Party Cooperation in a Results Perspective

Country Study: Uganda

Acronyms

CIL	Change Initiative Limited
CIS	Center Party International Foundation/Centerpartiets Internationella Stiftelse
CP	Conservative Party
DDP	Deepening Democracy Programme
DP	Democratic Party
FDC	Forum for Democratic Change
FES	Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
IDEA	Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IPC	Inter-party cooperation
IPA	Inter-party alliance
IRI	International Republican Institute
JEEMA	Justice Forum
JHS	Jarl Hjalmarson Foundation/Jarl Hjalmarson Stiftelsen
KAS	Konrad Adenauer Stiftung
KIC	Christian Democratic International Centre/Kristdemokratiskt Internationellt Centrum
NDC	National Delegates Conference
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NIMD	Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy
NRM	National Resistance Movement
PAO	Party Affiliated Organisation
PPP	People's Progressive Party
RYPLA	Regional Young Political Leadership Academy
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
Silc	Swedish International Liberal Centre

UPC   Uganda People's Congress

UWOPA   Ugandan Women's Parliamentary Association

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1   Introduction

This report presents the findings of the country study on Uganda, undertaken as part of the evaluation of democracy support through Swedish party affiliated organisations (PAOs). The report is one of three country studies linked to the evaluation. The overall findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation are presented in the main report.

The visit to Uganda was undertaken October 5-16, 2009. The evaluation team (the Team) met with partner organisations, persons responsible for project implementation, project participants, NGO representatives, international party foundations, independent researchers and the Swedish Embassy. Before the visit to Uganda, the Team met with the concerned Swedish PAOs. A debriefing with the Swedish organisations was made after the visit. A list of persons met is attached in Appendix 1.

The PAOs have two projects in Uganda. One is a joint project to support inter-party cooperation (IPC), which has engaged four organisations on the Swedish side: the Christian Democratic International Centre (KIC), the Center Party International Foundation (CIS), the Swedish International Liberal Center (Silc) and Jarl Hjalmarson Foundation (JHS).[1] The cooperation partners in Uganda have been the main opposition parties: Forum for Democratic Change (FDC), Conservative Party (CP), the Justice Forum (JEEMA) and Uganda People's Congress (UPC). Initially, the Democratic Party (DP) was also part of the cooperation but it later decided to instead become an observer.

The other project in Uganda is the Regional Young Political Leadership Academy (RYPLA), a KIC project implemented in cooperation with the National Democratic Institute (NDI).

Each project is assessed with respect to effectiveness and relevance.[2] The assessment of effectiveness is made against the specific objectives of each project, as described in project documents and interviews. The assessment of relevance draws on an analysis of the party system attached in Appendix 2. The report also presents observations made regarding side effects and sustainability, as well as lessons and other observations of interest.

A summary of main findings is presented in the Chapter two. Findings in respect to the specific projects are presented in Chapters three and four.

The Team has consisted of Eva-Marie Kjellström, Sabiti Makara and Peter Sjöberg. We would like to thank everyone who contributed to the evaluation in different ways!

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[1] JHS has not been part of the project after 2008.
[2] **Effectiveness:** the extent to which the development intervention's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.
Relevance: The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' and donors' policies.
Source: Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results-Based management, Sida in cooperation with OECD/DAC, 2007.

2   Main Findings

2.1   Political Context

Since independence in 1962, Uganda has had a troubled political development, plagued with internal conflicts, authoritarian one-party rule, militarism, intolerant multiparty systems, and suspension of party activities under the National Resistance Movement (NRM) lifted as late as in 2005. This has limited the development of an effective party system, a tolerant democratic political culture, and practice of competitive politics. As a result, the newly allowed parties lack strong links with the citizenry, resources to expand their operations, and the strength to compete effectively. This in turn has contributed to public suspicion towards multiparty politics in general, and political parties in particular. In addition, the aspirations and interests of women and youth are often resisted, and marginalized within the political sphere.

2.2   Strategies and Approaches

The two projects in Uganda represent two different approaches to strengthen democracy. However, both have been multi-party, contrasting with the more common 'fraternal' cooperation.

The joint project for alliance building has aimed at strengthening the opposition parties internally and improving the dialogue between them, thereby making them a more influential political force. The Swedish PAOs have primarily facilitated the establishment of a joint structure for IPC, which has included thematic working groups, signing of a joint protocol and a proposed joint electoral platform. There has also been a sharing of Swedish experiences in building political alliance.

In the other project, KIC is working with NDI to address the lack of youth involvement in politics through the Regional Young Political Leadership Academy (RYPLA). The project is jointly supported and coordinated by KIC and NDI. The overall aim is to empower the youth wing leaders in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania to gain influence in politics and to play leading roles in their parties. This has been done by offering training opportunities for the youth wing leaders.

2.3   Effectiveness

The projects were assessed in terms of achievement of objectives. For the joint project, most of the activities envisaged in the original application (including internal strengthening of the parties and support to women and youth) were not undertaken due to a change of project focus towards building a central platform for the opposition parties under IPC.

The cooperating Ugandan parties successfully implemented most of the project components planned after the revision. These included a visit by CP, DP and FDC to Sweden in February 2008, formation of the IPC Steering Committee on 18 April 2008 consisting of CP, FDC, UPC and JEEMA, summit meetings held in April and

May 2008, assignment of ten Thematic Committees in August 2008, and the signing of the Protocol of Cooperation on 5 August 2008, immediately followed by the first Inter-party conference held 14-16 August 2008 to ratify the Protocol and to approve a number of recommendations. Internally, each participating party has held a National Delegates' Conference (NDC). Four NDCs were held from November 2008 to February 2009, and these were co-funded by the project. Such NDCs would not have been undertaken to that extent without the Swedish support.

However, one party, DP, left the cooperation, claiming that the rules of the game were not fair to every partner. According to this party, IPC was exclusively focused on removing the current government. It also argued that the focus should be on building strong parties before initiating cooperation. Internal disagreements within this party could also be a reason for leaving. Still, DP attended the inter-party conference as an observer and also participated in the ten Thematic Committees presenting their findings during the conference.

During the first week of July 2008, representatives from FDC, DP, UPC, JEEMA and CP attended a workshop on the Logical Framework Approach (LFA) on the island of Gotland, Sweden, and the Summer Academy of KIC, which included interaction with Swedish politicians.

The Team found the project effective at strengthening IPC and the parties. They now share common visions, objectives and policy issues. The collaboration has created a new sense of confidence and consciousness and consultations are underway for a joint electoral platform for the 2011 election. It is still too early to assess the full impact of the project. However, the Team notes that the time perspective of the project is limited to the 2011 elections. Weaknesses within individual opposition parties and IPC may reduce the possible longer term impact.

RYPLA has shown promising results in Uganda despite the country having been included in the programme only in 2008. The Team found that the RYPLA activities have been successfully implemented. In 2008, 41 participants were trained, of whom 11 were Ugandans (6 men and 5 women). The outcome of the activities has so far mainly been observed at the individual level. The participants described the training as very effective and hands-on in imparting skills in political work and acknowledged that it had increased their self-confidence. The persons interviewed also felt better equipped in the dialogue with the party leadership. To some extent, the trained participants have also contributed to strengthening their party youth wings by starting new local youth wing branches and mobilising the youth to participate in politics.

2.4   Relevance

After more than 20 years of suspension of multiparty politics, all parties (including the ruling party) are experiencing weaknesses in terms of organisation and capacity to develop ideologies and policies. These weaknesses make party support highly relevant. So far, most of the representatives of the cooperating parties in Uganda concur that the Swedish support was timely and relevant.

The Team considers support to the opposition parties relevant to create a fair playing field between the opposition and the ruling party. The ruling party has more

resources at its disposal than the opposition. The parties are weak individually, hence the relevance of the Swedish intervention to strengthen the bond of cooperation between the opposition parties. The Swedish financial support is relevant in the context of scarce financing suffered by the individual parties, attributed to the fear amongst their supporters to contribute directly to the opposition parties, the acute poverty prevailing in the country, the threats from the police whenever parties go out to fundraise, and the failure of the parties to mobilise their supporters effectively. Within IPC, the Swedish experience of alliance building has been seen as inspiring and motivating for the Ugandan parties.

The focus of the Swedish strategy for cooperation with Uganda is democracy and human rights. Political party cooperation is well in line with this.[3]

The RYPLA project is acknowledged by the Team as relevant to the needs of the youth, enabling them to push different political issues within their parties, increase their democratic credentials and shape their future political careers. It has also addressed the generational gap between old and young leaders in the parties. Considering the national context and the problems identified, the Team found the project objectives relevant since they help turn the youth from mere vehicles of the power game to active participants in party politics.

2.5   Side Effects

The objective of bringing the youth from different parties together has helped create a culture of tolerance among the young leaders involved in RYPLA. As a result, the trained youth from the different parties have positively changed their attitudes towards one another.

2.6   Sustainability

The sustainability of the joint project depends on how parties use the common electoral agenda to their advantage to win the elections in 2011. IPC leaders state that they have developed procedures on how to analyse the outcome of the elections and how to continue the cooperation after 2011. However, if the opposition coalition loses the election, there are high risks that it will collapse. The Team could not find any consideration of sustainability beyond 2011 in the present application. Key officials on the Swedish side said that they have the commitment to take it beyond the next election. Some interviewees forecast higher chances of success for IPC in 2016.

The RYPLA trained youth can be a valuable asset to the parties but the long-term benefits of RYPLA are largely dependent on how individual parties will bring the trained youth into their activities. While party leaders interviewed by the Team admitted the weak capacity of parties, no party leadership has yet included the youth wings as an essential asset for building up the parties.

A potential sustainability problem for both projects is their dependency on Swedish funding. Although one of the parties had put in place a resource mobilization

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[3] Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sweden, Strategy for development cooperation with Uganda, March 2009-December 2013.

committee, it was not evident that the party had increased its resources; nor had the other parties taken similar steps.

2.7 Observations and Lessons

The timing of the intervention was important for the outcome of the joint project in Uganda. This, together with a strong local ownership by the opposition parties in Uganda, contributed to a good foundation for a successful cooperation. The design of the project follows a clear reasoning and is adapted to the needs expressed by the Ugandan opposition parties.

The PAOs have a good understanding of the political conditions in Uganda and rely on a network of sources to keep them updated on the country context. This is confirmed by several independent organisations in Uganda. As the Swedish organisations lack local representation, they need to build on their local network. A positive factor is the close contact with the Swedish Embassy in this regard. This contact also provides an opportunity to coordinate PAO cooperation with other Swedish democracy support.

The fact that four Swedish PAOs have been engaged in the cooperation has brought some benefits, including that it has been an example to the Ugandan side of how political parties can cooperate. However, it is also noted that the involvement of the Swedish organisations has varied considerably. KIC has had the main responsibility for coordination, and in Uganda, a local organisation Change Initiative Limited (CIL) has a key function as an intermediary secretariat between the Swedish side and IPC. It should also be recalled that the Swedish support has principally been financial. In this perspective, the number of Swedish PAO engaged in the project has possibly not been that important, as compared to if there was a more direct involvement of the Swedish PAO in project activities.

However, the internal communication between the IPC steering committee and the parties is problematic, which could potentially impede the cooperation.

The opposition parties have weaknesses in terms of internal democracy, political programmes and policies. As described in the sections above, most of the activities have focused on coalition building at the central level even though the project documents explicitly mention capacity development of the individual parties as a priority. The only activities focusing on capacity development at the party level are the NDCs.

Even though the assessment of RYPLA is general positive there has also been some discontent. The mother parties are dissatisfied with the RYPLA project in some respects. One is that NDI is not considered to be transparent to the parties in the programme in terms of cooperation, coordination and financial aspects. Thus, the communication, coordination and cooperation need to be improved between the different stakeholders in order to overcome the problems.

Another source of discontent is the selection process of RYPLA participants, as party choices are sometimes not respected. The Team believes that the selection process of participants is a good thing since it prevents unqualified candidates from attending the training.

A third source of discontent is that the project creates a gap between the mother parties and the RYPLA participants, since it make the youth become too independent from the party. However, the Team believes that self-confident youth wings that challenge their mother parties in political issues could be an asset to the parties if they are handled well.

3   Joint Project for Alliance Building

3.1   Background

Due to the restrictions on the work of political parties in Uganda, they have not been in a situation to develop programmes and strategies. They need to strengthen their internal structures, develop priorities and elaborate strategies. The suspicion between different political parties is widespread, which contributes to a weak and divided opposition. Further, the influence of women and youth in politics is limited.

KIC, CIS, Silc and JHS initiated a joint project in Uganda in 2006. The aim was to facilitate consultations between Ugandan Women's Parliamentary Association (UWOPA) and civil society organisations. The purpose was to put women's participation in politics on the agenda. In September of the same year, KIC invited the largest opposition party FDC to Sweden to observe the parliamentary elections and the work of the Swedish government alliance. The visit was meant to serve as a source of inspiration and learning for the Ugandan opposition party on how to build an alliance with other parties.

KIC visited Uganda in August 2007 after which a new project was developed (as an extension of the original one targeting women). Consultations were held with party representatives from the FDC, CP and DP, followed by a seminar in Uganda for the three Ugandan parties in December, headed by the party presidents and the deputy party presidents. KIC, CIS and Silc were represented during the seminar. The purpose of the event was to stress the need for political parties in Uganda to work together on politics issues. After further consultations, it was decided that the project was to focus on IPC with the Ugandan opposition parties DP, CP, FDC, JEEMA and UPC. Hence, the opposition parties have been the primary stakeholders and main target groups of the project.

Besides the joint project, Sweden also finances the Deepening Democracy Programme (DDP). DDP is jointly financed by several donors and includes several components to strengthen a democratic development. Out of these, one focuses on political parties.

Several other international foundations are active in Uganda. The National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the International Republican Institute (IRI) from the United States, the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) from Germany as well as the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD) are all working to strengthen political parties and the party system in Uganda, although their approaches differ.

3.2   Project Design

According to the application for the period 2007/08, the *overarching objective* of the project is to support building of a democratic and well-functioning party system in

Uganda. The intended focus is to enhance cooperation between individual parties to build alliances and improve the influence of women and youth.

The *project goal* is to assist the cooperating partners to build effective parties and to facilitate the dialogue and cooperation between them. The assistance should also include training of women and youth with the aim of these groups taking a leading role in politics. The *sub-goals* and indicators are:

• Sub-goal 1: The participating political parties are strengthened internally and the dialogue between them is improved.

  Indicators: The political parties can present programmes and strategies in order to reach their objectives; the parties initiate dialogue and cooperation; working groups with representatives from the parties are established with the aim of building a coalition.

• Sub-goal 2: Women in Parliament and women's organisations cooperate and establish networks with the purpose of formulating joint strategies.

  Indicators: Members of UWOPA and women's organisations meet regularly to discuss cooperation in order to reach jointly identified objectives; the women's organisations present suggestions for UWOPA regarding necessary reforms to strengthen women's legal status both in the household and society; women in Parliament present and support reform proposals to strengthen women's legal status in the household and society.

• Sub-goal 3: Young women and men are given more influence in their respective parties.

  Indicators: Young women and men successfully compete for official positions within the parties; youth issues receive increased attention within the parties, the party programmes and official activities.

The activities planned within the cooperation were discussed in February 2008 when a delegation from the three cooperating opposition parties visited Stockholm. In consultations with KIC, CIS, Silc and JHS, an agreement was established on a programme for the Ugandan cooperating parties. Its main components included:

• Organisation of a summit for endorsement of the cooperation.

• Persuading other parties to join the cooperation, e.g. JEEMA and UPC.

• Establishment of a steering committee with two persons from each party responsible for the identification and implementation of activities.

• Identification of areas of cooperation and presentation of strategies.

• Establishment of thematic committees to present joint proposals for how to address challenges in the socio-economic and political areas.

• Organisation of an inter-party conference in Uganda highlighting importance of inter-party collaboration.

• Organisation of workshops for women and youth leaders to spread the message of IPC.

Hence, there was a substantial change in the focus of the project. The objectives related to internal strengthening of parties and promotion of women and youth were suspended, and efforts were instead directed to uniting the participating opposition parties.

A non-governmental organisation (NGO) founded by FDC, Change Initiative Limited (CIL), was assigned to serve as a secretariat to the summit and steering committee. CIL has also been the main contact point between the Ugandan parties and the Swedish PAOs.

In April 2008, the cooperation was extended as UPC and JEEMA joined.

The budget for 2007/08 amounted to SEK 2 711 600. Of this amount, SEK 2 685 522 was utilised.

3.3 Activities and Output

Activities have been implemented as planned according to the revised project. The activities undertaken with Swedish support were:

- A visit by CP, DP and FDC to Sweden in February 2008.

- Formation of the IPC steering committee on 18 April 2008 consisting of CP, DP, FDC, UPC and JEEMA.

- The first summit meeting held 30 April to 1 May 2008.

- LFA workshop in Gotland the first week of July 2008, with representatives from DP, UPC, FDC, JEEMA and CP.

- Establishment of 10 thematic committees in June-August 2008 to develop policy positions

- The protocol of cooperation signed on 5 August 2008 by FDC, UPC, CP and JEEMA.

- First inter-party conference held 14-16 August 2008 to ratify the protocol and to approve a number of recommendations. DP attended as an observer.

- NDCs for each individual party held November 2008-February 2009.[4]

The original objective of promoting network and strategies for strengthening the women's situation was thus not realised. However, KIC, CIS, JHS and Silc have co-financed regional seminars through NDI with the purpose of highlighting women's influence over issues decided upon at the local level. The Women's Common Legislative Agenda (WCLA), which was formed during the earlier intervention, was followed up at the district level. Representatives for women's organisations have identified and prioritised issues affecting women locally.

The youth component as expressed in the third sub-goal was postponed and was instead conducted during 2009.

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[4] 32 % of the financing of these came from the project.

3.4 Effectiveness

The protocol of cooperation states the direction of the cooperation and includes four major components: i) necessary reform areas, ii) socio-economic and political challenges, iii) identification of policy positions and iv) development of a joint electoral platform. The parties have accomplished several of these components. One example is the proposed political and electoral reform transferred into private member bills as part of necessary reform areas.

The work of the 10 thematic committees to present joint policy positions to address identified problems has been completed. This also serves as a foundation for the joint electoral platform presently discussed. Deliberations on a joint electoral platform are a challenge for the opposition parties as they need to agree on the selection of candidates for the parliamentary and presidency elections in 2011.

The NDCs were important for gaining the support of party members for the IPC arrangement and activities, which were crucial for the development of a joint electoral platform. During the NDCs, party presidents consulted with members, which can be seen as an expression of internal democracy.

In the application, it is stated that one of the objectives is to strengthen the opposition parties' internal capacity and assist in building effective organisations. Only the NDCs can be considered as internal capacity development. Apart from the NDCs, no activities were conducted in 2008 to strengthen each party individually. The objective to strengthen capacity within the individual parties has therefore not been fulfilled. As observed above, there were no activities undertaken in 2008 devoted to the training of women and youth with the aim of these groups acquiring leading positions in political parties and becoming more influential in party politics. This means that sub-goals two and three were not fulfilled in the given time framework.

However, there have been substantial achievements in relation to the alliance building objective. The Swedish support has contributed to facilitation of the dialogue and cooperation between the opposition parties included in the IPC. According to people interviewed, the parties would have commenced the process of creating IPC with or without external support, but it would not have moved as fast or been so solid had it not been for the support of the Swedish PAOs.

The arrangement as well as the activities conducted have helped in overcoming distrust and have enhanced tolerance for different political views. Especially the IPC steering committee has proven to be a good forum for discussion as all the parties are represented and there is a rotating chairmanship. This body also has a key function when discussing common views, structures and objectives. Even though the tension has decreased among the parties within IPC, there is still some hesitation in regard to the fear felt by the smaller parties being incorporated by the dominant opposition party FDC. However, the common view among the parties is that this is an issue that can be resolved and therefore does not constitute a threat to the cooperation.

However, one of the founding parties left the cooperation claiming that the rules of the game were not fair. According to this party, the parties should have been strengthened individually before the cooperation was initiated. Alternative reasons for

leaving the cooperation could have been disagreement within this party on how to proceed with the IPC.

The main focus of the cooperation is the election in 2011. A major challenge in the future cooperation is the agreement on a joint electoral platform and selection of candidates for the election. There is also a need to reach out with the message of IPC at the regional and local levels. The project has a high potential to bring a change to Uganda if the participating organisations manage to keep together. Yet, the focus on 2011 makes it uncertain what will happen with the cooperation after the election.

The overarching objective to support the building of a democratic and well-functioning party system in Uganda is very general and long term. It is still too early to know whether the cooperation between the opposition parties will continue to deepen, whether the coalition will be able to challenge the ruling party and what a possible election victory in 2011 may imply. However, the cooperation has already had an impact on the party system in terms of an improved balance between the current government party and the opposition. If the cooperation between the opposition parties continues to deepen and becomes more solid, then the contribution to Ugandan democracy may turn out to have been important.

3.5   Relevance

Weaknesses in the Ugandan party system, described further in Appendix 2, are a serious problem for democracy and make support to party system development highly relevant.

Support to the opposition parties can be motivated on the basis of creating a fair playing field between the opposition and the government party. There is a clear divide between the two with respect to the conditions to operate and the possibilities to communicate their messages. The opposition parties lack the resources to enable them to compete with the ruling party and do not have the same access to media. In addition, the individual parties are small compared with the ruling party and may not compete effectively as single entities.

Furthermore, the project objectives are relevant in view of the difficulties collaborating and acting as a joint force experienced by the opposition parties. The Swedish support came at the right time to help in the organisation of the NDC for each of the cooperating parties. These conferences helped the opposition parties strengthen their internal democratic structures by renewing the mandates of the leaders and giving mandate to the individual parties to embrace the IPC. Additionally, it has been possible for parties to work on common electoral strategies, share visions and come up with a common agenda for the coming election. Through working together, the parties have also been able to fight for common space to operate politically.

Some of the people interviewed stated that by cooperating within IPC, the parties can assist each other at the local level to find and elect candidates for the IPC parties. It has a potential to strengthen the link to the grass root level. However, the activities that have been carried out are not relevant to strengthen networks between women or to enhance youth influence in the individual parties.

The idea of party coalitions is not new in Uganda. The National Resistance Movement (NRM) was operating as a coalition of various parties for more than 20 years. The opposition parties today have realised that, without cooperation, they are unlikely to achieve their objective of winning an election. On several occasions, their mistake of 'slotting' various candidates against a single NRM candidate has cost them an electoral loss. The idea of cooperation amongst the opposition was originated by the parties themselves.

There has been a strong national ownership of this project and the activities have been defined by the national partner organisations. Hence, the priorities of the partner organisations have been well reflected in the project. The Swedish input has been concentrated to financial support of the various activities undertaken. This is a relevant strategy for supporting local identified priorities but does not automatically correspond to what is relevant from a country perspective. People interviewed also mentioned that the Swedish party experience of coalition was a good experience and served as inspiration for the Ugandan opposition parties.[5]

The people interviewed noted that it would have been practically difficult to sign the cooperation protocol and arrange the NDCs without the Swedish financial support. Therefore, the financial support has been relevant in view of the resource constraints of the opposition parties and the high costs of NDCs. There is always shortage of funds in each of the individual parties, keeping them from doing what they would have wanted to do. This shortage is attributed to a) the fear amongst their supporters to financially contribute directly to the opposition party due to the fact that the Government could jeopardise their interests, b) the general poverty prevailing in the country, c) the ever-present threats from the police whenever parties go out to fundraise, and d) the fact that the parties have not been out to mobilize their supporters effectively. This has been compounded by the commercialisation of politics due to 'individual merit politics' of NRM. There is a widespread tendency of vote buying by the ruling party. Moreover, under NRM the politics of patronage has been the order of the day.

3.6   Sustainability

As the project is currently designed, the Team cannot find that sustainability beyond 2011 has been considered. However, key officials on the Swedish side said that they have the commitment to take it beyond that period. The sustainability to the 2011 election is dependent on an IPC agreement on a joint electoral platform.

IPC winning the elections would be a milestone in Ugandan politics and make the project sustainable in terms of continued cooperation between the opposition parties. On the other hand, if IPC loses the election, there are high risks that the coalition will collapse. However, IPC stated that it is focusing on a period beyond 2011 and will discuss the possibility of continued cooperation regardless of the outcome of the election.

The parties within IPC have intensified their drive for financial contributions from members. In one of the parties, a Resource Mobilization Committee is already in

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[5] Even if the Swedish experience is relevant it could not be replicated in Uganda, since the electoral system in Uganda follows 'first past the post system', while the Swedish system follows proportional representation.

place for this task.[6] The intensified recruitment of youth into political parties is seen as a way to sustain the opposition parties financially in the future. However, this group is financially very weak due to the high unemployment among the youth.

3.7   Observations and Lessons

The work by the Swedish organisations is headed by KIC with the cooperation of CIS, JHS and Silc. As the project manager, KIC has an overall responsibility when it comes to communication with the local counterpart and monitoring of activities. All the Swedish organisations have been involved in the implementation but to different degrees. In the seminars in Sweden, all cooperating organisations contributed with speakers.

The Swedish organisations rely on a network of sources to keep them updated about the country context. Several independent organisations describe KIC, CIS, JHS and Silc as having a good understanding of the situation in Uganda. Also the Swedish Embassy has a constructive role in the cooperation. The contact with the Embassy also provides the opportunity to coordinate various aid modalities, which is an explicit desire by the Swedish Government.

The Swedish organisations have delegated the responsibility for identifying and implementing activities to the Ugandan partner organisations and permitted flexibility and local ownership, which has contributed to a successful outcome of the project. Implementation delegated to the local organisations requires close monitoring from the Swedish side. The Team finds the monitoring of IPC satisfactory even if the Swedish PAOs do not have local representation in Uganda.[7]

The delegation of responsibility to the local organisations is mentioned by the interviewees as one important factor for success. Giving the local partners independence in identifying and implementing the activities has contributed to good timing of the content of the cooperation. The arrangement has also enabled a close dialogue between the parties, which has made it possible to build trust and increase tolerance for different political views. Challenges that still remain include improved communication between the bodies of IPC and clearer role descriptions for the summit, steering committee and secretariat. At present, these role descriptions are unclear and cause suspicion among the stakeholders.

CIL has a key function as an intermediary secretariat between the Swedish side and the IPC. CIL originated and was founded by FDC officials, something that initially caused suspicion among other IPC stakeholders. Over time, this suspicion has been overcome as the decisions taken by CIL have not been biased in favour of FDC.

Communication within IPC is a problem. The inter-organisational communication between the summit and steering committee is insufficient. Decisions made by the steering committee are not transmitted to the summit. Similarly, there is dissatisfaction with CIL sometimes acting on its own without authorisation from the steering committee. The steering committee is working well, however. No tension can be

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[6] For the period 2009/2010, the IPC leaders have developed a resource mobilisation plan for implementation.
[7] For monitoring purposes, the Swedish PAOs rely on a local network including CIL, DDP and the Swedish Embassy.

identified between the representatives of different parties in the committee. The rotating chairmanship makes parties feel included and build trust.

4 KIC – Regional Young Political Leadership Academy (RYPLA)

4.1 Background

The RYPLA project started in Kenya in 2001 through collaboration between KIC, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the Kenyan Government. During the turbulent political situation in Kenya in 2007, the programme was suspended for one year and, in 2008, it was transferred to Tanzania. In 2008, Tanzanian and Ugandan political youth organisations were included in the project.

The principal stakeholders and prime target group have consisted of the political youth wings in Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya, with an equal number of women and men. The parties that the youth wings belong to should be represented in Parliament. All parties in Uganda's Parliament were represented in RYPLA in 2008.

The mother parties have been indirect stakeholders.

The first section of this report described the joint programme for alliance building supported by KIC, CIS, Silc and JHS, in which the support to women and youth was suspended. In 2008, RYPLA partly compensated for this suspension by focusing on five youth organisations in the country, i.e. NRM, FDC, UPC, JEEMA and DP. In 2009/2010, youth organisations from PPP and CP have also joined the project.

As Uganda is the focus of this evaluation, Tanzanian and Kenyan activities are not included in the following text.

4.2 Project Design

The principal problem that the project has addressed has been the weak representation of youth in the political life, as well as the vulnerability of young people in East African politics. There has been a growing tendency that the mother parties have fostered the youth wings to become militant activists on their behalf, instead of giving them space and tools to effectively formulate and peacefully implement politics. The project wanted to contribute to a non-violent development, by encouraging and educating leaders of the youth organisations and showing the way forward towards a more stable democracy and a more inclusive socio-political climate in Uganda.

An additional problem addressed was the aging political cadres in the parties. It is very unusual that persons in their thirties or younger have any political or other official positions in the party or in the parliament. It is even more uncommon that young women are appointed such positions. The aim has therefore been to encourage especially young women to apply to, and participate in, RYPLA.

Lastly, the project application points at the problematic relationships between the youth wings and their respective mother parties. There have been instances where the youth wings have propagated for a different ideology than their mother parties. In

other instances, some parties have looked upon their youth wings as volunteers in the campaigns and practical assistants instead of utilising the youth wings' capacity when dealing with issues related to the needs and aspirations of youth.

According to NDI and KIC, the entire political life would benefit from rejuvenation. In order to demand the right to participate in, and influence, politics, the project was to provide the political active youth wing members with tools to organise themselves more effectively, to build up a stable membership base, and to become better at formulating and disseminating the youths' political messages to the public and media.

The project has had two goals. One for *politically active youth in youth wings to play a more active role in their respective parties.* This goal was broken down into two sub-goals with indicators as follows:

• Sub-goal 1: Increased political capacity among youth-wing members. Indicator: The beneficiaries have acquired new skills and knowledge about effective and responsible political leadership.

• Sub-goal 2: Increased influence among youth-wing members in their parties. Indicators: The beneficiaries have used their newly gained skills and knowledge to identify new activities and/or to improve existing activities and methods in their party political engagement. Youth are offered or engage themselves in new political areas in their party.

The other project goal was to *develop a network of mutual support and sharing of knowledge among youth-wing representatives.*

• Indicator: The participants have started to use and spread methods, best practices and electronic material received at the RYPLA courses.

Networking between the different party youth organisations/wings was seen as an important programme component to overcome problems of intolerance and prejudices against other parties and their members.

The direct target group was the young political candidates from the 11 youth organisations in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda (four organisations) who have a potential of becoming politicians. NDI has encouraged the parties to appoint young female representatives from the youth organisations. In those parties, which have had two or three participants attending RYPLA, at least one should be a woman.

Each party proposed a number of youth candidates to participate in RYPLA. After interviewing the candidates, NDI selected persons on the criteria that they should:

• Be active youth in the party.

• Have previously or are currently working for the party.

• Have a letter of introduction from the party.

• Promise to complete the RYPLA course.

Planned activities for 2008 were to conduct the school of young politicians, consisting of three training sessions of four days each for the youth-wing representatives.

Between the second and third training session, a mini-project that each youth wing had planned during the second session was to be implemented. The purpose of these was to train the participants to design and manage projects, including budgeting.

The Swedish project budget for 2007/2008, including the Youth Assembly project in Kenya, was SEK 1 585 134 and the total project expenditures amounted to SEK 1 551 032. The project budget for RYPLA was SEK 626 558 and the expenditure totalled SEK 661 315 (excluding project administration and trips for Swedish resource persons). KIC's contribution to the RYPLA project was approximately 30% of the total project costs, as NDI covered the rest. KIC paid for the mini-projects (see below) and the second course of the project.

4.3   Activities and Output

During 2008, the three four-day sessions at the School of Politics were conducted as planned, for 41 participants, out of which 11 were from Uganda (six men and five women). There were very few drop-outs (only two of the 41 participants).

The first training session concerned political parties and ideologies, strategic planning, programme planning and budgeting.

The second session dealt with how to develop a mini-project, communication and political identity, types of leaderships, the relationship between a youth organisation and its mother party and how to strengthen this bond.

The mini-projects were implemented and project content varied according to each youth wing's problem analysis. All participants presented a project proposal, which for example could include communication, identity and relations between the youth and the party leadership.[8]

The third session was to assess the mini-projects, how they had been carried out, the methodology used, communication with media, public meetings, campaigning, mobilising support, targeting and fundraising. This session also included an evaluation of the programme by participants.

The participants who passed the course were awarded certificates. A former RYPLA participant who had been appointed to a high political position after the training course handed them out at the school's closing ceremony. NDI hoped that this would strengthen the participants in their aspirations of applying to more influential positions in their mother parties.

After the training, NDI has had an advisory role to the RYPLA participants. NDI has assisted in design and management of projects, as well as given advice on how to improve the communication with a mother party.

The support to the project has primarily been financial. KIC's approach is that Swedish expertise and experiences should only be provided given that they are relevant. Additionally, KIC is of the view that locally based training and resource persons are more cost effective. Examples of Swedish input (through resource persons and

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[8] For instance, one mini-project done by one of the Uganda youth wings dealt with training of young party communicators in three pilot sub regions in communication skills, internal operation of the party, policies and programmes, and how to strengthen positive party image.

materials) include ideology, media relations, roles of the youth leagues in the context of their parties and training on how to make youth impact real party politics.

4.4   Effectiveness

The eight interviewed RYPLA participants confirmed that the training has increased their political capacity as expressed by the first sub-goal. Their skills have increased and they are better equipped to practice a responsible political leadership. At an individual level, the participants' self-confidence has increased and they now know how to package and disseminate their political messages more effectively. They also know more about how to interact with the media and the public. One of the participants, who was already a Secretary General in his party, reported that he has become more effective and focused on the youth issues thanks to RYPLA.

Some of the participants also expressed that they had acquired more influence within their parties after the RYPLA (sub-goal two). However, to what extent this was a result of RYPLA is difficult to say. Some youth have gained positions in the Government while others have gained positions in their parties. For example, one has become the Secretary for Internal Affairs to one of the parties. Another participant has been encouraged by senior leaders in his party to contest for elections as a MP. A third person, a Local Councillor, has been encouraged to aspire to contest for an MP position. A fourth participant is now working as a consultant for two MPs to mobilise the youth. RYPLA may have contributed to this even though other factors have most likely been involved as well.

The participants have been able to engage in and bargain with the party leaders on various issues to strengthen the youth wing as an organisation and to recruit new members. Examples are:

- Allowing the youth party wing to organise its own delegate conference and raise its own funds, to solicit and to handle finances autonomously from its own party, or to establish new local youth branches, using its own budget.

- Some of the participants have been able to use their newly gained knowledge about effective communication and responsible political leadership to mobilize other youth members to participate and contest for different political positions.

- One participant has been training other youth members in how to use information technology as a tool to reach out to members across the country.

The relationship between the youth wings and their respective mother parties has also improved to a certain extent, according to NDI and RYPLA participants. A common perception among elder persons is that the youth are violent, not focused and not thinking about the future. However, the senior politicians' attitude towards the youth-wing members has changed for the better, since youth have become better organised and now behave more professionally in their political work.

The RYPLA participants attending the same course have continued to exchange their experiences between themselves via e-mails. However, there has not been any networking between the participants attending RYPLA in 2008 and those attending in 2009.

It is not yet possible to assess the long-term impact of the project.

4.5   Relevance

After more than 20 years without a multi party system, all parties and their youth wings are suffering from weaknesses as described in connection with the joint project for coalition building. These weaknesses also relate to the youth wings, making support to these relevant. In this way they may become more professional in pushing political issues within their parties and thereby strengthen their mother parties as a whole. Strengthening of youth-wing leaders is also motivated in the perspective of the generation gap between old and young leaders in the parties and the need to train tomorrow's democratic leaders.

The project also addresses the history of political violence in the country and helps turn the youth from mere vehicles of the struggle for power to active participants in party politics. The objectives of bringing the youth wings from different parties together contribute to a culture of tolerance among the young people/leaders and to overcome the 'enemy syndrome', or the tendency for political opponents to assume hostile attitudes towards one another.

4.6   Side Effects

As a result of bringing youth from the different parties together, the youth participants reported that their attitudes towards each other have changed. In the beginning of the RYPLA course, there was suspicion among the participants. During the course, however, they started to build up friendly and harmonised relationships with each other, accepting their political differences. Despite their political differences, they now advise one another on how to penetrate and improve their own parties.

The youth participants also said that they had benefited from the interactions and discussions with the fellow participants from the neighbouring countries Kenya and Tanzania. By doing so, the participants have started to discuss the possibilities to include two additional countries of the East African Community, i.e. Rwanda and Burundi, to be involved in RYPLA activities. According to the respondents, this would contribute to the region becoming more stable, secure, peaceful and democratic.

Incidentally, the activities of RYPLA have complemented the joint programme for alliance building in addressing one of its objectives, by strengthening the youth wings to have more influence on their party politics.

4.7   Sustainability

The likeliness of benefits of the project in a long-term perspective is dependent on how individual youth-wing members trained by RYPLA are able to influence the party to become more democratic. This is in part dependent on how perceptive the mother parties are in their understanding of their weaknesses and their willingness to involve the youth in building up the parties. The information received from the interviewed party leaders confirms that they are very much aware of the weak capacity of their organisations and would appreciate assistance to overcome this problem. However, there are no indications at present that the parties are looking upon the youth

wings as assets to build up the parties. At present, only a few youth members at the central level have received RYPLA training and have continued to train other youth-wing members.

Furthermore, considering that hardly any of the parties have solid party structures, including youth wings at the local level, the prospects of the benefits of this project are dependent on how successful the parties will become at developing their organisations and establishing local party branches. By doing so, the parties will be in a position to recruit new members as local party activists, who will be trained by the RYPLA participants.

4.8   Other Observations and Lessons

The concept of RYPLA has been used for a number of years. The promising results stated above are indications of the project being effective.

One of the reasons for the positive results is the training approach used in RYPLA. According to the interviewed RYPLA participants, this approach is different from other courses and trainings they have undertaken. It is hands-on and practical (learning-by-doing) and can be used immediately in the party work, which is appreciated by all participants.

NDI has a local branch in Kampala facilitating the daily contact with present and former RYPLA participants. Its advisory role by assisting former RYPLA participants in their political activities ensures a better continuity and sustainability of the project. The Team therefore finds NDI to be a valuable cooperating partner organisation to KIC.

The mother parties are not content with the NDI project in some respect. According to the parties interviewed, NDI's coordination with the parties has not been good. As opposed to KIC, NDI is perceived as not transparent towards the parties, both in programmes and finances. It was also said that that the mini-projects conducted in RYPLA should be done in cooperation and coordination with the party. The Team suggests improved communication with IPC to facilitate the coordination and to avoid overlapping activities of different projects targeted to strengthen the mother parties and their youth wings.

Another reason for the positive results is that the process of selecting participants to RYPLA sometimes disregards the party choices. The youth wings, on the other hand, appreciate the present approach to select participants. The Team believes that one reason for the good results is the selection of participants. A common problem is otherwise that participants selected for training sometimes are not the best qualified, but have rather been selected as a result of personal considerations or attend for personal reasons. As stated above, NDI selects participants who fulfil certain criteria. On some occasions, NDI has not accepted candidates from the parties but has instead requested that they come up with other candidates.

The parties also perceived the RYPLA project to promote the youth to become too independent from their parties, which creates tension between the parties and the respective youth wings. It could be argued that the project creates a gap between the youth wings and their mother parties. Still, the Team believes that it is a good thing

for the youth-wing members to gain self confidence so that they can challenge and question their mother parties in political issues. Tensions should not necessarily be viewed negatively. If they are well handled, they are an asset to the parties. The Team advices KIC to discuss with NDI how to improve the relationship between the youth wings and the parties in order to keep the suspicions from increasing to a level that may jeopardise the Ugandan participation in the project.

The Team found that the network set up after the RYPLA course works exclusively between those attending the course the same year and not with the former RYPLA participants. This could be easily overcome by NDI and KIC providing all RYPLA participants an updated list of participant with contact information and e-mail addresses.

Additionally, the interviewed youth-wing members asked KIC to assist them in contacting the different Swedish party youth organisations and to suggest contacts with other youth organisations internationally to share experiences. The youth interviewed also asked KIC to provide them with information about where to find materials related to the work of political youth organisations.

Finally, the interviewed RYPLA participants suggested that a project similar to RYPLA be provided for the members of the mother parties.

Appendix 1: List of Persons Met

Sweden

CIS

Lennart Karlsson	Senior Programme Officer

JHS

Eva Gustavsson	Managing Director

KIC

Ulrika Eriksson	Programme Officer
Maria Folkegård	Secretary General
Magnus Ramstrand	Programme Officer
Erike Tanghöj	Programme Officer

Silc

Gunilla Davidsson	Former Secretary General

Uganda

Uganda People's Congress

Hon. Moses Apiriga	Secretary Foreign Affairs
Ms. Asiimwe Ariya	Assistant Treasurer
Ms. Goretti Byarugaba	Secretary for Women
Mr. Dolamulira	Youth Leader
Mr. Yona Kanyomoozi	National Chairman
Hon. Patrick Mwondha	Treasurer
Ms. Miria Obote	Party President
Mr. Chris Opoka	Secretary General
Ms. Constance Osoru	Youth Leader/participant RYPLA
Mr. Badru Wegulo	Vice President

JEEMA

Mr. Matovu Dasim	Assistant Secretary Jeema youth wing
Mr. Muhamad Kateregga	Vice Chairman and Member of IPC Steering Committee
Ms. Nanjego Khadnah	Secretary for Women/participant joint programme
Mr. Mohammad Kibirige	Party President

Mr. Sadat Mayambala	Youth Leader/participant RYPLA
Ms. Faridah Nakanwagi	Member of IPC Steering Committee
Ms. Khadisah Naryego	Youth Leader/participant RYPLA
Mr. Yahya Sseremba	Administrator
Ms. Kakembo Zaharah	Women's Affairs and General Secretary youth/participant joint programme and RYPLA

Democratic Party

Mr. Mwesigwa Fred	Deputy Publicity Secretary
Mr. Sebaana Kizito	Party President
Mr. Deo Njoki	Organising Secretary
Mr. Matia Nsubuga	Secretary General

Conservative Party

Ms. Nassuwna Asia	Women's Wing
Mr. Ssebina Elis Grace	Vice President
Ms. Asia Kamulali	Member of IPC Steering Committee
Hon. Ken Lukyamuzi	Party President
Mr. Wasibi Magira	Member of IPC Steering Committee
Mr. Walyemera Masumba	Secretary Legal Affairs
Ms. Asia K. Nassuna	Youth Leader/participant RYPLA

Forum for Democratic Change

Mr. Frank Atukunda	Youth Leader/participant RYPLA
Dr. Kizza Besigye	Party President
Hon. Professor Ogenga-Latigo	Leader of Opposition in Parliament and vice president FDC
Mr. Wafula Oguttu	Member of IPC Steering Committee
Ms. Ingrid Turinawe	Secretary Women Affairs/participant joint programme and RYPLA

National Resistance Movement

| Hon Daudi Migereko | Minister/Government Chief Whip |
| Mr. Abudu Muheirwe | Youth leader/participant RYPLA |

Change Initiative Limited

Ms. Scovia Arinaitwe	Administrative Assistant
Mr. Siragi Balinda	IPC
Mr. Robert Italo	Accounts Officer
Eng. Omar Kalinge-Nnyago	Program Officer
Mr. Raymond Lweterezo	Program Officer

Ben B. Mugual	Program Development Officer
Frank Nabwiso	Head of secretariat
Ms. Cissy Ssemuwemba	Assistant

National Democratic Institute

Ms. Heather Kashner	Country Director
Mr. Emmy Otim	Senior Program Assistant

Swedish Embassy/Sida

Carl Fredrik Birkoff	First Secretary Democracy and Human Rights
Anders Johnson	Ambassador
Anna Wrange	Counsellor Political and Cultural Affairs

Other

Mr. Joseph Ambrose Oneka	Head of Human Rights and Good Governance, Uganda Joint Christian Council
Mr. Silvester Arinaitwe	Executive Secretary, Uganda Joint Christian Council
Mr. Henry Kasacca	Senior Programme Officer, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
Mr. Yusuf Kiranda	Programme Officer, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung
Mr. Jeremy Liebowitz	Resident Country Director, International Republican Institute
Mr. David Opii Aira	Youth Leader/participant RYPLA, PPP
Mr. Simon Osborne	Programme Manager, Deepening Democracy Programme
Mr. Livingstone Sewanyana	Executive Director, Foundation for Human rights initiative

Appendix 2: The Party System of Uganda

General Overview

Political parties in Uganda have gone through tribulations, but have been resilient. During the colonial period, political parties survived three threats to their existence: Christian clergy and their establishments, colonial administrators and the Buganda ruling oligarchy. The first two groups believed that parties were fronts for "communist propaganda" while the latter was keen to protect its privileges, including its desire for a breakaway position from the rest of Uganda. Uganda gained independence from the British colonial rulers in October 1962. For the nearly forty seven years since then, the country's political history has been volatile and violent. Drifting between multipartyism, one-partyism and military regimes, Ugandans have suffered civil strife, political instability and authoritarianism resulting in political misrule, and economic and social hardships. While the country's immediate post independence regime was a vibrant multiparty system, it soon collapsed into a one-party state under Apollo Militon Obote from 1967 (Mazrui 1967, 1974, Satyarmurthy 1975, Mujaju 1976, Uzoigwe 1983). This was followed by Idi Amin's military coup in 1971. Amin's regime was forced out of power in 1979 by the combined armed forces of Uganda exiles with the backing of the Tanzanian Peoples Defence Forces. The overthrow of Idi Amin however was the beginning of unstable regimes (Avigan & Honey 1982, Gertzel 1980, Mazrui 1980, Bwengye 1985). The 1980 controversial elections, organized on the multiparty basis, failed to produce a clear winner, sparking off another wave of instability and civil strife. Between 1981 and 1986, the country suffered a guerrilla war fought by a National Resistance Army (NRA), spearheaded by Yoweri Museveni.

Suspension of political parties

In the 1980s parties existed but their members were constantly harassed, in many cases accused to be alleged collaborators with the NRA that fought in the incumbent government. The capture of state power by the National Resistance Army/Movement (NRA/NRM) in 1986 ushered in the Movement regime, which claimed in its *Ten Point Programme*, point No. 1 as "restoration of democracy". Emphasis however, was "participatory democracy" based on "individual merit" in elections and "non-partisan politics". In line with those principles, the NRM government suspended activities of political parties (Mamdani 1988). Despite these extraordinary constraints, parties remained underground and new ones have emerged. This disapproves the claim by Museveni that parties are only good for industrial societies (Museveni 1992). The NRM on its part, used the suspension of activities of parties to entrench itself politically. Moreover, the Constitution required that the change of the political system had to go through a referendum (Barya 200, Bratton & Laambright 2001, Onyango-Odongo 2000). Referenda on political systems took place in 2000 and 2005. The one in 2000 re-affirmed the Movement system while the one in 2005 changed the system to multipartyism. In that year, the Political Parties and Organiza-

tions Act (PPOA) effectively legalized the existence of political parties and freed their activities. In effect, parties became free to organize their delegates' conferences and party primaries, open branches, solicit funding and to come up with policies and party manifestos.

Since the freeing of political parties in 2005, they have demonstrated their efficacy in various ways. Parties have actively fought for human rights, pressed for alternative policies as well as exposing weaknesses of government's positions on several issues. They have also been seeking to mobilize voters, as evidenced by increasing the share of opposition vis-a-vis the decline of NRM voters. For example the NRM experienced decline as follows: 75 percent in 1996, 69 percent in 2001 and 59 percent in 2006. This reduction in the NRM's share of votes is an indication of the growing strength for opposition parties, and the population's disaffection with the government policies.

Towards multi-party politics

The action of the NRM to re-introduce multiparty politics (Makara, Rakner & Svasand 2009) and to allow them to operate is informed by a number of factors:

- The Movement took note that it had become apparent that the "no-party" system through which it ruled the country from 1986 to 2005 was unsustainable, both ideologically and in real politics. From 1995 the NRM had promoted an idea that the Movement was an alternative system to the multiparty and single party systems. However, various intellectuals, media and politicians questioned its credentials and principles (Barya 2000). The Movement operated more or less like a one-party system.

- *Disagreements in the ruling party:* Within the NRM, there were signs of disagreement amongst the bush war historicals as to whether the NRM was internally democratic and tolerant of criticisms. In particular, most critics argued that the movement had become narrowly focused, intolerant of diverse views and preferred candidates loyal to Museveni as opposed to those with open minds. This tendency was in contradiction to the principles of the Movement as laid down in the Constitution (Article 71). From 2001, it became apparent that the popularity of the movement and its leader Yoweri Museveni was declining.

- *Donor Pressure:* There was also domestic and international pressure (especially from the donors) demanding that the NRM initiate political reforms geared towards opening political space.

- *Internal Discussions in the Movement:* Within the NRM itself, there was an internal discussion amongst the top leadership, pointing out the weaknesses of their political organization. For example, it was realised that the Movement system was out of touch with the realities of the democratizing world (Makara, Rakner and Svasand 2009).

- *Strategic Considerations:* Strategically, the Movement officials and their supporters perceived the opening of political space as a strategic calculation that would give the NRM an advantage. The main calculation was that the leadership of the Movement would gain more legitimacy as champions of democratization. The

NRM leadership argued that this was an opportunity for them to get rid of internal critics. Museveni used the same opportunity to amend the Constitution to put to an end the constitutional articles that provided for term limits to the president (Makara, Rakner and Svasand (ibid). Amidst resistance from some legislators, the NRM MPs were bribed with Shs. 5 million each to vote in favour of the removal of term limits. It was not accidental therefore, that the opening of political space coincided with the termination of presidential two-term limits.

• *The Struggles of Democratic Forces:* Additionally, the opening of political space should not be seen as an initiative of the NRM. Rather, it should be seen as a culmination of the struggles of the democratic forces within the civil society, which voiced out the failures of the Movement. As electoral malpractices, especially during the 2001 elections. These discredited NRM's claim of the so-called "all inclusive, broad-based and participatory democracy". Organised civil society groups, intellectuals, the media and even the parliament, pointed out clearly that the idea of the "no party system" was nothing but a clique of individuals around Museveni, governing the country in whatever way they wanted (Onyango-Odongo 200, Kiiza J. et al 2008).

Historical evolvement of parties

Some of the political parties in Uganda have long traditions. The Democratic Party formed in 1954 founded largely by the Catholic Action Movement, had a Catholic base, hence it was referred to as "Dini ya Papa" (religion of the Pope) (Mamdani 2001: 218). Because it was opposed to the privileges of the Buganda political elite, the Buganda kingdom and the chief establishment opposed DP vehemently. Thus, though DP was born and led by Baganda Catholics elites, it was neither popular among the Baganda nor among the Catholics in Buganda. To counteract the Catholic-based DP, the Protestant elites created the Progressive Party (PP). The key objective of PP was to protect the privileges of the Protestant chiefs and clergy. Ethnic and religious misunderstandings were to later divide the truly nationalist UNC itself, resulting in the formation of Uganda Peoples Congress (early 1960s), with most of its support hailing outside Buganda region. Because these acrimonious relations between parties divided the population on parochial grounds, the governance of the country in the 1960s vacillated between crisis management and one-party rule, without a clear ideological direction.

The current party system is characterized by a number of notable factors:

• Some parties have a wide national coverage with branches across the country.

• Some parties are regional parties drawing support mainly from specific regions.

• Some parties that participated in the 2006 elections performed very well while others did poorly.

It is estimated that about 34 political parties have so far registered. All political parties have their headquarters in the capital city, Kampala. However, not all parties have branches beyond Kampala.

The Parties as Organisations

Membership base

Membership base: It is difficult to tell how many members each of the registered parties have. The tendency is to gauge the strength of a party by the number of voters that voted for a particular party in previous elections especially during the presidential election. For example in 2006 the presidential candidates were: Museveni (NRM) Besigye (FDC), Miria Obote (UPC), Ssebana Kizito (DP), Abed Bwanika (the independent now PDP). It is still difficult to find out whether or not parties have registers of subscribed members. This is because membership and participation of voters in Uganda are generally adhoc. For example, over one million reluctant voters turned up to register in October 2005, on hearing that Besigye had returned from exile in South Africa. These voters could have voted FDC. However, it is not certain that they have remained loyal to FDC.

Internal democracy

Within the major political parties themselves, a culture of internal democracy has been growing. Since 2006, FDC, NRM, DP UPC, PP have successfully held delegates conferences. They have successfully elected their top party office bearers. FDC is noted for holding a very successful delegates conference to elect its top leadership. There was healthy competition for the party presidency. Nevertheless, there are internal wrangles that have threatened internal coherence of parties. In FDC the former envoy for presidential affairs, Betty Kamya, resigned her post claiming she was barred from standing as a party chairperson to replace the late Dr. Badru Kigundu. Kamya argued that the position of party chairperson should be reserved for her ethnic group - the Baganda. Although she moved on and founded her own party the Federal Alliance, she did not resign from FDC party. This was in addition to her refusal to turn up for her party disciplinary committee. The Constitution provides that a person who resigns a party platform upon which he/she was elected must seek a fresh voters' mandate on a new party platform. Ms. Kamya has, up to this day, not registered because that would imply her resignation from parliament.

Unity

In the Democratic Party, squabbles have threatened its internal unity. The party today is divided among three groups – the old members loyal to the party president Ssebana Kizito, young democrats allied to Kampala Mayor Nasser Ntege Ssebagala and another group led by Kampala Central MP Elias Lukwago. These squabbles between Buganda-based DP leaders are increasingly making it difficult for Mr. Nobert Mao, the Northern-based Gulu District Chairman to realise his dream of taking over the leadership of the party.

In UPC, conflicts have been rife over accusations that party president Miria Obote (wife to the late President Obote) has been manipulating the members in order to bring her son, Akena (Lira Municipality MP) into the limelight for leadership succession. This has seen her drop some lifelong supporters of the party in a recent reshuffle of her party cabinet. She dropped her Vice-President Okello-Okello and Party Secretary General Peter Warubiri and others opposed to the "Akena project".

On the whole, though internal squabbles may have weakened parties, they have not brought them down.

Policy and programs

In terms of programmes presented in party manifestos, particularly in the 2006 elections, it is evident that the NRM presented a manifesto that detailed the achievements and plans of its government. Museveni promised "Prosperity for All", locally termed as *bonna bagagawale*. On the other hand, the manifestos of the opposition political parties highlighted governance issues such as tackling corruption, which has become endemic in the NRM government. The opposition parties pointed at the high profile corruption involving the Global Fund for Aids prevention, malaria and tuberculosis. Parties also criticised the government's excessive expenditures on public administration, undermining the institution of parliament, and scraping of presidential term limits. Political parties further scored some realistic policy outcomes such as their opposition to the outrageous proposal by the government to sell off the natural Mabira forest to Indian sugarcane growers. FDC campaigned against and caused the government to scrap the unpopular graduated personal tax (a hash direct personal tax per adult), that was introduced during the colonial times. Parties have also exposed the weaknesses in the electoral system by petitioning the courts of law.

Opposition parties have also been accused of lacking consistent alternative policies to those of the government. Some critics point out that even where opposition parties have such alternative policies, either they are of abstract content or they are not skilfully articulated to capture the imagination of the voters (Interview with a key respondent).

Capacity to campaign

Capacity to campaign depends on whether a party has well established structures, programmes and personnel to extend its campaign. However, there are also structural weaknesses. Most of the parties in Uganda exist in name, and are based at their headquarters. It is difficult for citizens to recall the names of most of the registered parties. Opposition parties lack sufficient financial resources to run their programs. While it would be expected that parties would raise resources locally from their supporters, this strategy is beset by three confounding factors:

- Parties have not been free to campaign freely in the whole country. Their rallies are constantly dispersed by police as "illegal gatherings" (Makara 2009).

- Some of the supporters of the opposition political parties fear coming out openly to express their support for their preferred party for fear that the government may harm their interests and that they may for example lose a government job or business (*The Monitor* January 29, 2006). Some supporters of the opposition parties also fear intimidation of security agencies. The structure of Internal Security Organisation (ISO) runs from the national to the sub-county level.

- Most of the would-be local financers of opposition parties play a *double game,* giving some portion of support to the ruling party and another to the opposition party. At the end of the day, the ruling party receives more financial resources

than the other parties. Moreover, the ruling party illegally uses some of the state resources for its campaigns (Kiiza 2008).

On its part, the NRM seems to have used the state apparatus to frustrate the activities of the opposition political parties. The police in Uganda have gained notoriety for dispensing opposition party assemblies on the pretext that they have not secured police permission to assemble. The police and other security agencies have been staffed by military personnel, who seem not to perceive themselves as servants of the state but as agents of the ruling party and its leadership. It is a clear fact that since 2000, the government has appointed the overall Inspector General of Police from within the top ranks of the army. Thus in dealing with the opposition parties, they sometimes exceed their official limits. A good example is when the paramilitary group called the *Black Mambas* blocked FDC leader Besigye from being released on bail granted by a court in the midst of the 2006 presidential election campaigns. It happened again when another paramilitary group allied to the Uganda police known as *Kiboko Squad* dispersed demonstrators during the Mabira protests with brutal force. Both the army (UPDF) and the police are decidedly pro-NRM. The Army Commander has said that the UPDF will not allow "bad people" to take over from NRM (The Monitor September 1, 2005). He appears to have been referring to opposition politicians.

Equally, the Police in Uganda have earned themselves the image of a repressive force. Using the colonial law of regulating assemblies, the police have been vigorously involved in violation of freedom of association and assembly. Opposition rallies have routinely been blocked and demonstrations violently dispersed. The increasingly common excuse for prohibiting lawful assemblies is that they disrupt business in the city centre of Kampala. This justification cannot withstand considering that pro-NRM assemblies are never dispersed. The police dispersed a Democratic Party rally at Mpigi on January 26, 2007, when there was no business to disrupt, since it was a public holiday.

Transparency, accountability and non-corruption

Parties world-over play controversial roles in society. On the one hand, they are defenders and advocates of human rights and accountability. On the other hand, they are accused of secrecy and corruption. In Uganda, historically, people generally rate parties as corrupt organisations. For example, there was the gold allegation in 1966, when Prime Minister Obote and his army commander, Gen Amin were accused by Parliament of looting gold from Congo (Mujaju 1987). Under the NRM government, prominent personalities in the ruling party have been accused of corruption. Senior Officers of UPDF were accused of plundering of Congo's mineral resources. Ministers were also accused of influencing peddling in the privatization services at Entebbe airport. Ministers of Health were accused of diverting the Global Fund monies for treatment of HIV/Aids. It is reported that the President issued a directive to the Bank of Uganda to give an unsecured loan of US $ 11 million to a local businessman who happens to be politically connected to his ruling party as the chairperson of the NRM business league (Kuza 2008). The Secretary General of NRM in 2008 was accused of irregularly and corruptly selling his land to the National Social Security Fund at an inflated price of Shs. 11 billion (5.5 million dollars). Some

opposition parties also have an accountability problem. For example, the intermittent wrangles afflicting UPC are associated with the Obote family claiming remittances from the properties belonging to the Milton Obote Foundation, which is supposed to be a UPC foundation, not family property.

Parties in the citizenry

Factionalisation of Parties

Parties in Uganda have historically been factionalised on ethnic, religious and regional basis. DP was perceived as a "Catholic party" and UPC a "protestant party". When the NRM ascended power in 1986, it campaigned on the grounds of anti-sectarianism, arguing that it intended to uproot such parochial tendencies within the Uganda society. The return of parties in 2005 to some degree marked a new beginning for party politics. It is difficult today to brand a particular party as a faith-based party. This is not to say that religious values are not manipulated opportunistically by political parties. Most of the political parties, including the NRM are fond of taking their campaign to places of worship. The NRM has focused on Pentecostal (balokole) churches and Muslim groups for recruitment of support. President Museveni is known for offering 4WD vehicles as gifts to religious leader, especially Bishops at their first installation. Such gifts are clearly meant to buy their loyalty to him and his party. Leaders of opposition parties usually make it a point not to miss most of the important religious functions such as the Uganda Martyrs Day that falls on 3 June every year, even when they are not of Catholic or Protestant faith.

Polarization of Ugandan parties has significant antecedents. This is partly because usually, whenever parties have been active, there has been a tendency towards a two-horse race. This was so in 1961, 1962, 1980 – mainly between DP and UPC. In the recent elections of 2006, the race was mainly between the NRM and FDC. The other parties and the independent candidate in the presidential elections polled slightly less than three percent of the vote. However, the candidates of DP and UPC managed to do better in the parliamentary elections securing nine and ten MPs, respectively.

Party Ties with Specific Constituencies

As noted above, UPC, CP, DP and JEEMA were able to secure representatives in parliament. This is partly explained by the fact that they have certain "traditional" constituencies. For example, UPC used to be very popular in Obote's home area of Lango. In fact, most of the MPs it secured in 2006 hail from there. DP on its part also secured all its nine MPs in the central region (Buganda). FDC, though new on the political stage, was able to spread its net more nationally in its first ever contest. For example, the FDC presidential candidate Dr. Besigye scored 37.3 percent of the national vote, distributed as follows: 34.7 percent in the central region, 41.2 percent in the Eastern region, 62.9 percent in the Northern region, and 20 percent in Western Uganda. FDC scored best in Northern and Eastern Uganda despite the fact that Besigye hails from Western Uganda. In contrast, Museveni's biggest support was his home area, the Western region, where he achieved 78.5 percent of his national vote. Museveni scored 29.6 percent in all of Northern Uganda. On the whole, one can say that because the old parties (DP and UPC) had been negatively portrayed and de-campaigned by the Movement leadership for a long time, by the time they resumed

their active role, so much damage had been done to their credibility. The Movement also made it a point to pouch leading members of the old parties by either placing them in government positions or dishing out business favours to them. The new parties face serious challenges in opening grounds for recruitment of support.

Such challenges include:

- The difficulties involved in penetrating the Local Council (LC) structure, which is largely tilted in favour of the NRM.

- The military establishment that is almost exclusively loyal to Museveni as a person.

- A police force that is decidedly pro-government and anti-parties.

- A large percentage of the population that is poor and illiterate, hence politically vulnerable. The government agents employ intimidation tactics and use money to induce support for the NRM.

- There is a hostile anti-party campaign by the government that makes the population suspicious of the motives of political parties.

At the same time, several new parties suffer from their own internal weaknesses. About 95 percent of the registered parties do not claim any constituencies, neither are many of the parties even known. It is generally believed that some of the political parties are "briefcase" parties, which are registered and hoping for government financial favours. It is also believed that some of the parties were registered as "proxies" of the government to undercut the support of the genuine parties. Such parties have all sorts of names, for example Bridge Party, Reform Party, Progressive Movement, National Peasant Party, Uganda Mandate Party, People's United Movement, to mention a few. They seem to be much ado about nothing.

The NRM has obvious advantages in terms of retaining its constituencies. The NRM maintained multiple constituencies that include national youth councils, women councils, trade unions, business associations, local councils etc. All these organizations benefit from state patronage in one way or another, through their ties with the NRM. NRM also ideologically identifies with peasants, persons with disabilities, the victims of the bush war (veterans). Despite NRM's efforts to reach out to all sorts of constituencies, it has had problems in the North and West Nile and the East. This is largely due to the prolonged war waged by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) of Joseph Kony that displaced over one million people in these areas, spread terror, and left thousands dead and those that remained alive without basic necessities of life. This war alienated the people in these regions from the NRM. This partly explains why the debutant FDC was able to make serious in-roads in these areas in the 2006 elections. Most of the voters in Northern and Eastern Uganda perceived Dr. Besigye (FDC leader) as a man who could deliver peace and provide an alternative leadership that would understand their plight. Generally, opposition parties were able to do very well in the conflict areas.

Citizens' engagement in politics and public debate

Since 1986, there have been various avenues of citizen's engagement and debate in public politics. These have included active participation of ordinary people in local elections at various levels from LCI to LC5 and in the national elections. All in all, today there are 945 351 contested seats in the country at all levels. There are over 100 FM radio stations, seven television stations, several newspapers and newsletters, five mobile telephone networks and several internet providers. Open radio talks *(Bimeeza)* have increased citizens' engagement in public debate on almost all subjects of public concern. However following the riots of 12-14 September 2009 the government has moved to suspend four radio stations and a number of radio presenters. The live radio public debates were also suspended. The state however has, at times, unleashed its long arm – arresting and charging journalists (Human Rights Watch 2006). The state has also been sponsoring callers to constantly rebut the opinions expressed by opposition personalities on the radio and TV talk shows.

The NRM has used the state media, (which is supposed to be politically impartial) to advance its view points. The state owns the New Vision paper, as well as its sister newspapers *Lupiny, Etop, Bukedde and Orumuri* that are to propagate NRM ideology. More recently, the New Vision Group established two new radio stations namely Vision Radio and Bukedde Radio and acquired Radio West, (previously a private radio). The government established a Northern-based radio station Mega FM. On these radio stations, much of the discussion is tilted to favour the NRM policies and ideology. It appears that they are created to counter the more liberal and critical views expressed on private radio stations such as the Buganda kingdom owned Central Broadcasting Corporation (CBS). There is however, a relatively free atmosphere for debate in the country. Exceptional cases include those incidents where Besigye was denied campaigning on Radio West even when he had paid for the air time (Human Rights Watch 2006). This is partly explained by the fact that most of the FM radio stations are owned by the NRM bigwigs in Kampala as well as up-country towns.

Relations to civil society

Other forms of citizen engagement are through civil society organizations (CSOs) and community based organizations (CBOs). It is estimated that there are over four thousand registered NGOs and several thousand community based organizations (CBOs). In recent years, the state came up with the idea of "Prosperity for All" *bonna bagagawale* programme. Through this programme the state is funding local savings and credit cooperative societies (SACOs). These operate on the basis of rotating small credit amongst their membership at the local level. Although they are supposed to be non-partisan, the funding by the state ties them to the NRM party. The NRM cadres politicize the state funding to these societies to an extent that some individuals belonging to other parties are coerced to denounce their party affiliation in order to "benefit". Hence, through SACOs *"Bonna bagagawale"* (prosperity for all) project, the NRM has intensified its penetration into the lives of ordinary people and their communities using state resources. In addition, most civil society organizations have to tread carefully when dealing with the state in Uganda because there is always the need for them to renew their registration annually, which the state may deny for "security" or other reasons.

The emergent political parties have attempted to forge links with local CSOs. However, most of the CSOs claim they are "non-partisan", hence not committed to the programme of any opposition party. Whenever a CSO allies with an opposition party, it is accused of being partisan. CSOs in alliance with the NRM are not seen as "partisan" by government. Opposition parties have clearer links with some party foundations such as the International Republican Institute (IRI), the National Democratic Institute (NDI), Frederick Ebert Foundation (FES) and Konrad Adeaneur Stiftung (KAS). Some of these CSOs are political in nature, for example, the Foundation for African Development (FAD) that is allied to DP. Otherwise, the opposition parties have not struck bonds with CSOs (Diklitch and Lwanga 2003).

Inter-Party Cooperation

Inter-party cooperation is perceived as a key strategic necessity if opposition parties are to wrestle effectively with the NRM. There are lessons from the neighbouring Kenya where the "Rainbow Alliance", a loose cooperation of opposition parties, managed to dislodge a reluctant President Moi and his party KANU from power in 2002. In Uganda however, opposition parties are fragmented over unprincipled trivialities and self-seeking motives of the politicians. Each party tends to believe in its own strength. Had parties cooperated, they would have won by-elections in Lubaga LC3 elections and Kyadondo North parliamentary seat. In these elections the combined vote count for opposition candidates was more than that for the NRM candidate; but the NRM was smart to put up one candidate.

Four major opposition parties have been able to forge "an alliance" known as the IPC. The parties in the alliance are: Conservative party, Forum for Democratic Change, JEEMA and Uganda People's Congress. Recently, the leadership of People's Progressive Party of Jabel Bidandi Ssali indicated its desire to join the IPC. Such a move is an indicator that other parties see value in the cooperation. One of the major achievements of the IPC has been regular inter-party meetings and consultations, planning to put up a single opposition presidential candidate and other joint candidates for electoral posts in 2011, and exploring possibilities of joint campaigns. However, DP is out of the cooperation. It could therefore easily turn out to be a "spoiler". To be fair, DP seems to have been reluctant to join IPC because of its fear to expose its internal weaknesses. But also DP is counting on bargaining with other parties when it has "something in its hands", that is, particular constituency gains. In other words, it is buying time to sort out its own internal contradictions. For example, DP unlike other major parties has not been able to hold a delegates' conference to renew the mandate of its leaders. Opposition parties that have not joined the IPC can have missed an opportunity as the IPC partners have successfully worked on the following areas.

• IPC came up with a detailed programme of reform including electoral reforms, which are needed to deepen democracy in the country. This was presented to parliament in May 2009. To some extent, the EC agrees with some of the reforms demanded by the opposition parties, but it is the government that is not keen on reforms.

- Ideologically, IPC partners share common values of good governance, for example, they are uncomfortable with the heavy financial burden of the cost of public administration, especially arising from the establishment of unviable districts. They are also critical of lavish and extravagant expenditure by the State House (president's official home). IPC is also committed to zero tolerance to corruption.

- IPC is also committed to a peaceful resolution of conflicts. The government has historically preferred a military solution to conflicts, especially in Northern Uganda.

- IPC is working closely with some human rights organisations to promote the rule of law, democratization and equity in Uganda.

- IPC as a joint political force has the potential to pose a formidable challenge to the ruling party once some of the artificial differences between the opposition leaders are buried. Moreover, they have garnered support from multiple constituencies; cross-ethnic support, youth, women, old party faithfuls, business people and donors.

- IPC as a joint force has been able to put up alternative policies for good governance and development of the country.

While the IPC stands to pose a formidable challenge to the NRM in elections it, however, has to overcome some obstacles. These include:

- *Financial Constraints:* A major problem emanates from financial constraints. IPC members have very little money at their disposal to do party work. Most of the leaders of the opposition parties have to "dig deep" in their personal pockets to finance themselves to do party work. This has constrained most of the party leaders to travel long distances up-country to establish branches, campaign and mobilize support. Parties have serious difficulties of paying their office rental and party staff, as well as facilitating volunteers. FDC for example was initially housed by a businessman known as Mr. Garuga Musinguzi. However, he has since "retired" from politics. Some people suspect he was "bought" off by the NRM. Several such patrons of the opposition parties tend to "retire" early, leaving their parties in dire need.

- *Women's constituency:* Most opposition parties have had difficulties retaining support of the women, especially in the rural areas because the NRM persistently reminds them that they are "NRM women" and claims that it was the NRM that "liberated" women in Uganda. However, younger women are a good recruitment constituency for parties.

- *Donors are intransigent (non-committal)*: In Uganda, the donors have been more "diplomatic" on the issue of political freedom and democratisation than they have been in many other African countries. The donors who support 40 percent of Uganda's development budget inevitably have a stake in the governance of the country. However, they tend to praise the Uganda government for effective use of aid and "proper accountability" of aid funds. They pay attention to strengthening of state institutions, for example strengthening the judicial system.

While institutions are necessary for democracy, there is need to balance the aid to the state and other stakeholders in the democratization process.

- *Disagreement over joint candidates*: To the IPC, the biggest is the likely failure to sponsor joint candidates in the 2011 elections. As noted earlier, this has been the main undoing of opposition parties at most by-elections. When they agreed on one candidate in the Bugweri by-election, Abdu Katuntu of FDC was able to trounce NRM stalwart Kirunda Kivejinja (Minister of internal affairs).

- Guarding success: there is need to retain party support. FDC and other opposition parties have suffered declining support, with some of their members of parliament playing a lukewarm part in party activities or in FDC, Wilfred Kajeke (resigned), Betty Kamya (has disserted). This is likely to negatively impact voter support for FDC and other parties in the opposition constituencies.

Parties in government

Political parties in parliament

The 2006 multiparty elections ended NRM's monopoly of politics in parliament, where the Movement acted as if it was a political party through its Movement caucus. Political parties were not allowed to form a caucus. Despite the dominance of the NRM, the debate was largely free and democratic. Multiparty politics has impacted the performance of parliament in various ways. For example, there is the government side and the opposition side and the independents sit on either side.

The present (eighth) parliament is composed as follows:

Members of Parliament by Party Affiliation

Affiliation of MP by organization	No. of MPs
NRM	205
FDC	37
DP	8
UPC	9
Justice Forum (JEEMA)	1
Conservative Party (CP)	1
Independents	37
Army (UPDF)	10
Total	**308**

Composition of Eight Parliament

Category	Number
Directly elected	215
Women Representatives	79
UPDF Representatives	10
Youth Representatives	5
Representatives of Persons with Disabilities	5
Workers Representatives	5
Ox-Official Members	13
Total	332

As the table above indicate, the majority of members of parliament belong to the ruling NRM. The NRM was able not only to secure most of the directly elected members of parliament but also the majority of reserved seats for the army, people with disabilities, and the representatives of the workers, women and youth. For the reserved seats, the opposition parties have been unable to make any serious in-roads. These constituencies seem to have been grateful, or they are reminded so, that it is the NRM that "gave them the privilege to be represented" in parliament, hence their support for NRM. It is also known that the NRM employs money, security and other resources to manipulate elections of special electoral groups. There are also the controversial 10 seats reserved for the army (UPDF). These MPs are supposedly non-partisan. However, they are not allowed to criticize the position of government. The reserved seats are generally in the political hands of NRM. This obviously gives the ruling party an edge over the other parties. The Constitution also allows the President to nominate un-elected Ministers as ex-official members of parliament. There are currently 13 Ex-official MPs in parliament and by implication, NRM members.

Parties in government

The objective of any political party is to struggle to gain control of government. In a democratic polity, there is a constant anticipation that the time will come when an opposition party will gain control of the government and see its cherished policies implemented. Opposition parties play a key role in shaping the agenda of government as well as suggesting alternative policy ideas. In Uganda, history has little to offer in terms of the role of the opposition guiding government policies. In Uganda there has never been a peaceful handover of government from the ruling party to the opposition party. In 1967 most of the members of the opposition crossed the floor and joined UPC in government. In the early 1980s, the opposition was virtually dominated, if not silenced, by the second UPC government.

The current multiparty regime has made some positive changes. There are 61 MPs elected on opposition party ticket, 31 MPs elected as independents, 10 "non-partisan" UPDF (army) MPs. Slightly over 200 MPs are NRM members. However, the NRM has also signed protocols of cooperation with some independent MPs, either to support its positions in parliament or not to oppose them. Some independents have been offered ministerial positions in government while others are believed to have been paid to support the government. It is also believed that some MPs elected on opposition party ticket have been paid off by the NRM either to cause trouble in their parties or to support the government positions in parliament. There seems to be some "political prostitution" amongst the independents. As Muriaas points out "informal practices and people's notions of representation prevent opposition parties from establishing a foothold at the local level" (Muriaas 2009: 91).

While the opposition parties and their members have struggled in parliament to make a contribution to good governance, the structure of the government in Uganda is built on patronage politics (Tangri & Mwenda 2001, 2006). The NRM has a cabinet of 72 ministers, over 100 paid presidential advisers, over 80 Resident District Administrators and their assistants, and over 80 District Chairpersons. The expansion of districts from 56 in 2006 to the present 96 has increased patron-client politics that bolster the NRM. In effect the state pays the bills for the "campaigners" of NRM. It

has been proposed that all LC officials be paid salaries by the government (*The Independent* 14 July 2009). The LC structure and its officials are already skewed to the NRM in most parts of the country. The proposed pay would just be the last step in using state resources to turn the elected local officials into NRM party functionaries.

Many political observers argue that opposition parties in parliament have not provided the necessary alternative leadership. On several critical issues such as the Domestic Relations Bill that has been shelved in parliament, and other critical matters such as land policy, displacement of squatters, labour regulations, industrial policy, investment policies, oil policy, food policy, conflict resolution etc. the opposition is blamed for preferring to be reactive rather than pro-active in policy matters. On their part, opposition parties argue that the process of introducing Private Members Bills is limited by the constitutional provision on the financial implications that such Bills should not impose a charge on the Consolidated Fund. Nevertheless, on the formal appearances, there is a semblance of a functional multiparty parliament. There is the Leader of the Opposition who enjoys benefits and privileges, and space to talk on behalf of the opposition members. There is a Shadow Cabinet drawn from the opposition MPs of all parties represented in the house. Some of the Committees are headed by members of the opposition including major ones such as the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) that scrutinises government spending and other accountabilities. Two of the eight members representing Uganda in the East African Legislative Assembly were nominated from the opposition ranks.

Broader Factors Influencing the Party System

A number of side factors directly or indirectly affect the performance of the party system in Uganda. These include the electoral system, the legal system government programmes and internal functioning of the parties themselves.

The electoral system

The performance of the political parties is enhanced by a belief within them that there are fair electoral laws and institutions that can ensure free and fair elections. In Uganda, parties have been revived amidst existence of an intransigent Electoral Commission (EC) which has been accused by the opposition groups as skewed in favour of the NRM. Such a view is given credence by the Supreme Court in the aftermath of the 2001 and 2006 elections when it ruled on both occasions that the Electoral Commission failed to administer free and fair elections. In May 2009, opposition parties presented a list of political and electoral reforms that they believed would strengthen democratic governance. However President Museveni categorically stated he would not effect any reforms. In August 2009, President Museveni re-appointed the same Electoral Commission team presided over by Badru Kigundu amidst protests by opposition supporters. On his part, the Secretary General of the NRM, Mr. Mbabazi praised the re-appointed EC saying that in the past it had done an "excellent job". On the other side, the president of FDC Dr. Kiiza Besigye has countered by saying that the current EC has no legitimacy to preside over any election in the country (New Vision Wednesday, August 26, 2009:5). He has asserted that every election the EC has presided over has been marred with rigging, violence and other irregularities (ibid New Vision). Amidst the reluctance of the government to correct the errors pointed out by courts of law, and going ahead to appoint a discred-

ited EC means that the parties will face a difficult task of preparing for the next elections in 2011. This can also send a wrong message to the voters and to the world to the extent that even if the EC was to perform to its best; there will always be an accusation that they were not impartial and credible.

The legal system

Political parties in Uganda have significant confidence in the judicial system. The courts of law helped political parties in their struggles for opening of political space through judicious rulings on party petitions over repressive laws. FDC President Dr. Kiiza Besigye has taken his electoral grievances to court twice (2001 and 2006). There are, however, allegations that in recent past, Museveni has increasingly appointed NRM cadres to all courts of law. It is believed that Museveni is preparing for favourable court rulings in the future. The courts of law have been pro-active in governance matters such as anti-corruption rulings, settlement of commercial disputes and others. It is the political cases that seem to have proved rather elusive for courts of law. The judges concluded that rights and freedoms under article 20, 21 and 29 of the Constitution can only be enjoyed within the confines of the law, and are not absolute. This indeed, is a contentious position if not a dilution of the people's rights.

Respect for democracy and human rights

Under the NRM regime, there has been improvement in the respect for human rights and practice of democratic participation. For example, most Ugandans who had fled during the previous regimes returned to their country. The government also established the Human Rights Commission, which oversees and protects citizens from human rights abuses. The government has put in place the Equal Opportunities Commission to provide for the disadvantaged groups. Civil society organizations have proliferated and are active in pointing out the failures of the state. Some of the human rights civil society organizations have helped in shaping the agenda for protection of human rights. Despite the existence of these human rights NGOs, the state of human rights remains poor, especially state violation of political rights (Human Rights Watch, 2006). State agents have been indicted for spreading terror during elections. For example, during the 2006 election campaign, one serving officer, Lt. Magara, shot two supporters of FDC at a rally in Bulange.

Political Education

This is supposed to be a lifelong process. However, since the majority of Ugandans are illiterate, there is need for public civic education. This has not been taking place. The Electoral Commission in the two past elections failed to carry out an effective voter education, resulting in several voters failing to exercise their democratic voting rights. On its part, the NRM conducts compulsory ideological politicization courses for civil servants, civic leaders, and ordinary citizens at Kyankwanzi Institute of Political Education. Though the aim is to spread the NRM ideology, the school is funded by public money. Political parties have complained about it to no avail.

Ethnicity

This is a persistent problem in Uganda's politics. The Buganda kingdom has consistently demanded a "federo" (federal status). Both the government and opposition

parties have been canvassing Buganda government over this issue without a concrete position. In a bid to manipulate the ethnic factor to its advantage, the NRM government has created ethnic-based districts throughout the country from 39 in 1992 to 96 in 2009. This is likely to favour NRM in future elections. Opposition parties see it as early 'jerrymandering' (i.e. a form of boundary delimitation in which electoral district or constituency boundaries are deliberately modified for electoral purposes.)

Persistent poverty

This is a problem for all political parties. The category of people living below one United States dollar per day (absolute poverty) stands at 31 percent of the population. The NRM claims credit for poverty reduction from 52 percent in 1986 to 31 percent at present. There is excessive inequality between the super-rich and the poor of the poor. The irony of wealth accumulation is that most of the wealthy people have benefited from political connections with the regime in power, by holding big jobs or securing government contracts. Such people are reluctant to associate with the opposition parties, lest they lose their state privileges. State patronage has undermined the formal channels of wealth-making and doing clear business. This partly explains the low levels of investment in long term sectors such as heavy industries, hence lack of opportunities in the formal employment sector for college graduates. Desperate job seekers are easily manipulated by the state agencies, just as the agencies do to the peasants.

Urban Vs. Rural Areas

Uganda is largely a rural country. The rate of urbanization in recent years has been at six percent, to the extent that the urban population doubles almost every ten years. For example, Uganda's urban population more than tripled between 1980 and 2002, from 940 000 to 3 028 809 people. This is politically important because whereas the NRM believes that it has most of its support amongst the peasants in the rural areas, the opposition parties have their strongest support in urban areas. Hence, as the education opportunities continue to expand, and more young people live in urban areas, there is a likelihood of increased opportunities for political parties to gain support. Moreover, most of the major parties have also gained foothold in the rural areas as evidenced by the 2006 elections. Thus, whereas the state may not be interested in encouraging democratic pluralism, democratic struggles in various political groups are likely to force a wave of change when the population structure changes over time.

International Cooperation

All the registered political parties in Uganda have access to international assistance through the Deepening Democracy Program (DDP). The DDP is a basket fund founded by bilateral donors to support democratic development. Political parties are one of the sectors the fund focuses on. Additionally, several international party foundations are represented in Uganda and both the German and the American foundations have permanent staff on the ground. NDI is one of the international foundations that have been most active in Uganda.

Most of the donor support to IPC comes from Swedish organizations especially the Christian Democratic International Center (KIC). It has supported IPC since its

founding. It extended financial support to IPC, enabling parties to hold separate dele-
gates' conferences, inter-party conferences and retreats. As a result of KIC's support,
the IPC has been able to set its clear agenda.

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