceptions across the country. The Key Informants, in all districts visited, and some participants in focus group discussions in Kasangati, Rubaga and Nakawa demanded to know why there was reluctance to overhaul the Electoral Commission that is continually perceived to favor the appointing authority. Many believe the method of appointment and removal of EC members makes them beholden to the appointing authority. This perception of the EC poses a high risk for electoral violence as captured in the findings of Jeff Fischer (2004) study that *"political parties participating in an election use violence, intimidation and conflict to influence the results or timing of an election especially when particular side perceives the process as unfair or exclusive"* is anything to go by.

**(xi) The increasing instant power and reach of social media:**

The power and reach of social media's increasing instant power and reach of social media has enabled information sharing and increased mass access to once exclusive information. The use of Emails, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, What-app, SMS services, the mobile phone with the increasing availability of affordable smart phones means message and evidence can be shared instantly as a strong mobilisation tool for violence across the country among the youth. From the Uganda Communications Commissions Data internet use in Uganda rose from about 5,700,000 in 2012 to 8,531,081 million people in 2014. This increase in information technology including the rising number of smart phones has expanded geographical outreach, intensified the complexity and impact of information for mobilisation to action on peoples mindset of especially the youth.

## IMMEDIATE/SHORT TERM RISKS AND TRIGGERS POINTS (SPECIFIC TO 2016 ELECTIONS)

This sub-section presents and analyses the immediate/short term risks ranked based on scale and impact; and the triggers as elaborated hereunder:

### i) The risk of unemployed youth actions

According to the study findings from the focus group discussions, more male youth than females said they were out rightly willing to indulge in electoral political violence in 'self-defense' when provoked by police, and for quick gain induced with bribes, promises for jobs and scholarships. They were also willing to participate in election related violence as youth wing gangs of different political parties for a pay and self-gratification of their valor. It was also established that younger Ugandans are more active before and during elections compared to the elderly, who mostly take a low profile until voting days. Youth are more susceptible to subversion and manipulation in election violence related behavior before and during campaign periods and probably also after elections than the older voters. Participants in focus group discussions reported that before elections, money is given out by politicians to youths to provide them security from violence from rival candidates as well as to intimidate political opponents and their supporters.

There is evidence that youth are being mobilized into antagonistic camps in support of specific presidential and parliamentary candidates with promises of opportunities should their candidate win elections. Potentially these emerging antagonistic political youth camps if not well managed are recipes for violent clashes in the 2016 election campaigns.

### ii) Intra-political party based conflict

Internal political party democracy leaves a lot to be desired, and the study team found a lot of complaints about how internal democracy is characterized by manipulations for top leadership interests and rumors of interference by the ruling party incumbent's agents, causing perpetual mistrusts and intrigue, which is likely to risk violence in the run up to the 2016 elections. It

was evident in all major political parties - NRM, FDC, DP, UPC, CP and JEEMA, that political rivalries are the primary sources of electoral violence as evidenced in the recent developments in the Democratic Party leadership election struggles in Masaka and Nansana where some heavy weights tried to impose candidates. This has led to postponement of DP delegates' conference that was scheduled to take place in May 2015. Following this postponement, a group of youth attempted to overrun the party headquarters thereafter. Similarly, the recent crisis in UPC where party presidential candidate Jimmy Akena and his supporters staged a 'coup' forcefully evicting UPC President Dr. Olara Otunnu from office, also led to the postponement of the party delegates conference. Soon after this, Hon. Jimmy Akena called a "delegates conference" that swore himself into a disputed presidency of UPC.

There is also an issue of 'Safe Seats' considered as an automatic win to parliament for particular political parties. This occurs in constituencies where major political parties have strong holds, hence laying automatic claim to sure win for a party flag bearer in the constituency.  In those constituencies, the party primaries rather than general elections determine who wins such a seat; raising high stakes in the primaries. The desperation is high, raising the chance of using violence to win at all costs to stop the candidate favored by the top party leadership.

Furthermore, Political parties lack well-defined and predictable political succession mechanisms, creating tension amongst the political elite both in the ruling party and the opposition. There is a growing fear that President Yoweri Museveni will continue to monopolize power at the expense of other political contenders beyond even the 2016 general elections. This is the reason why one of the proposed legal reforms is the restoration of terms limits for the presidency.  Increasingly, some political leaders have openly intimated that activism and or violence is an option that cannot be ruled out to change the political stage in Uganda. During the focus group discussions in Kampala, some youth intimated to the research team that they are ready for all options, including violence in 2016.

Political party financing appears inadequate, erratic, uncoordinated and not member supported. Party leaders are expected to provide all the funding and, although the law in Uganda provides for funding of political parties, this legal provision has only been actualized in May 2015. Moreover, because this funding is based on the number of MPs a party has in parliament, the NRM got over 78% lion's share from the EC for political parties funding. This money has already created tensions within political parties that are already struggling to survive. As a consequence, political party leaders have sought out ways of raising funds from outside sympathizers and within Uganda, ostensibly on promises of cooperation if they win elections, which often cannot be easily monitored by government.

In this era where individual politicians self-finance their campaigns without any institutional framework for control, money can easily be used to buy votes and finance other illicit political activities such as election violence. More often than not, this opaque political finance system will also foster illicit relationships between perpetrators and public officials, resulting in compromised elections security. Without a clear formula for disbursements of campaign money, meant to facilitate mobilisers on the ground level, violence may result as campaigners fight for their share as was cited in Nyamityobora ward, Mbarara Municipality.

### iii) Political parties lack well-developed and tested conflict management mechanisms.

Political party assistance by international donors focuses entirely on democratization without attention to help political parties develop mechanisms, processes and procedures for preventing and resolving intra-party conflicts through democratic channels. The study team reviewed political party legal instruments to identify whether mechanisms are in place to address intra-political party conflict so as to reduce the incentives for political rivals to use violence as a campaign tactic. The review found that this risk is inherent in the nature of political party management in that there are no provisions for standard political behavior; even where they exist, some cannot stand the necessary legal test as was the case of the "NRM rebel MPs". It is also evident that once disputes erupt, as always the cases, there is a complete breakdown of communication among political rivals, no forum for alternative dispute resolution (ADR) of electoral disputes.

### iv) Failure to institute legal and constitutional reforms

This ranks a high risk across all phases of the election cycle before, during and after the 2016 general elections. The demand for legal and constitutional reforms is generating a lot of heat, well before the commencement of the general election campaigns. The government's dilly-dallying in effecting the reforms contained in the citizens' compact generated by key stakeholders', including all citizens from around the country from all political persuasions, does not help to ease the tensions. Undercurrents of frustrations are already growing strong, increasing political discontent in the country especially amongst the youth.

So far there is sharp disagreement between citizens' formations on the one side and the government on the other. The apparent clash between the divergent positions is a recipe for violence, if the anticipated legal and constitutional reforms are not implemented. There are already outbursts in the media of threats of election disruptions that may degenerate into violence if the government goes ahead with election agenda without substantive reforms. Without the citizens' proposed reforms, many Ugandans believe there won't be free and fair elections.

For instance, recently the Uganda Joint Christian Council issued a statement in the media expressing concern that the government's proposed amendments fall far short of the constitutional and legal reforms in the national citizen compact for free and fair elections. This voice was re-echoed by European Union Ambassador Kristin Schmidt, expressing doubt over the credibility of the 2016 elections. This further reinforces the determination of some political actors like Dr. Kiiza Besigye to opt for activism agitating for election under the slogan "elections after reforms" through CIREN. Many Ugandans believe that the method of appointment and removal of EC members makes them beholden to the appointing authority and therefore manipulate elections in favor of the appointing authority as a way of protecting their own jobs. This perception of the EC poses a high risk of election violence if the findings of Jeff Fischer (2004) study that: "political parties participating in an election use violence, intimidation and conflict to influence the results or timing of an election especially when particular side perceives the process as unfair or exclusive" is anything to go by.

### v) Culture of impunity in the electoral process

The culture of impunity poses great risk to election related violence as extremist supporters, campaigners agents from all major parties (NRM, FDC, DP, UPC and CP) and government operatives (DPCs and RDCs) try to outdo each other to impress the leaders in anticipation of promotions and political favors. As the elections draw near, these agents have increased intensity in threats to use all forms of intimidation, including direct arrest and torture of their victims to influence election process and outcomes in favor of their candidates. Arrests of opposition leaders Kiiza Besigye and Mayor Erias Lukwago and charges leveled against them that do not stand in court and the Police Officers involved not facing any reprimand encourages other police officers around the country to do similar or more heinous acts of violence against the opposition. Without the prosecution of perpetrators of election violence, such as the members of Kalangala Action Plan, where there was overwhelming incriminating evidence, major political actors have been encouraged to form and finance similar violent groups to be part of their election campaign strategy.

### vi) Media conduct during the election period

The media in Uganda is largely owned by politicians who prefer that programming, especially news and talk shows be aligned to their political interests. Media practitioners, comprising of journalists and news reporters, lack requisite training and professional etiquette to handle balanced programming and objective reporting which is required in the sensitive period like the elections.

*"Using journalist who are not trained to handle election issues, just pick and run stories without taking into account the impact on public peace during election time, when sensitivity is very high, is a recipe for disaster]."*(KII-Media, Radio West, Mbarara).

Journalists and news reporters the study team interacted with cited lack of professionalism, management pressure and corruption as some of the key ingredients to inciting violence during election time. Yet the population perceives that the only accurate reports are the ones coming out of radio stations. Sometimes the media often goes overboard to excite and incite violence in order to cash in election campaign money from politicians by the media houses themselves and individual journalists. This approach to service by the media is likely to lead to unethical conduct thus inciting violence. As one of the media Key Informant said: *"Journalists can write inciting stories, hate speech and cause violence because the writer may note able to sense that certain stories can excite and incite violence."(KII-Media Radio West-Mbarara)*

### vii) Compensations of ex-combatants and auxiliary forces

Ex-combatants and auxiliary forces are products of a history political turmoil in Uganda since 1979. Two former armies, Uganda Army and Uganda National Liberation Army, largely recruited from the north and east of the country were defeated and retreated to the countryside and into Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). These include Uganda National Rescue Front I&II, West Nile Bank Front in West Nile region; Uganda People's Democratic Army and former LRA abductees in Acholi; Uganda People's Army in Lango and Teso; and

the 9th October Army in Bugisu and Bukedi sub-regions. Some of these groups were persuaded to abandon rebellion under the amnesty with promises of reintegration into society and monetary compensation, which they complain has not been fulfilled to date despite numerous promises at the election time by the government. The second group comprises volunteer's auxiliary forces that were recruited to support the army in the fight against especially the Lord's Resistance Army. These include Arrow boys in Teso, Amuka in Lango and Frontier guards in Acholi. In Karamoja sub-region, government launched a successful disarmament program to deal with insecurity inside Karamoja and neighboring communities of Acholi, Lango, Teso, Bugisu and Sebei. These disarmed and reformed Karamojong warriors are facing a radical shift in their cultural role of providing security and livelihood through the cattle rustling industry. This radical shift in their way of life in Karamoja requires systematic change management support that is not yet effectively dealt with. The inherent risk here is that this large collection of people with military experience and expertise in violence can easily become a supply source of elections related violence if their frustrations are capitalized upon by political actors in the next election. The fact that they have been used for political mobilization in the previous elections places them in a unique position and potential for participation in election violence. Indeed during a focus discussion with ex-combatants in Arua, they expressed dismay over the failure of government to fulfill the promises of compensation and reintegration into society despite their role in successfully mobilizing support for the ruling party in past successive general elections.

**viii)External threats to national security**

Uganda is a small land-locked country bordered by South Sudan to the north, Kenya to the east, Tanzania and Rwanda to the south and Democratic Republic of Congo to the west. The country has also been involved in the regional security initiatives in Somalia, South Sudan, Central Africa, and Democratic Republic Congo. This security reality poses a challenge to our national security, especially during elections. In the run up to 2011 elections, Al-Shabaab terrorist bombed the Kyandondo Rugby Club and two other entertainment centres in Kampala. These treats are still real and there is high vulnerability due to overstretched police force during campaign rallies, street demonstrations and polling stations during elections.

## 4.3 TRIGGERS FOR ELECTION VIOLENCE

Triggers are actions or situations that may initiate immediate reaction. As found by the study team, the following could trigger election violence at various stages during the election cycle.

**i)   Intimidation of civilians**

Sometimes the electorate is subjected to heavy intimidation during elections. Some are shown threatening war films like "The Rise and Fall of Iddi Amin" on 2011 election D-day, and the next day military tanks were seen in the voting area. The intention is to send the message that in case people do not vote in a 'strong' leader, synonymous with the 'incumbent caliber', they are likely to lose out. There are already some incidents of violence and intimidation during primaries involving security agencies. Sometimes the security agencies provoke and participate in violence and civilians fight back in self-defense or challenge them to a fight. For example,

one of the Youth participants in the study had this to say: *"When police spray me with teargas, I hit them with a stone."* (Participant-Boda-Boda FGD-Kanungu).

**ii) Use of foul language**

During campaigns some people use abusive, sexist vulgar language especially against women candidates'. Rival politicians are likely to take advantage of these sentiments and emotions associated with mudslinging and vote winning potential it comes with to foment election violence. Accelerated use of such language may cause a candidate and their supporters to lose self-restraint and physically react violently against the authors.

**iii) Political parties' lack of control over its members**

This is likely to affect all political parties and set the stage for further violence in the election processes for 2016. The key reason is because political parties do not have any operational mechanism and financial muscle to control party members and or candidates. These increases the likelihood of party primaries and election campaigns being messy, including being violent, around the country. There are already cleavages and infighting manifested in the physical fights in UPC and DP where factions have fought for the control of party headquarters.

**iv) Clash of campaign programmes**

Where candidate's programmes clash causing campaign teams to meeting in the same centres or along procession routes could result into violence triggered by emotional displays of political power and influence of candidates. This could be initiated by exchange of jostles and shoves among the crowds degenerating into abuses and physical fights in the campaign trail.

**v) Management of election results**

This is likely to peak on Election Day, during vote counting, tallying and declarations of results. Every candidate and their agents will be anxiously waiting and monitoring results of their candidates to make sure that there are no attempts to manipulate the results. This situation causes so much tension so that any small suspicion can easily turn into violence.

**vi) Behavior of security agencies**

Security agencies such as the police are perceived to be partisan enforcing security in favor of a candidate of the ruling NRM through its action in attempting to manage law and order. Such enforcement of security by the police manifests in arrests of youth belonging to opposition parties. The arrests are carried out on mere suspicions which, prompt the youth to respond with vengeance whenever an opportunity presents itself by pelting police personnel with stones, bricks and any kind of crude missile that they may lay their hands on.

## 4.4 MOTIVATION AND ROLES OF KEY OF STAKEHOLDERS IN ELECTIONS RELATED VIOLENCE

This sub-section discusses the motivation and role of stakeholders in election related violence from the perceptions of participants in focus group discussions and Key informants.

### 4.4.1 Motivations to engage in election related violence

The incidence of election violence in the past would among others manifest in the form of shootings, assaults and arbitrary arrests by the security forces, as well as clashes between the supporters of rival intra and inter-party actors. However, there are also other factors that acted as motivations for election violence during and after party elections in the past.

**(i) To achieve and defend selfish personal gains while in government**

In Ugandan context, politics are closely associated with personal financial gain that accrues from access, control and distribution of state resources at whatever level. Cases in point are Members of Parliament increasing emoluments once they get into parliament, influence peddling by Ministers and senior government officials to award contracts for commissions and other considerations, Local government politicians LCIII –LCV wield considerable power to award contracts, jobs and LCI chairs, has of recent, usurped powers of the 9 member council to preside over land cases etc. Given this background, the elections become a matter of life and death. This includes acquisitions of campaign money from loan sharks for election campaign financing, in which case losing cannot be an alternative and it motivates the contenders to use any means including violence to win elections at all costs.

Senior security officers in the Police, Army and other security agencies openly campaign for the incumbent and ruling party candidates in the hope of securing current jobs, promotions and the benefits accruing. During a focus group discussion with Youth in Kanungu, some participants reported that police often gained from violence through extortions and ransacking pockets of suspects arrested during election related violence.

**(ii) Money and vote buying**

Politicians of different political sheds often dished out money to their campaign agents and the money is usually meant to buy alcohol in trading centres and major towns to sway the electorate to support the vote buying candidate. In light of increasing poverty among some localities and deteriorating living conditions of some social categories, many candidates both in the ruling NRM party and the opposition, have perpetrated vote buying while canvassing political support, which is contrary to "ethical choice" demanded for realization of free and fair elections. Once vote buying becomes inequitable, election conflicts become intractable and violence could emerge. For example, in the Industrial Area Division in Mbale Municipality, the free supply of alcohol by FDC and NRM political parties was reported as the incentive for frequent clashes of both party supporters in that area in the 2011 general elections.

**(iii) Lack of level playing ground before and during elections**

Often past elections have witnessed unequal political playing ground financially and technically, especially when relating to the resources of the ruling NRM party. This tended to undermine the credibility of the competing field in a manner which induced them to resort to vote buying, supporting violence and tensions breaking out into full blown election violence. Once the atmosphere before elections is electrified, there are higher chances for contestations and violence during and after such elections.

**(iv) Provocative mannerisms such as the use of foul language in past elections**

The other major challenge for peaceful elections in the past was failure of the varied political parties to tame their candidates, among others in using respectful language and practices towards their opponents particularly during campaigns and during elections. Character assassination of competitors was rife, for example when a certain dominant pro-NRM Pastor predicated that the FDC President would die before completing the 2011 campaigns. Such disrespectful attacks caused politicians to go on the defensive to guard their status. In other words, whereas it is presumed that maligning the competing party or opponent is a quick and effective method to derail or completely cripple their prospects for success, in most cases, where this has been conducted persistently it has generated conflicts that often degenerated into election violence. During past elections this was common and it sometimes occurred within intra-party circles during some primaries.

**(v) Role of key stakeholders in violence in past elections**

According to views from the study, political parties are the central actors behind election violence with the variation of some being the perpetrators while others could be victims simply reacting to attacks. In fact, the repeated view was that political parties' manifestos in Uganda are limited in policy content but tend to be driven purely by the need to win elections at all costs, even if that also entailed the recourse to using violent tactics to win elections. For example, during a discussion with some Boda-Boda cyclists in Iganga town, it was observed that in the LCV bye-elections in Bugiri held in early 2015, harassing competitors was a deliberate approach to the campaigns. Earlier, during the 2011 general elections in Busoga region, similar methods of harassment of opposing candidates and their supporters was a strategy. In fact, it was reported that the NRM candidate for Bugweri had actually funded gangs of youth and armed them to beat up the supporters of the final FDC victor. A number of incumbent candidates have been said to make use of the state armed machinery for intimidating opposition competitors. Some youth allied to opposition politician have expressed interest in violent activities as was the case during the 2006 elections and have vowed to engage in 'activism' during 2011. By implication, this could send a signal that they may as well perform the same roles in the forthcoming 2016 elections.

In the forthcoming elections of 2016, there were claims that some candidates are reportedly carrying out clandestine mobilization of the youth in Kampala and Kigezi sub-regions in preparation for combative actions to contend with feared harassment from the NRM mainstream party machinery in the 2016 general elections. It was stated that youth groups in Kampala,

calling themselves the "poor" and "unemployed" youth have already started clashing with police. Some FGDs participants think that this could be a strategy for preparing the youth for violence in 2016 general elections. In Kigezi sub- region, during the FGD discussions, some youth alleged that some overnight meetings were being held, among others in Kabale Town, youth mobilisers in preparation for the 2016 general elections. Similarly, there was allegations that some meetings have been held in Kanungu District, where some youth groups have been mobilized under suspicion that they are being prepared to obtain combative skills to defend themselves against what is perceived as impending harassment by youth gangs from the NRM ruling party and supposedly "biased security forces".

## (vi)  Government and National Resistance Movement

The overriding view is that because the current government is fused with the ruling party, NRM elections management and outcomes can never become free and fair. As a result, it is argued that party and state have formed a monolithic system that seeks to, among others, win (all) elections at all costs to remain in power. This fact is sinking in the minds of Ugandans who are now aware of the complexity of regime change under the current leadership. Hence, many in the electorate do not see the will for the state to encourage elections that will be free and fair to lead to regime change as notably observed in Kasese and Kanungu, by some youth participants during a focus group discussion who had this to say:

*"NRM will use all strategies, violence inclusive to remain in power, not until Museveni becomes tired"* (FDC youth winger Kasese District).

For others, *"reluctance to relinquish power arises from the fact that after many years of misusing power, the current politicians are reluctant to leave for fear of what portends to them outside [when] political power is lost"* (Kanungu, youth).

Hence, the perception is that the government, which is also at the same time the one heading the ruling party, shall come out with a lot of security deployment to clamp down hard on any likely sources of election related violence. The challenge is that too much force could also play out as direct intimidation and make the environment volatile for free and fair elections. This could keep some people tamed but on the other hand, it could propel the radicals to counter intimidation and violence with fire.

The frustrations with government's delays to implement the electoral reforms remains a source of apprehension over what would end up being the stratagem for managing political violence come 2016. For most, it is likely to be splashing more money but as some of them ask; to what avail, for peaceful or for violent ends? Another perennial strategy being used is intimidation of the masses that without the NRM, Uganda will return to conflict, for example, some NRM candidates are said to threaten people that:

*"If you do not vote such and such a party, the country is going to war. It's like someone is weighing for you something in darkness, how sure can you be that he is giving you the right quantity."* (FDC officials, Iganga)

This has been done through multiple ways including out rightly making such statements in public but often in subtle ways using films as a medium of communication.

**(vii) Multiple forces and civilian militias**

The armed forces are mostly considered to be always practicing partisanship by way of supporting the ruling NRM party. As a result some actors in the electorate have decided to play 'an eye for an eye' violence to fend off the challenges associated with police and army harassment. The public is getting the ideas of retaliating as the following statement demonstrates:
*"When police spray me with teargas, I hit them with a stone."* (Participant-Boda-Boda FGD-Kanungu).

The public is also concerned about the deployment of non-formal security actors in providing partisan security that is sympathetic to the incumbent NRM during elections. For example, the public is concerned about a category called "Crime preventers". According to some respondents, these are mostly youth who have obtained training in the use of arms and defensive skills, and the Uganda Police Force has their telephone contacts. It is said that these are often lying low in villages but are likely to be on-call to harass members of the opposition, during elections periods.

In addition, during elections other cadres from State House are also deployed in districts to oversee security. RDCs also become excessively aggressive under the guise that they have the mandate to 'oversee government programs in general', which leads people to wonder, what exactly does it mean to oversee elections generally? Where does duty stop and impunity start under such terms of service, and what are victims meant to do? For example, it was stated that when one RDC stops an on-going peaceful rally organized by the opposition, they get praised by the highest authority (the President), for that matter, impunity is emulated by other RDCs mainly in search of job security. In Kasese, it was stated that government officials use positions recklessly to even manipulate voter populations before and during election periods. For example, we quote:

*" A government official labeled those of us who live on the hills, the Bakonzo, as anti-government, therefore some of us who are sympathetic to government have been pushed against the wall; if that is what is perceived of us that is what we will do"*(KII-member of the Obusinga bwa Rwenzururu, Kasese District).

It is clearly possible that such expressions cause people to become agitated, and could be hostile to government after developing the feeling that they are being taken for granted and not being appreciated or respected for their own political standing.

**(viii)   Political parties and election violence**

It was stated that in some cases, political parties regardless of their orientations, could promote violence especially where they suspect rigging. Some have gone as far as recruiting youth brigades for use during elections period either for protection of their candidates and escorting ballot boxes after elections to tallying points; for revenge violence after suspicion of vote rigging and protests; and/or when attacked by rivals. In some cases, supporters of a candidate beat-up opponents and subsequently nothing is done by way of punishment so the effected

party take it upon themselves to resort to mob justice and hence election violence. The statement below provides such a scenario:

*"The area LCI Chairman was bringing in people from other villages to vote at our polling station, and when we resisted it , the police intervened and had us sprayed with lots of tear gas"* (Participant-Women FGD-Mbarara)


In yet other cases, some political parties are just internally weak and fail to control their cadres who become overzealous or fanatical and take to violence during campaign. This has led some commentators to recommend some stringent regulations to come into force, among others to hammer political parties into shape, as quoted below:

*"We need to strengthen the law regulating the political activities during campaigns so that stringent measures are taken against errant parties; their candidates and supporters that perpetrate violence."* (KII-Registrar Electoral Commission Soroti)

The situation is further complicated by the fact that these very political parties strongly mistrust the Electoral Commission (EC): this is an overriding problem that makes most people think that the central election management body (EC) is not independent, therefore not impartial but partisan in favor of the appointing authority and ruling party. Other party officials and members were angered by the misconduct of some partisan EC Returning Officers, who in past 2011 elections attempted to rig them out of their success after elections, and only through a bitter struggle through committed party agents was it possible to redeem the situation by catching the NRM fellows, who had tried to engage in rigging. Some examples given, included the cases of Katongole Singh versus Kasibante in Rubaga North and Sekikubo versus Hon Sam Kutesa's candidate, in Ssembabule, among others.

**(ix) The Media**

The media is universally recognized for playing a critical role in moderating electoral processes and outcomes before, during and after elections. However, in some contexts media have not been accorded the respect that they really deserve. Among others, media is denied the autonomy to exercise professionalism and in so doing they are often compelled into un-professional acts that end in election violence. This voice from a media personality says it all, we quote:

*"Our bosses cannot let us practice professionalism and any attempts to [act] against their instructions means one's job is not secure"* (Media fraternity-Mbale).

During elections, the government security agencies intensify media monitoring, which can end up in harassment, assault and even jailing journalists and media owners on tramp up charges. Media houses whose ownership is believed to be sympathetic to the opposition often face the most difficult times. Most private media houses are either owned by politicians belonging to the ruling party or business people sympathetic to it. Moreover, private media broadcasters are mostly localized, and with limited outreach, for example, *'Endigyito'* was previously located in Kamwenge but is now re-located in Mbarara yet some people in Kamwenge district still think the radio belongs to them and serves their interests. Unprofessional or unethical conduct on the part of some journalists caused embarrassment and could trigger violence. In a discussion group, a commentator had this to say:

*"Journalists can write inciting stories, hate speech and cause violence because the writer may not be able to sense that certain stories can excite and incite violence."* (KII-Media Radio West-Mbarara)

This is partly attributed to the proliferation of private media houses especially local FM radios creating very tight competition that makes staff use all means to get ahead of their competitors with the risk of leading to violence. For example, the statistics show tremendous growth in the sector:

- 248 radio stations on air
- 270 radio stations licensed and operational
- 240 radio stations that are consistently on air

In past election national broadcasting bodies were literally closed off to the opposition and used to only air out the ruling party campaigns and yet they are national and not party organizations, such is the case with the government owned UBC Radio and TV.

Social media is fast becoming a dominant mode of social and political interfaces and can quickly become good mobilization tools during campaigns regardless whether it is for good or for worse. During the recent student strike early this year at Makerere University, students mobilized on "WhatsApp" and one cannot underestimate the role this social media played in tipping or triggering violence at campus that could effectively harness its potential for fully brewed violence in election time.

### (x) Religious Institutions

Religious leaders actively act "behind" the scene to support and promote some candidates of their choice in ways that affect election outcomes. This is most common among the Pentecostal "born again" churches. In the run up to the 2011 elections, Pastor Kayanja predicted that "the NRM would win the 2011 elections and one of the political party leaders would die before the end of the election period". Historically even the traditional faith groups like the Anglican and Catholic Churches and the Muslims have always influenced political organization and electoral outcomes both directly and indirectly. The Seventh day Adventists, Orthodox and other small religious factions do not have significant influence on the election temperaments and outcomes because of their small numbers.

Most FGD participants think the "born again" churches and Muslim factions have highest potential for election violence because of poor chain of command in their setups. This could manifest in leadership wrangles over control of resources and overall supremacy. Common among Pentecostals is the lack of a common ideology to mobilize their flock and limited education of most of their grassroots leadership often with the largest numbers of young people.

### (xi) Traditional/Cultural Institutions

Politicians enjoy riding on the tide of cultural institutions to rally support during election periods and sometimes either by omission or commission end up fueling election related violence. Historically, cultural institutions are built on a legacy of authoritarianism and resistance to

modern statecraft and attendant ideals of democratic governance for which elections are a major pillar. Cultural systems mobilize on highly emotive values such as ethnicity and religion often against perceived intruding "outsiders" that can easily rupture into mass violence. Often such sentiments coincide with election periods such as in the following cases:

2015 – Currently Toro Kingdom is simmering with tensions arising from some rebel Royals questioning and threatening the legitimacy of the incumbent King.

2015 - The Alur kingdom is facing a factional conflict in which one group of traditional chiefs attempted to depose *Ubimu* (supreme ruler), Phillip Olarker Rauni III, the Alur cultural leader.

2015 - In Acholi region of northern Uganda tensions often associated with partisan alignment and money received from central government and donors have torn apart the cultural leaders setting ground for violent conflict during the upcoming elections.

2014 – Last year the Toro Kingdom organized the marching of the youth (Engabu za Toro) from Fort Portal to Parliament demanding for their property of Toro Kingdom lost to central government in the 1967 constitutional changes.

2014 - Obudingya bwa Bamba and Abasing bwa Rwenzururu Kingdom had differences when the latter King Wesley Mumbere disregarded the Omudingya Martin Ayongi Kamya, King of the Bamba, when the latter attempted to force a visit on the Bamba but was stopped by the Uganda Police Force to avert conflict.

2012 - to date: Conflict broke out during the Lango Conferences held both in the UK and in Lango, where the sitting paramount chief Yosamu Odur Ebii and his allies were accused of being partisan and allied to the NRM and for abusing funds given by president Museveni to fund the two Lango conferences. This has escalated into the emergence of two rival camps and two parallel paramount chiefs with each claiming legitimacy and engaged in a bitter conflict characterized by both physical and verbal abuse.

2009 – In Buganda mass bloody riots ensued when the Kabaka of Buganda Ronald Mutebi was blocked by the central government from visiting Kayunga where the leader of the Banyala was trying to secede from Buganda. This event set the tempers for election violence in some parts of Buganda where politicians (Isa Kikungwe-Kyadondo South suspected ring leader) rallied on this misfortune.

**(xii) The Judiciary**

The judiciary is the second most essential arm of government in ensuring quality of electoral processes and guaranteeing that elections are free and fair for all. Many FGDs participants believed that judges solely appointed by the executive, especially those tagged as cadre judges are perceived to be to be corrupt and partisan to favor the incumbent NRM. A retired senior judge, comment commented thus:

  *"The Judiciary is "Crude and corrupt"* (Justice George Kanyeihamba, Former Supreme Court Judge)[6]

---

[6] Cited from Daily Monitor Monday, April, 20 2015 pp. 5.

Consequently, public perception of the judiciary is always oscillating from respect to some cynicism especially depending on whose side a particular political judgment tends to favor at the time. Most often when the opposition loses an election petition the immediate sentiment is that there was bias and vice versa. A classic case in point was the court ruling in Besigye's petition after losing 2006 elections:

*"In 2006, Museveni cheated elections but the case was dismissed and the opposition lost it. Courts said it was not substantive enough, yet there is nothing like small cheating."* (Male participant, FGD Rubaga Division, Kampala)

Indeed this case, in which Col. Besigye closely came second to Museveni, has been referred to as a 'classic' in the history of election petitions judgments as among others stated by Margaret Sekaggya, herself a high court judge of repute, who at one point headed the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC). After the ruling, Dr. Kiiza Besigye decided never to go to court again after the 2011 elections, due to his lack of trust in the courts of law.

### (xiii)   Private Sector

The business community, especially the Asians (mostly Indians and Chinese), and the local prosperous businessmen and women (Young Millionaires Club & Kwagalana Group), genuinely have a stake in Uganda's political development. This is not just as sense of nationalism but also the desire to protect their investments worth billions of US dollars, and potential favors such as tax waivers and lucrative government tenders, influenced by the ruling political elite. They may contribute to fundraising such as was the case for the NRM headquarters building (Movement House), fundraising dinner or finance particular candidates perceived as very influential in government. Such financing risk motivating violence in the following ways: Firstly, such actions anger indigenous Ugandans who feel these "foreigners" interfere in local issues with the risk of targeting their businesses for looting in case of any turmoil related to elections.

Secondly, because there are no clear accountability and control mechanisms, such financial contributions could end up being used for clandestine campaign strategies like hiring and facilitating gangsters to harass opponents, promoting violence during elections. This practice by some prominent prosperous businessmen and women is also referred to as 'fear' of electoral financing.

## 4.5 LEVEL OF PREPAREDNESS TO AVERT ELECTION RELATED VIOLENCE IN THE 2016 GENERAL ELECTIONS

This sub-section analyses the level of preparedness to avert election related violence for the 2016 general elections by assessing the adequacy of existing legislative, administrative and security frameworks.

### Adequacy of legislative, administrative and security frameworks

There are overall challenges with regard to the legislation, administrative and security frameworks for managing election related violence and conflicts in Uganda. There is a broad concern over the respect accorded to constitutionalism in the country resulting in contentious outcomes such as lifting of presidential term limits, among other issues currently fomenting election conflicts. That said, however there are some relevant legislation that if they could be respected provide for reasonable grounds for preventing election related violence and conflict. We discuss some examples of such legislation is the Code of conduct regulating the political parties during elections and the Presidential Elections Act 2000 in the section below.

### The Legislative Framework

### Code of conduct regulating the political parties conduct during elections

The current draft of inter party elections code of conduct 2015 proposes that any party or its agent that engages in electoral related violence will be cautioned and at worst named and shamed. There is no doubt that this Code of Conduct for party activities offers very weak measures that are not likely to provide enough force to restrain any candidate or party to engage in violence before, during and after elections. One need to forget that after all, politicians in Uganda are not bothered by scandals of political nature including election related violence.

### Presidential Elections Act 2000Cap: 142
### Part V—Campaining

### 24. Interference with electioneering activities of other persons

*A person who, before or during an election for the purpose of effecting or preventing the election of a candidate either directly or indirectly:-*

*- by words, whether spoken or written, song, sign or any other representation, or in any manner seeks to excite or promote disharmony, enmity or hatred against another person on grounds of sex, race, color, ethnic origin, tribe, birth, creed or religion;*

*- organizes a group of persons with the intention of training the group in the use of force, violence, abusive, insulting, corrupt or vituperative songs or language calculated to malign, disparage, condemn, insult or abuse another person or candidate or with a view to causing disharmony or a breach of the peace or to disturb public tranquility so as to gain unfair advantage in the election over that other person or candidate;*

*- obstructs or interferes or attempts to obstruct or interfere with the free exercise of the franchise of a voter or compels or attempts to compel a voter to vote or to refrain from voting; compels or attempts to compel a candidate to withdraw his or her candidature;*

*in any manner threatens any candidate or voter with injury or harm of any kind; or induces or attempts to induce any candidate or voter to fear or believe that he or she will suffer illness or will become an object of divine, spiritual or fetish displeasure or censure, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding eighty currency points or to imprisonment not exceeding two years or to both.*

## 25. Prohibition of incitement to public disorder

*...No person shall during campaigning use any language which is defamatory or which constitutes incitement to public disorder, hatred or violence.*

*...any person who contravenes subsection (1) commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding eighty currency points or to two years imprisonment or to both.*

## Arms and ammunition prohibited

*...no person shall arm himself or herself during any part of polling day with any deadly weapon or approach within one Kilometer of a polling station with deadly weapons unless called upon to do so by lawful authority or where he or she is ordinarily entitled by virtue of his or her office to carry arms. Any person who contravenes subsection (1) commits an offence.*

## Comment on legislative framework

As noted above, however the problem of legislative nature on elections and associated violence is not borne out of non-existence of requisite laws. Uganda has sufficient legal frameworks for proper conduct of elections. The problem is one of politicians and their party members not respecting them and acting under rightful constitutional mandate. Instead there is evidence of neglect and sometimes outright flaunting of the provisions of the Constitution of Uganda and electoral laws there from, such as those cited above. For example, what is a statement of non-readiness is the fact that 6 months to elections there have been no legal reforms implemented as demanded by the opposition since the past elections. This speaks volumes about the general mood of doubts for an efficient and peaceful election process and outcome in 2016. There is also concern that, the Electoral Commission seems to be detached from other players in engaging them in fully understanding and owning up to design and processes for rolling out the 2016 general elections. This includes limited engagements with political parties, voter education, crime preventers and the security apparatus as a whole.

## Administrative framework

In addition, it is not clear how prepared the EC is in terms of obtaining requisite resources in terms of money, equipment and other logistics to run an efficient and controversy-free general

elections. Though it was pronounced that EC procured equipment like the Barometric Systems for electronic voting, in the EC 2011 Report, they mentioned loss of staff after serving previous elections, by implications there is a possibility of limited standing capacity of new staff to handle the technologies systematically. There is fear that EC lacks the adequate manpower and capacity for full preparedness, which is required to run an efficient general election with only 9 months towards the voting D-day.

**Security framework**

The security organs are perceived to be partisan and the evidenced high-handedness demonstrated in past elections leads some elite to argue that the current Uganda Police Force is no longer as professional as it was before. By extension, there is doubt as to whether in collaborating with other forces, during protection of electoral processes, professionalism remains under consideration. Hence, the majority of the participants were of the view that there has been no sufficient capacity building of the security forces to play a neutral role in safeguarding lives, movement and allocation of voter materials professionally particularly during and after elections in the past. It is therefore in doubt that this could significantly change in 2016.

## 4.6 GEOGRAPHICAL HOT SPOTS

As illustrated above, election related violence in Uganda has been part and parcel of the election history and 2016 general elections may not be any different. However, there are specific areas where election violence seems to be the norm rather than an exception. This study delineates the areas prone to election violence and analyses the existing prevention and mitigation measures with a view to finding the viable strategies for preventing or reducing the intensity of violence in such areas that we refer to as hot spots. The hotspots take centre stage in proposed prevention and mitigation of election related violence because learning from the past experience, there is high tendency of recurrence of election related violence in these areas with increased intensity and sophistication.

This section presents geographical hotspots and analyses the existing prevention and mitigation measures, their gaps and how the gaps can be bridged. The hotspots are presented as ranked based on analysis of findings on hotspots. In order to arrive at the ranking, the study team interrogated the measures that participants in FGDs and Key Informants based their perceptions of existing prevention and mitigation approaches for effective security management before, during and after elections on, including taking into account local and context specific realities.

### i)  Buganda Region: [Ranking No.1]

Located in the heart of the country, the region has the highest population density (voter block) and the metropolitan demographic composition of the country and the prime destination for rural urban migration in Uganda. Located in the region, Kampala the capital city, is the commercial, administrative capital position makes a hot bed for all sorts of contesting political players given its sensitivity to the national economy (over 80% of GDP produced in the region)

and home to the political super structure (executive, judiciary, parliament) of the country. The latter are reinforced by wider coverage of both international and local media, attracting immense attention from the local political players and the international community. This means that the stakes are highest for both the opposition and the ruling party in this region for the 2016 election.

Located to the south west of Buganda region, and strongly catholic, Masaka has often been the engine agitating politics in Buganda and ancestral home of (Benedicto Kiwanuka RIP) the founding father of the Democratic Party. The flash points of violence in this region are likely to include Kampala's divisions of Rubaga, Central, Kawempe and Nakawa; and the townships of Kasangati and Nansana. Another epicenter could include Nyendo suburb of Masaka Municipality, Bukoto East (Buwunga, Mukungwe), Sembabule District and Bukomansimbi District.

**The risks in the region**

These include some elements from the Kingdom engaging in covert support to certain political candidates contesting against the incumbents at all levels, ostensibly using the politicized ethnic card to regain the not yet recovered properties. Public threats by opposition leaning youth groups, targeting specific ethnic communities like the Banyarwanda and women for their support to the ruling party are signals of potential risks of violence.

Already, flares about the failure of the cabinet to table the very electoral reforms enshrined in the proposals of the citizen compact is fueling discontent amongst citizens. There is increasing tension between activism to force electoral reforms versus participation in elections, which is even causing rifts in political parties like FDC and UPC. Activism strategy on how to gain power remains unclear and most likely is capitalizing on demands for electoral reforms to instigate violence before, during and after elections. The recent standoff in April 2015 between Dr. Besigye and his supporters to present their views to the legal parliamentary committee is a case in point.

Contentious issues likely to fuel election violence include public land give away, demands for return of all federal property of the kingdom, control of urban markets and allocation of market stalls and ethnic cleavages against Banyarwanda and Banyankole communities. The issues of electoral and constitutional reforms are also very strong and fairly well informed in this region.

**Existing mitigation measures**

In Buganda region, the cultural institution was reported to be key in mediating conflicts among politicians for the sake of Buganda's unity. According to some focus group participants in Rubaga Town Council, politicians often sought the mediation and blessing of the Buganda Kingdom and cultural institutions to further their political ventures and there is no doubt that if formally and actively engaged in attempts to prevent or mitigate electoral related conflict and violence, there are high chances of success. Their intervention throughout the elections cycle will be key to violence free elections not only in Kampala and Masaka as hotspots but can be replicated in the entire country where similar cultural institutions and systems could

take a cue and learn from. Thus it is very critical for the security agencies, the electoral commission and development partners to engage with the cultural institution on strategies aimed at preventing and mitigating election related violence come the 2016 general elections.

As discussed in the previous section, religious institutions have the capacity to galvanize their flock for purposes of both development and politics. In Buganda, the Anglican and Catholic Churches and Muslim religious bodies and influential leaders can be critical allies in managing prevention and mitigation of election related violence. Religious institutions are very powerful power brokers and in the past mediated explosive situations in Buganda Kingdom. For instance the Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJJC) has been an active lobby for civic education and monitoring elections, mostly geared towards peaceful elections. UJCC have already shown interest in working together with other like-minded NGOs to promote peaceful election and constitutional reforms before the 2016 elections.

The lead institution in providing security during election time is the Uganda Police Force and is mandated by law to enlist other security agencies should there be situations that may tend to overwhelm the institutions before, during and after elections in hot spots of Kampala City and Masaka. To a large extent, the police has been able to contain demonstrations within the central business district, at the expense of their freedoms, leading oppositions members like Dr. Kiiza Besigye and Lord Mayor Erias Lukwago. The use of excessive force in managing volatile situations continues to and may undermine the image of the police, requiring urgent attention.

**Gaps in the existing mitigation measures**

The study notes that a number of gaps exist, including: inadequate resources from national coffers to support the multi-stakeholder platform and building the capacity of stakeholders to deal with election violence. Some religious and cultural leaders align themselves to some political groups, which may wreck or compromise the initiatives. The cavalier attitude of the security forces towards the opposition politicians and the limited awareness and weak enforcement of the laws of hate speech during campaign further weaken the existing mitigation measures of election related violence in the region.

**Measures to fill the gaps**

Revive and strengthen inter-party dialogue to include observers like donors, religious leaders as well as come up with a code of conduct with punitive measures and enforceable under the existing laws by the security agencies. Sensitization and dialogues initiated by cultural institution and Catholic Church likely to have influence and positive impact and funding the initiatives.

**ii)   Busoga Sub-Region: [Ranking No 2]**

Busoga is a collection of 11 autonomous chiefdoms that elect a joint leader (The Kyabazinga) following the demise of a reign. The region has been embroiled in a succession dispute since the death of Kyabazinga Muloki for the Bulamogi lineage. This calmed down temporarily with the crowing of Prince Gabula Nadiope of the rival Budiope lineage.

Busoga has seen a collapse of the local economy with the closing down of Jinja industrial town, which is just recovering as new investors start to deploy in the region. A region, which once flourished on coffee, cotton and sugar cane growing under the auspices of the Busoga growers Cooperative Union limited, built its own Busoga Railway Line to connect the main Uganda railway line to the cotton and coffee growers of Lake Kyoga shores, collapsed at the overweight of economic liberalization and privatization. Consequently poverty is probably the one single crisis in the region that has made it so vulnerable to manipulation and potential election related violence.

Moreover, Busoga was also the gateway to Buganda for pre-colonial Muslim Arab slave and ivory traders and missionaries for the east coast, which probably explains the presence of quite sizeable population of Muslim faithful in the region.

The region is also a stronghold of the opposition FDC, security concerns about recruitment of youth into rebellion and small arms proliferation; associated with Muslim extremists, point to recent murders of Muslim clerics; and rivalries in the Kyabazinga cultural institution. The region reported bitter rivalries during elections time between the NRM and FDC candidates have often drawn in security agencies and local vigilantes leading to injuries, death and destruction of property. The flaw points for violence reported by key informants and FGDs in Busoga region include the districts of Iganga, Kamuli, Luka, Mayuge, Kaliro, Jinja, Mayuge and Bugiri. In particular, Iganga district alone, 16 sub-counties out of 18 have always been the most volatile in previous elections, especially in the sub-counties of Bulamogi, Buyanda, Buyanga, Buwabe, Ibulango, Makutu, Nakalama, Nakigo, Nakigo, Namaremba, Nambale, Namugabe, Namunkesu Namwandala and Iganga Municipality.

**Risks in the region**

Tension over the cultural institution of Busoga, The Kyabazinga, will be at the center of tension as the Balamogi feel let down by the establishment whom they think sided with the rival Budiope royal lineage. Religious factor, especially the murder of Muslim clerics, exclusion, poor social services and poverty etc., remain hot issues. Rivalries for control of constituencies between political parties (especially NRM & FDC rivalries), unemployed but educated youth, unemployed out of school youth and disgruntled traders are likely to be the main players for election related violence in Busoga.

Other principal risks include tension over land rented out to investors (often sugar cane commercial famers) by poor famers, reducing the land under crop cultivation. Many small-holder famers are also sub-contracted by sugar cane plantation companies with famers complaining of poor terms. Many entrepreneurs also complain of over taxation reducing their profit levels and weakening the purchasing capacity of famers, eventually slowing business returns. Busoga region has continuously complained of election rigging, often associated with violence, with the prediction that it is likely to be more violent in the 2016 elections.

**Existing mitigation measures**

Busoga region was identified as a key hotspot for all previous elections and is likely to remain so in the future elections. But interactions with some Key informants and participants in FGD did not reveal any clear local framework for prevention and mitigation of election related violence. This probably explains why the history of election violence hotspots was so pronounced covering the entire region. Even the Kyabazinga (King) of Cultural Institution that could have provided such a role has been embroiled in internal succession disputes to the throne, undermining its moral authority for mediation.

**Gaps in the existing mitigation measures**

The study team did not come across a clear mechanism for initiating and funding to support a framework for initiating a dialogue between political rivals and effectively and efficiently carry out the anti-violence campaigns in the Busoga region.

**Measures to fill the gaps**

A coalition of religious, cultural and opinion leaders, accepted as non-partisan enough, urgently need to be initiated with a purpose of preaching peaceful campaigns, freedom for voters to their right to vote one's own choice of candidate, respect for the outcome of the elections at all levels and peace dialogue in case there is election results disputes in any part of the region.

**iii) Ruwenzori Sub-Region: [Ranking No. 3]**

Cladding the foothills of the mighty Ruwenzori mountains; the Ruwenzori region is what at independence in 1962 was known as the Toro district, taking its name from the Toro Kingdom which had imperial influence in the region and the other communities of Bakonzo, Bamba, and Batuku and later the Basongora cattle keepers. From the late 1960s, the Bakonzo rebelled against the Toro imperialism and later against the Uganda government whom they accused of taking sides with their tormentors. In the 1970s, the Idi Amin government temporarily resolved this impasse by creating Kasese district, which was recognized as the home of the Bakonzo, something that earned President Amin a title of their "Liberator" and his image is revered to date amongst the Bakonzo. Historically, Kasese is an opposition stronghold and consequently an area of political contestations since the 1980 elections, when the DP candidate Mr. Vito Muhindo was assassinated. Since then, any other elections have had violence during and after elections, for examples in 2001 election 53 vehicles were burnt. In the 1980s the Bakonzo continued this "liberation" struggle mode through various fighting groups that often took advantage of their political grievances to start a rebellion. In recent times, concerns have expanded to include land and boundary disputes in which many Bakonzo believe they have not got a fair deal compared to the Basongora cattle keepers.

**The risks in this region**

Risk in this region manifests in the July 2014 attacks on the army and police barracks in Bundibugyo Kasese and Ntoroko, and further threats of potential future rebel attacks. The simmering relations between central government and the Obusinga bwa Rwenzururu and mobilization of the Youth (Esyamango) for the defense of the interests of the kingdom is likely to be an active risk in this region in the run up to the 2016 elections. Kasese district, especially Kasese Municipality and Lake Katwe sub-county are reported to be at the epicenters of these tensions. Concerns over what is seen as unfair land allocation by central government and the unfulfilled promises to the Rwenzururu veterans will continue to be very important risks in this region. The perception that the Obusinga bwa Rwenzururu may support one party against the other will increase tensions and rivalries with the potential of degenerating into violence in the region. The existence of Queen Elizabeth national park in the area has led to the human and wildlife conflict over land use and this could also build into violence during the election campaign period.

Potential risk actors in the region include but not limited to Obusinga Bwa Bwenzururu versus Obundigiya Bwa Bamba, alleged ADF rebel formations, Basongora and Bakonjo, Central Government and Obusinga bwa Rwenzururu, Uganda Wild life Authority versus local communities neighboring protected area. In case the trials on-going in the court martial in Kasese end up in heavy convictions of suspects of attacks in Bundibugyo and Kasese. The other potential key risk is mobilization of rival cultural "youth brigades" such as *Esyamango* of the Obusinga bwa Rwenzururu, the *Empagi* of Obudingiya bwa Bwamba, and the *Ngabo* Za Toro which could be fueled during elections. The recent attacks mentioned above are most likely going to be a tense reference issue in the coming elections with the risk of degenerating to violence.

**Mitigation measures**

Following the July 2014 conflict in which about 100 people died, an urgent dialogue initiated between Government and the Rwenzururu Cultural institution aimed at looking into the grievances of the Kingdom has been put in place. This dialogue needs to go beyond just looking into grievances to enhancing community dialogue between the warring communities over land and other issues. Reconciliation initiatives between Bakonzo, Basongora, and Batuku when earlier initiated are likely to reduce tensions. This region remains a hotspot with ethnic tensions over land, geo-political influence of rival cultural institutions between the cultural institutions of the Bamba, Bakonzo, Batoro and Basongora with a potential of blowing up during height of elections campaigns. Democratic Governance Facility (DGF) is also supporting conflict mitigation project by Kabarole Research and Resource Centre to mitigate different kinds of conflict within the region.

**Gaps in existing mitigation measures**

The recent conflict and simmering inter-ethnic tensions between these communities and their cultural leadership structures still undermine their potential for a joint regional framework for mobilization for a violence free election. The tension however still exists between the various

ethnic groups, no single framework for resolving political tensions in the region has been developed. So the local religious and local government leaders in the region have approached the Uhuru Institute for possible technical support to a peace and reconciliation dialogue process in the region.

**Measures to fill the gaps**

A local framework for reconciliation, peace and development dialogue between the Central Government and Rwenzururu (Bakonzo and Bamba and Basongora) is urgently required before the political temperature heightens. The important challenge is to make such a framework a truly non-partisan neutral framework that can be utilized by all political formations in the region.

### iv) Lango Sub-Region [Ranking No. 4]

Lango is the home turf of Dr. A. M. Obote, two-time president of Uganda and founding president of the Uganda Peoples' Congress, and stronghold of the party. Lango has maintained a uniquely passionate, religious supporter base of UPC amidst over 20 years of denomination of the party and Obote's history in Uganda. This has meant that any attempt by other political parties to gain ground in Lango is met by strong opposition from UPC diehards. This also means that any tension seen in the party headquarters can easily filter into local factionalism within UPC in Lango. The Museveni-Mbabazi rift within the NRM has also been replicated in the sub-region, with NRM members substantially polarized between the two factions, especially since the run up to the NRM delegate's conference in 2015. Such tensions have also now entered into religious and cultural institutions in the sub-region.

**Risks in the region**

There is a historical conflict responsible for some of the tensions between Lango and Acholi communities whom the former blames the Acholi for the 1985 coup that led the region suffering long-term civil strife. This often blows up in boarder conflict that is sometime used by local politicians to drum up support. Tensions over the perceived government failure to protect the region over Karamojong cattle rustlers and LRA incursion are still a common concern in Lango political circle.

The historical analysis above makes Lira District (Lira Municipality) constituency currently led by Obote's son, Hon. Jimmy Akena, very central in political party rivalry and in the regional risk to election related violence. Most political tensions in the region actually play out or are planned in Lira town. The region has been embroiled in leadership disputes in the cultural institution (*TeKwaro Lango*) between two partisan aligned factions. But the one probably most dangerous risk in the region, which requires keen attention, is the volunteer Youth militia (Amuka Boys) who supported the government in uprooting the rebel LRA from the sub-region more than ten years ago and who is still claiming unmet promises of "retirement" packages.

**Existing Mitigation measures**

The 153 Clan Leaders in Lango (The Awitong) wield a lot of influence in this community and are respected by their sons and daughters of the soil. The clan Leaders are working jointly with religious leaders. They could form a strong mitigation framework for peaceful election. However, whereas the cultural institution can be enlisted to mitigate or prevent election violence, a division between two parallel paramount chiefs, each claiming the throne, currently wrecks it. The said rivalry between the two rival paramount chiefs is further causing political alignment, which might itself cause election violence.

Lango is also one region with probably the most active radio talk show programmes in rural Uganda but is often not used for prevention and or mitigation of political tensions, rather they are centres for heated and aggressive debates that run the risk of increasing tensions, especially at the peak of elections. In one incident in Otuke district, in Lango sub-region, one parliamentary aspirant with international standing was disparaged using electronic media as being gay (although he denied being gay), a label that is derogatory in the local culture.

In the past, former Amuka militiamen could be enlisted to beef up election security in the sub-region before, during and after the election. Now, there is a strong discontent between them and political leaders because their requests for compensation for the service they rendered in flushing the Lord's Resistance Army LRA) out of Lango has not been successful. If misguided, they could therefore be used to supply violence. There is a strong civil society presence, with a considerable experience in peace building, including mitigation of post-conflict election violence in the region but none of the CSOs currently has the resources to mitigate or prevent risks of election violence.

**Gaps in the existing mitigation measures**

Although the TeKwaro Lango cultural institution has the potential to influence and to lead on prevention and mitigation of potential election violence, the simmering partisan based factionalism seriously undermines this opportunity.

**Measures to bridge the gaps**

Whereas in recent times there have been deliberate attempts to support reconciliation dialogues between the warring factions in the Lango cultural leadership and dialogue have been initiated between Lango, Acholi, West Nile, Teso and Karamoja communities, this initiative lacks the resources to keep it protracted and running. This initiative would benefit from logistical, financial and technical support to enable them traverses the whole of Lango sub-region as well as initiate and carry out sensitization programs over the radio.

**v) Bugisu Sub- Region [Ranking No. 5]**

In the slopes of Mount Elgon, Bugisu is a region whose potential is still to be fully exploited. Bugisu's regional center, Mbale town, once touted as the cleanest city in East Africa is now a shadow of herself, beginning to emerge slowly to come up into the limelight. The political risk in the region is strongly grounded in the ill-informed decision by central government to suspend

the board of Bugisu Cooperative Union, accusing them of abuse of office only to be forced into returning them into office, leaving behind major losses. The Bugisu cooperative union was formed by Arabica coffee farmers and is very central in determining leadership in the region. Coffee is a crop so engrained in the family cultural lineage of the Bagisu and is passed on from generation to generation.

Risks in the region will be based on how best one manages relationship with the cooperative union and the coffee business in the region. In urban Mbale, the Industrial division, Central division and Bufumbo divisions are the flash points to watch in the run up to the 2016 general elections. The Elgon game park and land wrangles and alleged exclusions are common causes of tensions in the region. Actors will include Political Parties (FDC and NRM), Landslide displaced persons and Uganda Wildlife Authority. In Bugisu, especially Budadiri the home area of Hon. Nandala Mafabi, will likely be a battleground between FDC and NRM. Government failure to restore the Bugisu Cooperative union to its former financial standing before it took over may agitate electorate against the ruling party candidates. Political party (FDC and NRM) instigated clashes during election time and the botched resettlement of Bududa landslide victims in Kiryandongo is likely to play a role in instigating violence.

### Existing Mitigation Measures

The Bugisu cultural institution, *"Inzu ya Masaba"*, expressed willingness to promote unity and anti-election violence in the region.

### Gaps in existing mitigations measures

Lack of the resources to carry out sensitization of the electorate and reconciliation efforts among the political contenders remains a major challenge.

### Measures to bridge existing gaps

The key mitigation measures that featured prominently from both youth and women FGDs in Mbale, for the electoral commission to organize joint campaigns for the different party candidates on the same day, provided there was adequate security to deal with people who may try to disrupt elections when they are drunk as has been the case in the past. It is incumbent upon the Electoral Commission that all electoral laws should be put in local languages that people understand. The sensitization on the electoral laws should be done through the media well in advance and those 6 months to election date was considered as appropriate. The sensitization recommended was to be continuous after elections, so that people know and understand their legal rights. There should be organized mediation meetings between inter-party and/or intra-party rivals by a neutral party especially CSOs, religious and cultural institutions. They also advised that continuous civic education after elections for empowerment of citizens to respect their rights and encourage the voters to go and register and thereafter go voting in the next election can contribute to mitigating violence. Electoral Commission should plan the logistics in time and make sure that all election staffing, materials and security are deployed in time and as any delays can easily be misunderstood to mean bad intension.

### vi) Kigezi Sub-Region: [Ranking No. 6]

Kigezi region is home to the Bakiga of Kabale, Kanungu and Rukungiri, Bafumbira of Kisoro districts. It is a mountainous region of South-Western Uganda bordering Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo. In 1904 the region was acquired by the British colonial government from King Leopold of Belgium at a fee and curved out from the Belgian Congo colony. The Bakiga are straight talking, hardworking mountain people who have also migrated to central Uganda and made fortunes from hard work and determination. The region is currently home to two Prime Ministers (Hon. Ruhakana Rugunda (present) and Hon. Amama Mbabazi (former) who has declared interest in wrestling the presidency from his long time buddy of 40 years and the incumbent President Yoweri Museveni, causing a lot of arrest of his supporters around the country. This situation has no doubt turned Kigezi region in general and Kanungu district (Mbabazi's Home town) into a lime light for potential violence in the 2016 elections. Rukungiri district of Kigezi is also home to the opposition leader Col Dr. Kiiza Besigye (Rtd) who has been one of the most serious opponents of the incumbent in the last three elections, although without success.

The main risks being the battles of personality politics between, Besigye, Mbabazi and Museveni as the main risks in the region's electioneering politics in the coming months which will play around the emotion of their supporters. FGDs in Kanugu identified the following potential flash points namely Rutenga, Kambuga, Kihihi-Kayonza and Kanungu Townhip. They summed it up thus:

> *"Our son versus Museveni has coalesced the electorate under the banner of Umoja (Unity).The security agencies have been given instructions to deal with such pro-Mbabazi groups hiding under the implementation of the 2005 Act regulating assemblies* (Youth FGD-Kanungu)

There was a claim that some Youth representatives around Kigezi sub-region hold meetings attended by Military officers at night in Kabale to discuss initiatives to promote Mbabazi presidency. Instructions given to clamp down on such meetings can result into violence that may claim many lives, assuming such facility is identified by security forces as an illegal assembly.

**Existing Gaps in Mitigation Measures**

No specific framework for reconciliation has been initiated, probably because no one expected this level of acrimony that is now brewing between the big political guns in the region. The Banyakigezi Convention (Ruhakana Rugunda and Amama Mbabazi are key members), a local community dialogue with local, national and diaspora membership was strongly recommended as the right platform with the potential to support anti-election violence and Catholics and Anglican Religious leaders dialogue, initiated by Christian Council. Amama Mbabazi's likely presidential bid is brewing, followed by forcing people to vote for people not of their choice, the broken bridge and tarmacking of the Rukungiri-Kanungu road, the hot bed of giving away and the sports ground to an investor in Kanungu Town Council are likely to be violence triggers, come 2016 general elections.

Deliberate measures should be instituted to ensure that religious leaders engage the winners and losers to set aside their grievances and settle down and work together for the betterment of the people. A kind of council of main religious denominations, namely Anglican and catholic, were better placed to mediate because they command high respect and trust in the area. The media was regarded as a very critical element and could as well better serve as the vanguard of the mitigation strategies as commanding wide audience in the region. In order to fulfill that mission, the editors or media owners were called upon to exhibit high levels of professionalism. This is a critical period the media is tempted to make inciting broadcast of unconfirmed poll results that risk creating unnecessary excitements whose outcome is often violence. Participants in some focus group discussions felt that the radio stations refrain from unauthorized vote tallying that are often misleading and caused chaos in the past.

On a number of occasions, security agencies were often blamed by participants in Focus Group discussions for their laxity and being poorly equipped in response to volatile situations during election campaigns, Election Day and after elections for lack of clear strategy and lack of adequate preparations to deal with incidences of election related violence. FGD participants proposed that Local Defense Units s undertake orientation on the handling of firearms for election security. They also recommended that better arming of police polling constables with firearms could be a good deterrent to the would-be trouble causers during election time. Although politicians were consistently accused as the trouble causers in election violence, there is no clear framework for dialogue and or training in good practices for peaceful elections. Targeting them could help stem off violence particularly before and during elections.

### vii) West Nile Sub-Region [Ranking No. 7]

Like Kigezi, the West Nile region was also acquired by the British colonial government from King Leopold of Belgium at a fee and curved out from the Belgian Congo colony in 1904. As discussed above, the West Nile region is just recovering from rebellion and has done very well in the last twenty past years. After negotiating peace with central government, the region took advantage of its geo-strategic location to benefit from international trade with RDC and South Sudan. Arua, the regional center, has recently been awarded as one of the fastest grown towns in Africa.

Risks for violence in West Nile region are associated with the consistent contestation between the FDC and NRM and the lingering question of promised compensation of Ex-combatants of the various fighting groups that negotiated peace with central government. Although they have not been compensated yet, they have been mobilizing votes for the incumbent. Equally volatile is the land conflict in urban centres and International trade tensions with neighboring countries, including the mistreatment of Ugandan traders. The flash points identified include Arua Municipality and Yumbe town.

Violence-free election in the sub-region is also challenged by historical Alur-Lendu conflict, which dates back to 1848, during the Luo migration, when Alur first came into contact with the Lendu and Okebo who were the indigenous people of the present day Nebbi district who subjugated them, making them their servants. The climax of this conflict was in the 2002-2005

when the Lendu engaged the Alur in armed violence. This tribal schism may re-emerge, widen and cause electoral violence when Lendu or Okebo candidates contest against Alur candidates in the 2016 general election.

**Existing Mitigation Measures**

The West Nile region and particularly the major district of Arua, has for long been a hot spot of political contestation during past elections, mainly between the two big political parties NRM and FDC. These contestations have more often than not resulted into violence, especially within Arua Municipality. In order to avert potential electoral related violence and conflict, a number of institutions were identified as quite influential in mitigation of violence in the sub-region. These include the Cultural institution- *Lugbara-iKari*, the media and the Ex-combatants of the defunct Uganda Army and West Nile Bank Front as discussed below:-

The traditional institution known as *Lugbara-iKari* was mentioned by several respondents during interviews for this study in Arua as having the experience in successfully mediating intra – ethnic and inter-party political conflicts, which usually define the scope and depth of political conflict in West Nile sub – region. The recommendations are based on the experience of the Elders' initiatives in mediating tensions during the 2006 elections when the political conflict degenerated into displacement of a population from an entire parish after their homes were burnt. In addition, at the time this study was being conducted in March 2015, the same Elders had initiated a peaceful co-existence campaign on two local FM radio stations in Arua aimed at easing tensions before the coming elections by calling on key politicians to embrace peaceful campaigns. According to a Key Informant, one of the radio programs is called "The West Nile We Want" and is aimed at minimizing conflicts among the ethnic groups especially during election time, since politicians often come from the major ethnic divides between Madi-Okoro and Madi-Opeyi. Recently, *"Lugbara-IKari"* also hosted cultural leaders from Lango, Acholi and West Nile communities for a truth and reconciliation meeting. All these programs were considered key entry initiatives by the traditional institution to bring about unity well in advance of the 2016 general elections. Hence, this institution provides another opportunity for engaging people of that sub-region in peaceful 2016 elections.

As noted above, media in West Nile region have already started pro-active measures in collaboration with the cultural institution by supporting the campaigns for peaceful 2016 elections. According to a Key Informant, the moderators of the programs have listened to the elders' messages and approached the campaign professionally to the extent that they share the acclaim for having rendered campaigns to encourage and restrain politicians against using a provocative and divisive approach that could incite violence in coming electoral processes and outcomes. This has been seen a key-mitigating role of the media as far as political conflict and violence in the area is concerned. For example, it was narrated that:

*"In the peak of elections, politicians of different shades come together on FM radio and inform people that they should be calm."*(Key Informant-Arua district)

The ex-combatants have since formed the Ex-Combatants Association and through it have played a big role in the mitigation of election related violence during past elections and could

be a key institutional frame work for mitigating electoral relayed violence in the upcoming 2016 elections. They are constrained by limited resources to provide an effective and timely cover for the entire region.

In Alur region, nothing much is happening in terms of mitigating or preventing violence since cultural, religious and civil society organisations have no specific ongoing conflict mitigation projects. Thus, in the districts of Nebbi and Zombo, there is tension between Alur and Okebo, who are claiming an area where they had previously settled but is now inhabited by the Alur after the discovery of commercial quantities of oil resources in the area. Following Nebbi District Local Government election of 2011, which was marked by violence characterized by bloodshed, intimidation and massive politically motivated arrests, in the run up to 2016 general elections the same political rivalries that led to electoral violence are re-emerging.

**Gaps in Mitigation Measures**

There is lack of adequate funding and no existing coordination to align their activities with the national anti-election violence agenda.

**Measures to bridge the gaps**

There is need for enhanced funding to the initiatives and coordinating the effort at the national level.

**viii)Ankole Sub-Region [Ranking No. 8]**

Ankole is a home to the Banyankole peoples of Uganda and the home ground of the incumbent President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of Uganda.  Naturally, this is the heartland of the NRM with most of the UPDF Generals, Ministers, and senior government offices hail as sons and daughters of the soil. The region is generally highly loyal to President Museveni as a person and to the NRM. The region is also home to the current president of opposition party FDC. Recent developments in the politics of the country has seen many leaders from this region raise concerns and join the struggles to cause change in the political terrain of the country. Although President Museveni has been the strongest proponent of reactivating cultural institutions and their property in other parts of the country, he has firmly refused to see the same in his back-yard. The argument is that this would reactivate historical sectarian divisions in the community that would undermine unity and development.

The main risk of this region is probably the attempts to block the existence of a decent opposition in the region, and any attempt by the opposition to expand their territory in this region. Only the FDC can talk of some substantive following in Ankole. Security agencies are reported to be very active trying hard to keep the opposition as negligible as possible in the region. The regional urban center Mbarara had Kakoba divisions as flash point and other areas outside town included sub-counties of Rwampara, and Mwizi.

Leadership tensions in the Anglican church of Uganda are brewing and may soon become a political crisis since most of the West Ankole politicians recently signed up to a petition against their Bishop. The emergence of a youth group advocating for the return of Ankole cultural trust

and the Obugabe (Kingdom) institutions and properties, including real estate and the Royal Regalia confiscated by central government in 1967, is causing new tensions in the region. Religious leaders, mainly Catholics versus Anglicans, covertly supporting rival political candidates are new areas of tension, which could turn into sources of violence in the region.

**Existing Mitigation Measures**

Although no formal conflict mitigation framework was reported, the Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC) initiative was strongly recommended as a key neutral personality to resolving these issues. Banyankole opinion leaders are likely to play a key role in averting electoral violence. Media campaigns attempting to avert violence during elections are key to mitigating the effects of violence.

**Gaps in Existing Mitigation**

Participants in FGDs recognized the unique role played by religious leaders to mediate between warring political parties and individual politicians in the region, but rather ad hoc in nature and depending on request from local leaders.

**Measures to fill the gaps**

Religious institutions seem to be a reliable framework for mitigating election related violence in the region, with better coordination and resources at their disposal. Like Kigezi region the Ankole region does not seem to be expecting any serious election violence crisis, hence there are no signs of any preparations going on. Nonetheless, initiating locally based preventive measures though funding media mobilization and education would be a good preventive strategy.

**ix) Teso Sub-Region [Ranking No. 9]**

Teso region is home to Kalenjin origin peoples who entered Uganda form the North-East coming down from Ethiopia. Teso was once a bustling mixed farming community with the largest cotton growing and a strong livestock culture. The region is slowly recovering from insurgency and cattle rustling that destroyed all its cattle wealth. Once a highly educated and civil service community, well known for being amongst the best administrators and teachers in their country, Teso has since the war become shadow of its former glory.

**Risks in the region**

Unmet promises of restocking, unlikely to be honored in time, are keeping many people bitter. Following the defeat of the LRA incursion, illegal arms that came from that adventure continue to be a challenge in the region, with the potential of becoming a tool for violent episodes in the 2016 elections. The perception of exclusion from war reparations and restocking, IDPs from Karamojong and ethnic tension with the Balalo migrant pastoralist continue to simmer in the region. In Soroti town, flash points reported were Pamba, Kicinjaji, Teso Inn, Moru-apesu and Nakatunya as the flash points for violence. This will be battle ground for UPC, FDC and

NRM parties, recruiting the former arrow boys into their illegal militia to escort their processions and guard their votes and constitutes a high risk given the violence they have engaged in the past.

**Existing Mitigation Measures**

Cultural institution and Elders readiness and actions are already in place to promote violence free elections; and Arrow boys' willingness to provide election security through frameworks such as the community policing are good existing mitigation measures. In Teso Sub-Region, the Cultural institution and Elders galvanized by the cultural leader-*"Emori-mori"* are decided to rise up and take a central role in mediating conflict before, during and after elections. This study found out that a number of mediation efforts have successfully initiated political settlements and lobbied government for resources to compensate masses that lost lives and wealth. At the time of the study, the cultural institution was designing strategies and measures aimed at ensuring that the 2016 general elections in the sub-region to prevent violence or at least ensure that, once incidents arise, they can be mitigated to reduce their intensity and appeal to calm.

Furthermore, the Cultural institution is lobbying for use of the Arrow Boys for additional ad-hoc election security force to back up the police during the campaign period and Election Day. Moreover, some of the former Arrow boys' willingness was exemplified by actively participating in local security frameworks in their current role as Community Policing Agents. These Arrow Boys would do even better if they were provided election security training and adequately resourced to support the police and other security agencies during elections.

The media in Teso sub-region is very influential and practitioners interviewed during this study cited the central role of the media in mitigating conflict at every stage of the election cycle. One of the media Key Informant interview commented on the critical role of the media thus:

*"Media plays a big role, if a person is moderating and is not playing it cool with the panelists from different political shades, tampers can flair up and inflammatory and inciting statements can be aired out."* (KII-Delta FM, Soroti).

Therefore, professional media reporting aimed to popularizing peaceful campaigns is a key tenet for mitigation of violence during elections. However, it is important to note that most of the Media practitioners needed an orientation on matters related to covering election issues to equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary for reporting responsibly in order to mitigating violence come 2016 general elections.

**Gaps in existing mitigation measures**

No funding to ensure wide coverage of the entire sub-region and no deliberate mobilization of arrow boys for election security has so far been done.

**Measures to fill the mitigation gaps**

The mobilization strategy, funding and capacity building tailored towards election security in the region are required to ensure that adequate security is provided during election cycle.

## 4.7 EXISTING NATIONAL MITIGATION MEASURES

As discussed in the preceding section on the hot spots, a number of mitigation measures exist and need to be strengthened and scaled up to ensure that there is adequate coverage and foot print to deal with election related violence. The perception is that there are some efforts undertaken formally through institutions of the government, including security forces and non-state actors such as civil society, to prevent the recurrence of election related violence in the future. There are also some small and isolated non-formal processes towards designing preventive and mitigation strategies, for example traditional and religious institutions working towards uniting warring political forces in Buganda, Soroti, Lira and Arua, among others. CSOs are also implementing civic education programmes in most parts of the country, intended to strengthen citizen consciousness and responsibility for free, fair and violence free elections. In this section we discuss the mitigation mechanisms that exist towards the 2016 general elections.

---

**Lesson on mitigation of election violence from Kenya**

**Enactment of the National Cohesion and Integration Act, 2008 creating the National Cohesion and Integrations Commission**

- National Cohesion and Integrations Commission charged with promoting and monitoring harmony and peaceful coexistence of ethnic groups in hot spot areas and throughout the country during after the upcoming general elections.

- Instituted a transparent public recruitment process for electoral commissioner which enhanced the public confidence in the Electoral management Body.

**Election security, law and order during the election period**

- Gather intelligence about the impending election related violence and acting to contain it. Implement an integrated security agent's framework to boost the numbers, equipment and capacity to deal with cases of violence wherever and whenever they occur. Judicial reforms could go a long way in building public confidence into the judiciary as the last resort to victims of election related violence during the 2016 general election.

- Donor community and Civil Society augment government effort to prevent hate speech during election time through efforts like Umati established by Ushahidi for online early warning in 2012 to monitor hate speech and find the strategies for countering it through its partner organization, Nipe Ukweli (give me truth). Outreach was done to counter incitement messages. Individual Kenyans also played an active role in reducing the impact of potentially dangerous social media.

---

*Figure 4: Lessons on mitigation of election related violence from Kenya*

**Security Forces**

Security key informants met by the study team expressed satisfaction on their readiness to deal with election related violence in their areas of responsibility. The police have recruited and trained additional manpower and auxiliary forces like the community crime preventers ready to respond to potential and actual threats to election security. However respondents expressed concerns over limited budgetary support for transport and logistics supplies necessary for effective and timely preventive and protective response to trouble spots, in urban and rural areas of their responsibility. Security officers also expressed the need for improved election security coordination led by the Uganda Police, citing evidence of weak coordination and lack of clarity of institutional roles, which in the past have led to breaches that derailed timely action.

District Security Committees have devised a strategy to identify and recruit the radical Youth as key informers to security agencies so as to ensure they are not recruited into political party camps to cause violence.

**Election Management Body**

Electoral Commission has been on the spotlight after debacles in the past elections led to considerable election related violence under the same management. Obviously, skepticism abounds about what is likely to happen differently with the very same team of actors and prevailing systems in place. To avoid past mistakes, the EC has made substantial investments in doing a better job as demonstrated in the following reforms listed hereunder. The EC was incorporated in the National Identity Card joint task force, extracting the voter registers in each parish/ward from the joint national identity data bank. The Electoral Commission has already rolled out its plan and road map to the 2016 elections for all processes that hopefully would guarantee successful violent free elections. This includes voter education, operationalizing legal and policy frameworks to articulate multiple stakeholder rights, roles and obligations and, among others, ensuring that there is adequate preparation of key actors such as security organs. The Electoral Commission: Road map to 2016 Elections as hereunder illustrated:

1.      From April 19th – May 23rd voter registers printed out for scrutiny; May 11-15th gazette and publish candidate nomination dates and venues;

2.      From May 12th – 1st June recruit and train display officers and parish/ward tribunals; 2nd – 11th June display youth, PWD and older persons registers in each village as well as those of UPDF, professional bodies and workers register at EC offices; and

3.      2nd – 22nd June the EC display the comprehensive national voters register at each polling station in readiness for commencement of elections.

4.      Elections for all interest groups commence 14th August – 30th September;

5.      Nomination for presidential candidates starts 5th – 6th October;

6.      Presidential campaigns start from 12th October 2015 and end on 15th February 2016;

6.      Parliamentary campaigns start 12th November 2015 – 16th February 2016;

7.    Polling period (presidential and parliamentary) 12th February – 12th March 2016;

8.    Gazette and publish results 19th February – 25th March 2016;

9.    Post-election activities shall continue 15th Feb – 30th June 2017 culminating in the publication of the Election Commission Report on 2016 elections by July 2017.[7]

In view of the prevailing voter apathy, the EC has started a deliberate drive to ignite citizen interest in the 2016 elections. This exercise is run by the civil society group, Citizens Coalition for Electoral Democracy in Uganda (CCEDU) in what is dubbed the "*Votability*" campaign that seeks to:

*"Mobilize eligible Ugandans to actively and peacefully participate in the register update exercise before it winds up on April 30."*(Key Informant-CCEDU)

The above campaign focuses on Boda-Boda riders because they constitute a unique segment of the population of between 18 and 35 years of age in urban and rural areas and are active campaign clientele of politicians. According to the he CCEDU Communications Manager, the Boda-Boda (*mopeds*) teams are also explained below:

*"They are also the most frustrated and tend to think that elections do not matter. We want to tell them that they matter"* (Daily Monitor, April, 2015: 7)

The EC has the powers to enlist the support of the Uganda Police and through them other forces to guarantee sufficient security during elections. However, in 2016 the role of the police and other forces is not yet very clear but is likely to be boosted to cater for anticipated escalation of election related violence. The specific actors are likely to be Uganda Police Force in collaboration with the UPDF as main actors.

**Civil Society initiatives**

Civil society and faith-based organisations are also active in the pre-election period to prepare citizens for elections. Civil society and government through the EC are already running the "votability" campaign to interest more Ugandans into voting in 2016. The religious leaders have and continue to caution politicians against making inflammatory political statements that can divide communities as well as politicizing land disputes. The New Vision of Thursday May 28th 2015 page 11, quoted Archbishop of Church of Uganda, His Grace, Stanley Ntagali warning politicians in northern Uganda against making political statements that can divide local communities. The Arch Bishop is also quoted to have warned politicians not to use the land disputes in Acholi sub-region to earn cheap popularity. The EC has accredited a number of NGOs and media houses to do civic education and voter education but it does not target active politicians enough. They are currently shopping for funds from development partners. The study noted that existing civic education programmes content lacks a clear violence-free-election messaging yet this is critical as we approach the elections such as has been adopted by DGF funded voter education programs. This is happening while there is compelling evidence

---

[7] EC collaborates with CCEDU in rallying citizens to vote through the "*votability*" campaigns

of violence and conflict already taking place in internal political party preparatory activities for the 2016 general elections.

**The Media**

Media houses have been active at national level promoting public dialogue on electoral reforms (e.g. NTV Fourth Estate, On the Spot, and The Situation Room) talk shows, some of them in collaboration with development partners and NGOs. This has to continue since a professional media provides the best ammunition for quelling conflict during and after elections. In this regard collaboration between the Electoral Commission and Uganda Communications Commission is critical to ensure media communicates messages for peaceful elections aimed at mitigating violence before, during and after 2016 elections. A key informant from the media pointed out that the strict sanctions by the Uganda Communications Commission has in the past effectively reprimanded the errant media and has been an effective tool for restraining the media from inciting political violence (e.g. closure of CBS radio in Kampala) Such strong measures if adopted could be very instrumental in restraining the media from inciting electoral violence in the programming in the forthcoming general elections.

**Political parties**

Political parties under the inter-party forum have initiated a draft code of conduct for political parties, which is a good move in the right direction for mitigating election related violence. There is the Inter-Party Organization for Dialogue (IPOD) to mitigate and/or resolve inter-party conflicts. The study team noted that the disciplinary measures proposed in the draft code of conduct are not deterrent enough to restrain all political actors from engaging in election related violence. The proposed caution, warning, naming and shaming comes very close to condoning rather than deterring politicians from breaching the code, this is yet to be rolled out after a long time of negotiations. Political parties need to clean up their own houses in order to have clean primaries, well prepared candidates and brief their supporters on observing law and order.

## 5.    CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 CONCLUSION

The study concludes that election related violence in Uganda has been recurring since inde-pendence and with time it has gained sophistication in planning and execution, supported   by modern technology such as FM radio stations, mobile phones, social media and ease of transport such as Boda-Boda motor cyclists, to the extent that some areas are highly vulnerable to election violence. While in the early years of electoral democracy, election related violence was mainly motivated by loyalties to preserving ethnic and religious identities, the power and influence of money has taken center stage in motivating violence. All political parties' at all electoral levels are culpable and it requires special soul searching for individual and collective action to end election related violence in Uganda. Evidence from past election and recent elec-tions shows that collateral damage and overall impact of election related violence goes far

beyond the targets with severe consequences to families and society at large. Existing mechanisms for prevention, mitigation and resolution of election related violence remain spontaneous, reactive, weak, under-resourced and stakeholders involved are un-coordinated and to some extent reluctant to act. Dealing with this problem requires collective effort by all stakeholders at all levels with concerted effort and leadership by government.

## 5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

In these recommendations we draw from the participants to this study and lessons from the Kenyan experience. This is because the political, economic and social context of Kenya has similarities with the current Ugandan Context. Both countries are former British Colonies government by the traditions of the English Law, pursuing largely western capitalist economic policies and facing similar religious and ethnic dynamics. Kenya underwent one of the worst post-election violence in modern times following the disputed 2007 elections with the death of over 3000 people and hundreds of thousands displaced in the spate of only two month. Following this violence, the Kenyan government undertook serious constitutional, legal and institutional reforms and implemented programs aimed at minimizing any form of violence in subsequent elections with good results in the 2013 election. The recommendations proposed hereunder are categorized into four, namely short, medium, long term and specific ones for donor actions.

**Short term**

- Under the oversight of the Electoral Commission and leadership of the Uganda police force there should be enhanced coordination and collaborative effort for election security intelligence gathering by the responsible sister agencies the ISO, ESO and CMI.

- Election conflict early warning system and documentation of incidences of election violence should isolate Election Violence Against Women(EVAW)from other forms of election violence so that exact level of prevalence of EVAW as a form of election violence can be established

- To strengthen the auxiliary forces and ex-combatants and LCs defense secretaries and co-opt them to support this processes.

- Police working hand in hand with other security agencies and designated political party officials in charge of security work to demobilize Political Parties' Youth Brigades with priority in the hotspots of Kampala, Masaka, Busoga, Bugisu, Kigezi sub-regions and other urban centres to follow.

- In the short time available, the Uganda Communications Commission, as the regulatory media agency, should work with the media and broadcasting councils and the Uganda Media Owners Association (UMOA) to implement an election specific media monitoring guidelines with special focus in monitoring and preventing hate speech, inciting media campaigns in print, electronic and social media while maintaining high standards of integrity and non-partisanship.

- In the long term a review of existing media management laws and enforcement mechanism may be necessary to improve their quality and applications, including punitive measures such as revoking lenience's arrest and prosecution of errant journalists and media staff and owners. Avoid selective implementation of media laws in favor of the incumbent.

- The Electoral Commission, the police, CSOs and development partners should design and promote packages of messages aimed at peaceful elections on election security that should be integrated into the civic education and voter education manuals used by CSOs, the media and other agencies around the country. Popular versions translated in local languages should be widely circulated around the country.

- Ministry of Finance in collaboration with Electoral Commission and the police should improve financing of the districts election security committees and police logistics to strengthen intelligence gathering and timely response to election related violence reports.

- CSO in collaboration with Boda-Boda cyclists associations and the electoral commission implement an online SMS early hate speech monitoring systems based on the Ushahidi model and supported by a national network of Boda-Boda cyclists training and working community "election peace teams" recently equally applied in Nigeria by CSOs.

- Support for election violence prevention and mitigation measures should be designed to pay particular attention to electoral violence against women and ethnic and religious minorities, and resolving local conflicts that have potentials for causing or escalating electoral violence.

**Medium-term**

- Parliament urgently needs to implement the legal and constitutional reforms provided for in the Citizen's National Compact for Free and Fair Elections presented to government and parliament by CSOs and political parties in December 2014, and consider addressing recommendation item 1 of the citizens' compact (demanding a new independent electoral commission) and proactively launch a public media campaign to explain the roles, successes and limitations of the electoral commission throughout the election cycle.

- The electoral commission and all other election stakeholders should acknowledge the prevalence and adverse effects of Election Violence Against Women(EVAW) a sub category of Violence Against Women In Politics(VAWIP),on the integrity of elections and taken steps to formalize effective complaint and response mechanism to mitigate the vice.

- The Judicial Service Commissions should strengthen the election tribunal to be operational throughout the election cycle period and expeditiously handle all cases brought to the bench.

- Support for election violence prevention and mitigation measures should be designed to pay particular attention to electoral violence against women and ethnic and religious minorities, and resolving local conflicts that have potentials for causing or escalating electoral violence.

**Long-term**

- The election security component of elections should be amplified and adequately financed to deal with perpetrators as well as supporting victims of violence. In this regard, legal aid should be initiated and supported by the Civil Society organisations.

- Support for election violence prevention and mitigation measures should be designed to pay particular attention to electoral violence against women and ethnic and religious minorities, and resolving local conflicts that have potentials for causing or escalating electoral violence.

**Specific Recommendation to Development partners**

Consider funding the following:

- Support for curbing election related violence, prevention, mitigation and measures designed to pay particular attention to electoral violence against women and ethnic and religious minorities, and determine mechanisms for resolving local conflicts that have potentials for causing or escalating electoral violence.

- Support the development of, productions and distribution of election security training tool kit and the integration of election security training in already ongoing civic and voter education programme funding.

- The establishment of an independent CSOs online SMS election violence monitoring system based on the Ushahidi model of Kenya, this could be built on a nationwide network of Boda-Boda volunteer monitors trained on election violence prevention monitoring and reporting.

- Organizing regional dialogue for election security and peace for political parties and politicians that are active in the election campaign to address potential and actual tensions.

- Establish an Independent Elders Mediation Group with high standing persons with integrity akin to the "Ogola Group" that attempted negotiation following the 2011 elections.

- Establishment and strengthening of election violence early warning system as part of the election violence prevention of mechanism.

- Local civil society organisations in each of the hot spots to build and/or support local peace infrastructure to mediate local electoral disputes and promote a culture of peaceful elections because of their perceived political neutrality, and trust by local communities and politicians.

- Political party assistance should not focus on democratization only, without attention to conflict prevention, but should include supporting parties develop mechanisms, processes and procedures for preventing and resolving intra-party conflicts through democratic channels.

- Support the monitoring and documentation of incidents of electoral violence in all phases of the electoral cycle, especially in the 'hot spots' areas of the country and support measures intended to protect individuals vulnerable to violence, including support for electoral justice.

- Support the training of journalists on gender and conflict sensitive election reporting, to reduce risks of journalists sensationalizing the public to foment electoral and gender-based political violence.

# REFERENCES

Ahikire et al (2013), "It all begins with me, Citizens' Voices on Uganda at Fifty Years of Independence and Beyond, Amplifying Citizens' Voices", CBR Working Paper No. 102

Ake, Claude (2000), the Feasibility of Democracy in Africa. Dakar: CODESRIA.

Collier, Paul (2009), Wars, Guns and Votes: Democracy in Dangerous Places, London: The Bodley Head.

Diamond, Larry, and Marc Plattner, eds. (2010), Democratization in Africa: Progress and Retreat. Baltimore, MA: Johns Hopkins University Press.

European Commission-United Nations Development Programme (2011), Thematic Workshop on Elections, Violence and Conflict Management: Summary Report. EC-UN Joint Task Force on Electoral Assistance/Barcelona International Peace Centre, Spain, Brussels: Belgium.

European Union Election Observation Mission (2011), Uganda: Final Report on the Uganda General 18 February Elections, EUEOM, March.

HURINET Observer Report on Uganda 2011 Elections

Hyden, Goran. 2011. "Barriers to Party Systems in Africa: The Movement Legacy." Africa Review 3 (2):

International Peace Institute (2012), "Elections and Stability in Africa: The Way Forward", New York: United Nations

Karl, Terry. 1986. "Imposing Consent? Electoralism versus Democratization in El Salvador.", in Elections and Democratization in Latin America, 1980–1985, edited by Paul Drake and Eduardo Silva, 9–36.

Khabele Matlosa & Victor Shale (2013) "The pains of democratization: the uneasy interface between elections and power-sharing arrangements in Africa", Africa Review, 5:1.

Khadiagala, Gilbert. 2008b. "Forty Days and Nights of Peace-Making in Kenya", Journal of African Elections 7 (2): 4–33.

Khadiagala, Gilbert. 2009. "Political Parties in the Consolidation of Kenya's Democracy: Trends and Perspectives," in Two Countries One Dream: the Challenges of Democratic Consolidation in Kenya and South Africa, edited by Rok Ajulu, 63–94. Johannesburg: KMM Review Publishing

Lindberg, Staffan. 2006. Democracy and Elections in Africa. Baltimore, MA: John Hopkins University Press.

Lindberg, Staffan. 2009. "Democratization by Elections: A Mixed Record." Journal of Democracy 20 (3): 86–92.

Matlosa, Khabele, Gilbert Khadiagala, and Victor Shale, Eds, (2010). When Elephants Fight: Preventing and Resolving Election-Related Conflicts in Africa. Johannesburg: EISA.

Mkandawire, Thandika. 2008. "Africa: Insight—in 'African Democracy' the Big Men Believe in Choosing their Own Voters", Daily Nation (Nairobi), 18 April (quoted in Kanyinga, Karuti, and

Duncan Okello and Kanyinga Karuti, Eds, (2010), Tensions and Reversals in Democratic Transitions: The Kenya 2007 General Elections. Nairobi: Society for International Development.

Omotola, Shola. 2011. "Third-Term Politics and the De-Institutionalization of Power in Africa." Africa Review 3 (2): 123–140.

Opolot Samson James (2014) "State and Society relations in Uganda's Politico-economic Transitions: Structures, Processes and Outcomes of Governance since 1986", The Uganda Journal of Management and Public Policy Studies, Volume 8, Number 1, October.

Perrot Sandrine, Makara Sabiti, Lafargue Jerome and Fourere Marie-Aude Eds. (2014), Elections in a Hybrid Regime: Revisiting the 2011 Ugandan Polls. Kampala: Fountain Publishers.

Sekaggya Margaret (2010), Uganda: Management of Elections; a Study by AfriMAP and the Open Society Initiative for Eastern Africa, Nairobi: Open Society Foundations.

Sørensen, Georg. 2008. Democracy and Democratization: Processes and Prospects in a Changing World, 3rd ed. Boulder, CO: West view Press.

The Citizens' Manifesto (2010), Our Idea of a Peaceful and Prosperous Uganda with Happy People: A National Synthesis report, Kampala: Uganda NGO Forum.

The Citizens Manifesto 2011 – 2016, Towards a Peaceful and Prosperous Country with Happy people, Kampala: Uganda NGO Forum.

Uganda Police (2001), "Report on the policing of the Presidential Elections of 2001". The Police Elections Coordination Office, 20th March.

United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (2009), African Governance Report II, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (2013), African Governance Report III, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Uganda Join Christian Council (2011), UJCC Post-Election 2011 Statement, The Daily Monitor, Monday, March 7, 2011, Kampala.

The Ugandan Journal of Management and Public Policy Studies Volume 4 No.1, November 2012.

**Newspapers:**

Daily Monitor (2015), "Kanyeihamba cites bribe-taking judges, scolds ULS", Monday, April 20, Kampala: Monitor Publications Ltd, Nation Media Group Company.

Web Sources:

http://www.ec.or.ug/press/Milestones%20for%20EC%2020152016%20General%20Elections.pdf

http://www.ec.or.ug/press/Press%20General%20Update%20of%20the%20National%20Voters'%20Register%20April%202015.pdf

http://www.ngoforum.or.ug

**ANNEX ONE: CONSULTANCY TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR RESEARCH CONSULTANCY**

| Project Name | Promotion of violence-free/peaceful 2016 general elections |
|---|---|
| Short title of assignment | Research consultancy on the assessment of risks of election-related violence before, during and after the 2016 general elections |
| Duty station | Kampala (with travels to selected regions of the country) |
| Application deadline | Two weeks from the date hereof |
| Type of contract | Individual consultant |
| Duration of contract | 25 days |
| Start date | As soon as possible |

**About The Democratic Governance Facility**

Eight of Uganda's development partners (Austria, Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the UK and the European Union) have combined their experiences, expertise and resources to establish the Democratic Governance Facility (DGF). The overall goal of DGF is to contribute to equitable growth, poverty eradication, rule of law and long term stability, which are aspirations of Ugandans, espoused in the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda and the National Development Plan.

To this end, since 2011 DGF has been supporting state and non-state actors within three interlinked components, namely:
1. Deepening Democracy, to promote democratic values, norms and practices.
2. Rights, Justice and Peace, to promote human rights protection, access to justice and conflict prevention.
3. Voice and Accountability, to promote citizens engagement for improved service delivery.

**Background to the assignment**

In Uganda's Constitution, elections are envisaged as the peaceful, constitutional means of bestowing political legitimacy. Art 1.4. States that 'the people shall express their will and consent on who shall govern them and how they should be governed through regular, free and fair elections.' Yet Uganda has a checkered electoral history. Recent national polls have been contentious, with defeated contestants seeking redress in the courts (2001, 2006) or in the 'court of public opinion' (2011). Judicial rulings and electoral observation missions have noted serious flaws, not just in the administration of the elections, but more importantly in the wider electoral environment ('playing field'). Electoral turnout, while still relatively high nationally (59% in 2011), is on the decline, as are measures of popular satisfaction in the electoral process. Accordingly, 'improving the integrity and credibility of the electoral processes has been identified as a key DGF objective, and a number of initiatives, ranging from electoral reform advocacy to voter education, are being supported by the DGF as a result.

Election-related violence poses a particular challenge to the integrity and legitimacy of the electoral process, as voters require an environment devoid of intimidation, threats, as well as violent conflict in order to freely choose their representatives. However, political contestation in Uganda has historically been associated with violence, and elections have often exacerbated existing tensions and generated fresh grievances, triggering violent confrontation. The 2011 electoral campaigns fortunately marked an improvement over 2001 and 2006, and were relatively devoid of overt violence. However, in their immediate aftermath, 'Walk to Work' protests were violently put down by police and military forces.

Against this background, as 2016 general elections draw nearer, the DGF intends to instigate a study to identify, assess and rank in order of priority the risks of election-related violence, both before, during and after the 2016 general elections. This 'action-oriented' research will serve as a basis for key stakeholders in the electoral process – security forces, political parties, Electoral Commission, civil society organizations, observer groups, development partners – to identify potential corresponding measures to prevent the occurrence and/or mitigate the effects of these identified risks of election-related violence, and provide specific recommendations for the DGF.

**Objectives of the study:**

The following are the specific objectives of the study:-
- To identify, assess and prioritize risks of election-related violence before, during and after the 2016 general elections.

- To determine the level of preparedness to avert election-related violence in the 2016 general elections.
- To identify further prevention and mitigation strategies and measures to address the risks of election-related violence identified above.

**Scope of work:**

The following key activities are envisaged to be completed to meet the objectives of the study listed above, include, but are not necessarily limited to:

**Objective i)**
- Identify, assess and prioritize the risks according to factors such as their scope, magnitude, impact, target populations, likelihood of occurrence and geographical location ('hotspots').
- Analyze electoral violence data for the past elections to identify possible recurring patterns and/or 'hotspots'.
- Analyze the role and motivations of key stakeholders, including security forces, regarding election-related violence and identify the proximate causes and potential triggers or 'tipping points' for violence.

**Objective ii)**
- For each of the risks of election-related violence identified above, determine whether prevention, mitigation and/or resolution mechanisms exist and assess the level of their effectiveness.
- Assess the adequacy of the legislative, administrative and security framework for managing election-related violence and conflicts.
- Map and assess the key stakeholders regarding the prevention and mitigation of election-related violence, and their level of readiness.

**Objective iii)**
- Recommend potential measures to fill gaps and address identified shortcomings in existing prevention and/or mitigation measures related to election-related violence for relevant stakeholders
- More specifically, make recommendations for the DGF, in order of priority, to support the prevention and mitigation of election-related violence.

## Methodology:

The consultant is expected to develop a methodology for undertaking the study and achieving the above objectives. The proposed methodology should cover but not be restricted to the following issues:

- Identifying, collecting and analyzing relevant primary and secondary documents on election-related violence (observer reports, academic studies, court rulings etc)
- Identifying key stakeholders and informants concerning election-related violence risks and prevention/mitigation measures
- Devising appropriate quantitative and qualitative data collection instruments, including interview matrix for key stakeholders and informants to be consulted in the study.
- Developing a provisional travel plan to selected potential 'hotspot' areas.
- Determining a method for analyzing and assessing both risks (criteria, ranking, etc) and mitigation measures.

## Deliverables

The deliverables include:
- An inception report with research design, methodology and work plan to be presented to the DGF (day 3).

- A mid-term debriefing of progress with the DGF with presentation of the envisaged table of contents of the reports (between day 10 and 12)

- A draft report with provisional findings and recommendations presented and discussed in a validation workshop at DGF (day 20)

- A final report, with executive summary, findings, recommendations and annexes, taking into account comments made in the validation workshop (day 24).

- A one-day workshop with key state, non-state and international electoral stakeholders to share findings and recommendations of the final report (1 day, after completion of the final report).

**Budget and Timeframe:**

The budget will provide for professional research fees as well as travel expenses in connection to field trips in accordance with DGF policies and regulations. The assignment will start as soon as possible and be completed within 25 working days from the start date.

**Experience and Qualifications required of the consultant:**

The lead researcher should have:-
- Advanced university degree in political science, development studies, peace and conflict studies or other relevant discipline.

- Significant, demonstrated professional experience in conflict analysis, conflict prevention and implementation of Conflict Sensitivity Approaches (CSA).

- Successful track record of carrying out research studies, including publication, and consultancy assignments.

- Experience in electoral violence analysis a plus.

- Strong interviewing, communication, analysis, presentation and report writing skills.

- Ability to manage a high workload and deliver to tight deadlines.

- High sense of responsibility and ability to work in multinational team.

**How to apply:**

The application should consist of the following:
1. Technical Proposal:
- Cover letter and CV. The CV will be evaluated for general qualifications, adequacy for the assignment and relevant experience. The CV will count for 60% of the Technical Proposal.
- Methodology (maximum 12 pages) containing the consultant's understanding of the assignment, proposed approach/methodology to carry it out and references for 3 similar assignments undertaken. The Methodology will count for 40% of the Technical Proposal.

2. Financial Proposal showing clearly the breakdown of costs e.g. on professional fees, per Diem and other related costs. Each researcher/lead consultant will be entitled to include 1 research assistant for a maximum of 20 days in the financial proposal. Contracting is subject to DGF approval of the research assistant's CV and qualifications.

Qualified candidates should submit an online expression of interest, addressed to the Programme Officer po4@dgf.ug, Democratic Governance Facility (DGF) by November 28, 2014 at 3pm Kampala time.

**ANNEX TWO: DATA COLLECTION TOOLS**

**TOOL I: IN-DEPTH KEY INFORMANTS INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

**Introduction:**

My Name is and I am from?

May I know your title Sir/Madame?

Uganda has evolved a promising multiparty political system characterized by regular elections at national, local governments and lower level structures. However previous elections notably 2001, 2006 and to a lesser extent, 2006 were marred with varied levels of election – related violence before, during and especially after elections. These outcomes undermined the integrity of the elections. As 2016 elections draw nearer, the DGF deemed it fit to instigate a study to identify, assess and rank in order of priority, the risks of election-related violence before, during and after the coming elections. The results of this 'action research' will serve as a basis for key stakeholder in the electoral process – Electoral Commission, political parties, CSOs, observer groups and development partners to adopt 'evidence based' preventive or mitigating actions to avert escalation of election-related violence in future.

You have been identified as a stakeholder to inform this process so your kind cooperation will be highly appreciated. Kindly participate in answering the question and discussion that follows. Thank you.

**QUESTIONS:**
1. What do you know generally about elections?

2. Have you participated in public elections before? (If yes, how and when was this?)

3. What is your view on the process/nature of election processes in Uganda? (Probe for national or any other levels)?

4. What is the state of political representation of the electoral processes we are discussing? (Probe for e.g. political party representation, distribution of power, political party freedoms and sovereignty,)?

5. How do you assess the state of independence, transparency and credibility of electoral processes (design, implementation and outcomes)?

6. What is your perception of the effectiveness and accountability in management of elections (in terms of legislative effectiveness and judicial effectiveness?)

7. What is your view on the state of executive influence on design, processes and outcomes of elections?

8. Are you aware of election related violence (Who was involved? How? Where)?

9. In your view, what could have triggered this violence (Who was the most negatively affected parties in the conflicts? Who could have gained from the violence?)

10. Was the election violence mentioned above a unique experience or one that you often

experience in other elections (are the victims and perpetrators always the same)?

11. Given the above experience, do you think that violence free elections are feasible in Uganda?

12. What specific measures do you think can make future elections less non-violent (could this be refined by actors e.g. development partners, government, CSOs, others?)

**TOOL II: FDG/DIALOGUE QUESTION LISTS**

**Introduction:**

**We are a team from?**

Uganda has evolved a promising multiparty political system characterized by regular elections at national, local governments and lower level structures. However previous elections notably 2001, 2006 and to a lesser extent, 2006 were marred with varied levels of election – related violence before, during and especially after elections. These outcomes not only undermined the integrity of the elections themselves, but posed a threat to the consolidation of good governance in the country. Against this background, as 2016 elections draw nearer, the DGF deemed it fit to instigate a study to identify, assess and rank in order of priority, the risks of election-related violence before, during and after the coming elections. The results of this 'action research' will serve as a basis for key stakeholder in the electoral process – Electoral Commission, political parties, CSOs, observer groups and development partners to adopt 'evidence based' preventive or mitigating actions to avert escalation of election-related violence in future.

You have been identified as a stakeholder to inform this process so your kind cooperation will be highly appreciated. Kindly participate in the discussion that follows. Thank you.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What do you know generally about elections?

2. Have you participated in public elections before? (If yes, how and when was this?)

3. What is your view on the process/nature of election processes in Uganda? (Probe for national or any other levels)?

4. What is the state of political representation of the electoral processes we are discussing? (Probe for e.g. political party representation, distribution of power, political party freedoms and sovereignty)?

5. How do you assess the state of independence, transparency and credibility of electoral processes (design, implementation and outcomes)?

6. What is your perception of the effectiveness and accountability in management of elections (in terms of legislative effectiveness and judicial effectiveness?)

7. What is your view on the state of executive influence on design, processes and outcomes of elections?

8. Are you aware of election related violence (Who was involved? How? Where)?

9. In your view, what could have triggered this violence (Who was the most negatively affected parties in the conflicts? Who could have gained from the violence?)

10. Was the election violence mentioned above a unique experience or one that you often experience in other elections (are the victims and perpetrators always the same)?

11. Given the above experience, do you think that violence free elections are feasible in

Uganda?

12. What specific measures do you think can make future elections less non-violent (could this be refined by actors e.g. development partners, government, CSOs, others?)

**TOOL III: EXPERT SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

**INTRODUCTION**

Uganda has evolved into a promising multiparty political system characterized by regular elections at national and local government levels. However previous elections notably 2001, 2006 and to a lesser extent, 2006 were marred with varied levels of election – related violence before, during and especially after elections. These outcomes not only undermined the integrity of the elections themselves, but posed a threat to the consolidation of good democratic governance in the country. Against this background, as 2016 elections draw nearer, the DGF deemed it fit to instigate a study to identify, assess and rank in order of priority the risks of election-related violence before, during and after the coming elections. The results of this 'action research' will serve as a basis for key stakeholder in the electoral process – Electoral Commission, political parties, CSOs, observer groups and development partners to adopt 'evidence based' preventive or mitigating actions to avert escalation of election-related violence in future.

You have been identified as a stakeholder to inform this process so your kind cooperation will be highly appreciated. Kindly participate in filling this questionnaire and the discussion that follows. Thank you.
Name of Interviewer: …………………………………….………………

**QUESTIONS:**

Title of Respondent: ……………………………………..………………….
District: …………………………………………………………………….
Date: ……………………………. Time: ………………………………

To show your opinion, kindly <u>tick</u> or <u>place</u> star in correct box below:

**SECTION 1: BIO DATA**

1. **Age:**
    I. 55 and above ……………..
    II. 40 – 55: …………………..
    III. 35 – 40: ……………………
    IV. 20 – 35 ……………….
    V. Below 20: …………….

2. **Sex: i) Female: ……………. ii). Male: …………………..**

3. **What is your Religions?**
    I. Protestant: ………….
    II. Catholic: ………….
    III. Seventh Day Adventists: …………..
    IV. Orthodox: …………..
    V. Born Again: …………..
    VI. Islam: ………………… .

.

**4. What is your district of Birth? .........................................**

**5. What is your nationality? .......................................................**

**6. What is your highest Level of Education attained**
    I.    University  ......................................................
    II.   Tertiary      ........................................................
    III.  A' level Secondary .........................................
    IV.  O'level Secondary  ...........................................
    V.   Primary level     ..................................................

## SECTION TWO: CONTEXTUAL QUESTIONS ON ELECTIONS

- **How would you rate your knowledge about political elections, if at all?** *(Don't read options)*
  **Table 1: Level of Awareness about Elections**

| Nothing | 1 |
|---------|---|
| Fair | 2 |
| Good | 3 |
| Excellent | 4 |
| Other | 5 |
| Other | 6 |

**1 What exactly do you know about elections in Uganda?**
**Table 2: Knowledge of Roles of Elections (What are elections: for? What are outcomes of elections?)**

| 1. What are elections for? | |
|----------------------------|---|
| 2. What is the expected outcome of elections? | |
| 3. Are the elections you know leading to above outcomes? (Explain): | |

**2. Have you ever participated in any political elections before? (Do not read options)**

Table43: The Nature of Participation in Elections

| Probe issues | |
|---|---|
| 1. How did you participate in elections? | |
| 2. When did you actually participate in those elections? | |
| 3. Is there anything else you did during that participation in elections? | |
| 4. Where was this election you engaged in? | |
| 5. Others (specify) | |

- **Did you participate in any of the following past Presidential elections (2001, 2006, and 2011)?**

1). Yes: .....................

2). No................................

**3b. If yes, what specific role did you play?** *(Read options)*

Table 3: Roles of Participation in past Presidential Elections

| | |
|---|---|
| *Simply voted* | 1 |
| *Had administrative roles (Specify)* | 2 |
| *Never (why and give reasons)* | 3 |
| *Don't know, Don't remember* | # |

**4. In your opinion what were the key strengths in processes of any of the above elections you engaged in? (Probe for elections of 2001, 2006 and 2011)?**

Table4: Perceptions of the key strengths of past general elections known (2001, 2006. 2011)?

| Rank strengths from best to lowest | Reason why |
|---|---|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |

**5. How would you rate the levels of weaknesses of past Presidential elections (2001, 2006 and 2011)?**

Table 5: Perceptions of the key weaknesses of the past Presidential elections (2001, 2006. 2011)?

| Rank weaknesses from the most sever t to lowest | Reason why |
|---|---|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |

**6. What is your comment on the observed levels treatment of opposition political party candidates during any of the following elections (2001, 2006, and 2011)?**

Table 6: Treatment of Opposition parties/candidates

| Rank weaknesses from the most sever t to lowest | Reason why |
|---|---|
| 1. Excellent | |
| 2. Good | |
| 3. Fair | |
| 4. Poor | |

**7. How in your view did the following actors manage the above electoral processes (in 2001, 2006 and 2011)?**

Table 7: The perceived nature of Management of the electoral processes by Actors

| Rank weaknesses from the most sever t to lowest | Reason why |
|---|---|
| **Electoral Commission and branches** | |
| 1. Excellent | |
| 2. Good | |
| 3. Fair | |
| 4. Poor | |
| **Uganda Police  Force** | |
| 1. Excellent | |
| 2. Good | |

| | |
|---|---|
| 3. Fair | |
| 4. Poor | |
| **Other Forces e.g. Army, Vigilantes, etc (specify)** | |
| 1. Excellent | |
| 2. Good | |
| 3. Fair | |
| 4. Poor | |
| **External Observers** | |
| 1. Excellent | |
| 2. Good | |
| 3. Fair | |
| 4. Poor | |
| **Local government leaders** | |
| 1. Excellent | |
| 2. Good | |
| 3. Fair | |
| 4. Poor | |
| **Political parties (give specific examples)** | |
| 1. Excellent | |
| 2. Good | |
| 3. Fair | |
| 4. Poor | |
| **The electorate/voters (give specific examples)** | |
| 1. Excellent | |
| 2. Good | |
| 3. Fair | |
| 4. Poor | |

8. **Kindly rank by order of intensity some of the reactions of citizen as a sign of concern over the challenges in managing the above elections**

Table 8: Perceived turn up of citizens during the past electoral processes (probe for specific attributed to 2001, 2006, 2011 elections)

| Reaction of citizens | Explanatory remarks (why?) |
|---|---|
| 1. Excellent turn over | |
| 2. Good turn over | |
| 3. Fair turn over | |
| 4. Poor turn over | |

9. **Kindly rank the behavior of citizens in response to election processes and outcomes (probe for 2001, 2006 and 2011)**

Table 9: Perceived citizens behaviors during the past electoral processes (probe for specific attributed to 2001, 2006, 2011 elections)

| Reaction of citizens | Explanatory remarks (why?) |
|---|---|
| 1. Very violent | |
| 2. Violent | |
| 3. Calm | |
| 4. High apathy/neglect | |

Table 10: Rank the observed responses of varied stakeholders towards citizen's responses before elections (probe for 2001, 2006, 2011)

| Name of stakeholder | Explanatory remarks on responses (why?) |
|---|---|
| 1. Government of Uganda | |
| 2. Electoral Commission | |
| 3. Uganda Police Force | |
| 4. Other forces | |
| 5. Election observer groups | |
| 6. Development partners | |
| 7. Media | |
| 8. Local governments | |
| 9. Civil society organizations | |

| 10. | Others (specify) | |
|-----|------------------|---|

**SECTION THREE: QUALITY OF ELDCTORAL ENVIRONMENT AND OUTCOMES**

**10. Political Representativeness of past election processes**

**Table 11: Perceptions of Political Representativeness of past Electoral Processes**

| 1.1. Nature of Uganda's Political system to deliver representative politics | |
|---|---|
| 1. Excellent | |
| 2. Good | |
| 3. Fair | |
| 4. Poor | |

**Table 12: Distribution of Power among Electoral Actors**

| 1.2. What was the distribution of power relations between incumbent and opposition in past elections | |
|---|---|
| 1. Excellent | |
| 2. Good | |
| 3. Fair | |
| 4. Poor | |

**Table 13: What was the state of freedom and security for the opposition during and after elections?**

| 12.3. Political party freedom and security (in reference to opposition parties) | |
|---|---|
| 1. Excellent | |
| 2. Good | |
| 3. Fair | |
| 4. Poor | |

**Table 14: What was the credibility of the electoral processes and outcomes?**

| 12.4. Independence of actors, credibility and transparency of electoral process and outcomes | |
|---|---|
| 1. Excellent | |
| 2. Good | |
| 3. Fair | |
| 4. Poor | |

**SECTION IV: INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENEESS AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF ELECTIONS**

**Table 15: Legislative effectiveness of past elections**

| 13.1. How was the quality of legislative effectiveness of past elections | |
|---|---|
| 1. Excellent | |
| 2. Good | |
| 3. Fair | |
| 4. Poor | |

**Table: 16: Judicial effectiveness of past elections**

| 1.2.    Judicial effectiveness of past elections | |
|---|---|
| 1. Excellent | |
| 2. Good | |
| 3. Fair | |
| 4. Poor | |

**14. Level of Executive Effectiveness for Free and Fair Elections?**

| 14.1. How do you rate government management of state structure? | |
|---|---|
| 1. Excellent | |
| 2. Good | |
| 3. Fair | |
| 4. Poor | |

**15. Competence of CSOs in creating pressure for free and fair elections?**

| 15.1. How do you rate Civil Service transparency, accountability and accessibility in electoral systems? | |
|---|---|

| 1. Excellent | |
|---|---|
| 2. Good | |
| 3. Fair | |
| 4. Poor | |

11. **How do you rate the efficiency of government services for transparency of electoral processes and outcomes?**

| 16.1. What is the level of governmental efficiency in servicing effective free and fair elections? | |
|---|---|
| 1. Excellent | |
| 2. Good | |
| 3. Fair | |
| 4. Poor | |

12. **What is the level of decentralization of electoral structures for ensuring universal access to electoral services?**

| 1.1. How decentralized are the electoral service structures to ensure universal access to electoral services? | |
|---|---|
| 1. Excellent | |
| 2. Good | |
| 3. Fair | |
| 4. Poor | |

## SECTION V: WHAT IS THE LEVEL OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND OBSERVANCE OF THE RULE OF LAW DURING ELECTIONS

| 1.2. How are stakeholder human rights observance levels during past elections? | |
|---|---|
| 1. Excellent | |
| 2. Good | |
| 3. Fair | |
| 4. Poor | |

| 1.3. | How is the level of the Respect for the rule of law prior, during and after electoral services? |
|---|---|
| 1. Excellent | |
| 2. Good | |
| 3. Fair | |
| 4. Poor | |

| 1.4. | What is performance of law enforcement organs before, during and after electoral services? |
|---|---|
| 1. Excellent | |
| 2. Good | |
| 3. Fair | |
| 4. Poor | |

13. HOW DO YOU RATE MEDIA INDEPENDENCE DURING PAST ELECTIONS?

| What is performance of MEDIA before, during and after electoral services? | |
|---|---|
| 1. Excellent | |
| 2. Good | |
| 3. Fair | |
| 4. Poor | |

14. RANK THE LEVELS OF TRANSPARENCY IN MANAGEMENT OF ELECTORAL FUNDS BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER ELECTIONS

| What is performance of the economic incentives regimes during organs before, during and after electoral services? E.G. Funding political parties? | |
|---|---|
| 1. Excellent | |
| 2. Good | |
| 3. Fair | |
| 4. Poor | |

### 15. WHAT IS THE STATE OF CORRUPTION BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER ELECTIONS?

| What is the level of corruption before, during and after elections in Uganda? | |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Excellent | |
| 2. Good | |
| 3. Fair | |
| 4. Poor | |

### SECTION VI: RECOMMENDATIONS ON BEST PRACTICES FOR FUTURE ELECTIONS

| **Kindly provide a ranking of action specific recommendations for preventing election-related violence in Uganda?** | |
| --- | --- |
| Preventive actions | Reasons |
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. Others | |

### KINDLY MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MITIGATING CONFLICTS DURING ELECTIONS

| **Kindly provide a ranking of action specific recommendations for mitigating conflicts during future elections in Uganda?** | |
| --- | --- |
| Preventive actions | Reasons |
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. Others | |

### 16. RECOMMENDATIONS ON BEST PRACTICES FOR MANAGING POST ELECTION VIOCLENCE IN UGANDA

| Kindly provide a ranking of action specific recommendations for managing post-election violence in Uganda? | |
| --- | --- |
| Preventive actions | Reasons |
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. Others | |

**THANKS YOU VERY MUCH!**