



UNITED NATIONS
UGANDA



Strengthening Electoral Processes in Uganda (SEPU) Project



South-to-South learning during a past symposium of electoral actors from African Countries

End of Project Report *2020- 2023*



Contents

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS.....	ii
Executive Summary.....	3
1.0: INTRODUCTION.....	4
1.1 PROJECT SUMMARY.....	5
1.2 PROJECT RESULTS STRUCTURE.....	6
1.3 KEY SUMMARY PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS 2020-2023.....	6
1.4 LESSONS LEARNED, EMERGING ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES	19
2.0 DETAILED PROJECT PROGRESS AND RESULTS BY OUTPUT	18
2.1 OUTPUT 1: STRENGTHENED INCLUSION AND TRANSPARENCY OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS.....	18
2.2 OUTPUT 2: ENHANCED INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY FOR THE EC AND OTHER ELECTORAL STAKEHOLDERS.	26
2.3 OUTPUT 3: STRENGTHENED DIALOGUE CAPACITIES AS WELL AS ELECTORAL VIOLENCE EARLY WARNING AND EARLY RESPONSE (EWER) SYSTEM.	34
2.4 OUTPUT 4: EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT PROJECT MANAGEMENT, PARTNERSHIP FORMATION, AND MONITORING AND EVALUATION.	40
3.0 STATUS OF RISK LOG.....	43
4.0 LESSONS LEARNED, RECOMMENDATIONS, EMERGING ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES	46
4.1 LESSONS LEARNED.....	46
4.2 EMERGING ISSUES	49
4.3 OPPORTUNITIES.....	49
5.0 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW FROM FEBRUARY 2020- AUGUST 2023.....	48
6.0 PROJECT PICTURES GALLERY BY OUTPUT	48

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
ANT	Alliance for National Transformation
ASTU	Anti Stock Theft Unit
DP	Democratic Party
EC	Electoral Commission
EDR	Electoral Dispute Resolution
ERM	Electoral Road Map
EWER	Early Warning and Early Response
FDC	Forum For Democratic Change
IDD	International Day of Democracy
IPOD	Interparty Organization for Dialogue
IRC	Inter- Religious Council of Uganda
JEEMA	Justice Forum
GoU	Government of Uganda
MCU	Media Council of Uganda
MDA	Ministries, Departments& Agencies
MAK	Makerere University
MP	Member of Parliament
MoJCA	Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs
MoLGSD	Ministry of Labour, Gender, and Social Development
NCF	National Consultative Forum
NRM	National Resistance Movement
NUP	National Unity Platform
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
SEPU	Strengthening Electoral Processes in Uganda
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
TEFU	The Elders Forum of Uganda
UCLF	Uganda Christian Lawyers Fraternity
UHRC	Uganda Human Rights Commission
UN	United Nations
UNRCO	UN Resident Coordinator's Office
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization
UN WOMEN	The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UPC	Uganda People's Congress
UPF	Uganda Police Force
WCCE	Women Council and Committee Elections
WSR	Women Situation Room

Executive Summary

Background and Context

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), together with the broader UN family (United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office (UN RCO), United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)) and Electoral stakeholders developed a USD10.5million electoral project to support the 2020/21 electoral cycle in Uganda. The project was initiated in preparation for Uganda's 2020/2021 elections, but also more broadly, for purposes of strengthening institutions of democracy in the country and for promoting governance as an enabler for development. The project followed the recommendation of the UN Electoral Needs Assessment Mission (NAM) of March 2019 completed at the request of the Government of Uganda.

Implemented was undertaken by UNDP in close collaboration and partnership UN RCO), UN Women), OHCHR, UNESCO and other electoral stakeholders who comprised of state and non-state actors, specifically: Electoral Commission (EC), Judiciary of Uganda, Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs (MoJCA), Ministry of Local Government (MoLG), Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC), Parliament of Uganda, Media Council of Uganda, Makerere University, Inter Religious Council of Uganda (IRC); Nnabagereka Development Foundation and Women Situation Room (via the Women International Peace Centre). This enabled strengthened actions and interventions of pre, during and post-election period in Uganda with a focus on diverse strategic, and programmatic entry points. The project significantly achieved progress across the four thematic outputs that were developed at the onset: 1) Strengthened inclusion and transparency of the electoral process 2) Enhanced institutional capacity for the EC and other electoral stakeholders, 3) Strengthened dialogue capacities as well as Electoral Violence Early Warning and Early Response (EWER) system and 4) Effective and efficient management, partnership formation, research, and monitoring.

In supporting the effective implementation of this project, a total of USD 7,232,481 was generously contributed by Norway, Austria, Denmark, Sweden, Iceland, and UNDP. This enabling effective delivery of programmatic outputs as designed for the project.

Between May and June 2020, the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, the Chairman of the Electoral Commission, and the UNDP Resident Representative signed the SEPU project document. Implementation of the SEPU project was affected by the dynamics of COVID 19 and also saw a period of significant slow pace of implementation owing to the prevailing national context. However based on a series of consultative meetings with key stakeholders, in March 2022 government provided guidance, which was applied in updating the project work plan., Here specifically enabling the project to have a focus in support to the Women Council and Committee Elections (WCCE). Key to note also is that,

following implementation of a few activities between March – May 2022, the WCCE were postponed by EC on 24 June 2022. The postponement of these elections implied that some proposed for the WCCE elections were not completed. Based on further consultations, implementation of select activities such as institutional capacity building support through digitization, provision of equipment, production of communication materials, organization of key trainings for various trainings - intended to sustainably impact on the broader electoral cycle and not just the WCCE electoral event, were agreed and implemented.

At the start, the SEPU project was planned to be implemented for two years; from February 2020 to February 2022, however, based on these proposed adjustments, in March 2022 the SEPU project was extended for twelve months, until February 2023, and thereafter to August 2023. This allowing re-alignment as a result of the challenging environment occasioned by the Ebola outbreak.

1.0: INTRODUCTION

The strengthening Electoral Processes in Uganda (SEPU) project was formulated by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in collaboration with the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office (UN RCO), United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and other electoral stakeholders. This was in response to a request from the Government of Uganda

for electoral support and the March 2019 recommendation of the United Nations (UN) Electoral Needs Assessment Mission (NAM) for the UN to support the 2020/2021 elections in Uganda.

The project was informed by a three-point logic:

- (i) Inclusive, participatory, and transparent elections are critical to the sustenance of development gains and consolidation of peace that is a key foundation on which development thrives.
- (ii) Technically capable, independent, and trusted governance institutions are essential for the conduct of credible, inclusive, and peaceful elections.
- (iii) Elections could be a conflict trigger which potentially results in violence and loss of lives; therefore, peace building, and conflict prevention approaches are critical in assuring peaceful and violence-free elections.

The overall goal of the project was to improve the capacity and credibility of key institutions with an electoral mandate to promote credible elections in 2020/2021 and beyond. This effort significantly contributes to Uganda's Vision of becoming a secure and prosperous middle-income country by 2040.

The Project objectives were centred on four outputs:

1. Strengthened inclusion and transparency of the electoral process.
2. Enhanced institutional capacity for the Electoral Commission (EC) and other electoral stakeholders.
3. Strengthened dialogue capacities as well as Electoral Violence Early Warning and Early Response (EWER) system.
4. Effective and efficient project management, partnership formation, and monitoring and evaluation.

1.1 Project Summary

Country: Uganda

Project Duration: February 2020 – August 2023

Project Budget: US\$ 7,232,481

Norway	US\$ 2,670,996
Austria	US\$ 1,767,736
Denmark	US\$ 1,043,171
Sweden	US\$ 1,122,334
Iceland	US\$ 200,000
UNDP	US\$ 428,244

Cumulative expenditure: **US\$ 7,232,481****Implementing partner:** UNDP in collaboration with the Office of the UN RCO, UN WOMEN, OHCHR, UNESCO**Responsible Partners:** Electoral Commission (EC), Judiciary, Ministry of Justice & Constitutional Affairs, Uganda Police Force, Uganda Human Rights Commission, Ministry of Information & Communication Technology, Media Council of Uganda, Non-state Actors-Inter Religious Council of Uganda (IRCUG), The Elders Forum of Uganda (TEFU), Political Parties (through the National Consultative Forum), Women's Situation Room, Nnabagereka Development Foundation and Uganda Christian Lawyers Fraternity, International Women Peace Centre (IWPC).)

1.2 Project Results Structure

UNDAF Outcome	<p>1.1 By the end of 2020, the rule of law, separation of powers and constitutional democracy are entrenched in Uganda and all individuals are treated equally under the law and have equitable access to justice.</p> <p>1.1.1. By 2020, the Electoral Commission and other institutions of democracy have adequate technical and operational capacities to organize and promote credible and peaceful elections.</p>
UNDP CPD Outcome	Strengthened technical and functional capacities of institutions of democracy for enhancing equal participation, accountability, rule of law and access to justice.
Expected CP Outcome:	<p>1.3.3 By 2020, targeted public institutions and CSOs have enhanced capacities to effectively include women and youth in peace building, democratic processes, sustainable production, energy, and natural resource management (NRM) 1.4.1. By the end of 2020, targeted public institutions establish and implement a comprehensive regulatory framework to foster peace, equal participation, dialogue, social cohesion, and regional security.</p>

1.3 Key Summary Project Achievements 2020-2023

Outputs, Targets, and Indicator Status of Achievement

Project Output 1: Strengthened inclusion and transparency of the electoral process

Indicator	Indicator Target	Summary achievement	Status:
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1.1. <i>Proportion of eligible voters who are registered to vote, disaggregated by sex, age, and excluded groups.</i> Baseline: 15,277,198 total registered voters (52% female)	Target: 10%	Percentage increase: 18.5% Total registered voters: 18,103,603 Female: 9,501,809(52.5%) Male: 8,601,794 (47.5%) Youth: 7,392,676 (40.8%) Older persons: 1,548,629(8.6%) PWDs: 344,590(1.9%)	Completed
1.2. <i>Percentage of women (to men) participating as candidates in elections at national and sub-national levels:</i> Baseline: <i>In the 2016 elections only 5.5% of candidates in the direct elections for President, Member of Parliament and District or City chairperson were women who ventured to compete directly against men</i>	Target: 7.5%	Percentage increase: 14.2% 4.9% - 133 women out of 2,728 candidates) contesting for the mainstream parliamentary seats. 3.6% - 22 out of 613 contestants for the position of District or City Chairperson at subnational level, 5.7% - 20 seats were secured by women out of 353 open parliamentary seats.	Completed
1.3 # of women voters aware of the women elections program (including young women voters who are active followers of Electoral Commission social media platforms (the EC Facebook page, Twitter handle and the Instagram account) Baseline:	Target:	WCCE were indefinitely postponed by the government. A new date hasn't been given.	Delayed
1.4 % increase in the proportion of stakeholders participating in the Women	Target:	WCCE were indefinitely postponed by the government. A new date hasn't been given.	Delayed

Council/Committees Elections Baseline:			
1.5 % Increase in candidates nominated in all elective positions for the Women Council/ Committees Elections, 2022 Baseline:	Target:	WCCE were indefinitely postponed by the government. A new date hasn't been given.	Delayed
1.6 % increase of elective positions filed for women at lower local council. Baseline:	Target:	WCCE hasn't been done still pending communication from E.C. on the dates and funding to conduct the Women elections.	Delayed
1.7 Number of strategic dialogues held with key stakeholders. Baseline: Nil	Target:3	3 strategic dialogues conducted. A dialogue on the Revised Elections Roadmap was convened with key electoral stakeholders, including political parties, parliamentarians and CSOs on whether Uganda would conduct the 2021 elections as planned or to postpone these elections beyond February 2021 due to the Covid-19 global pandemic adverse impact. The dialogue provided an opportunity for the EC and key stakeholders to share perspectives and as well provide an opportunity for the EC to bring clarity to legal and constitutional issues around the electoral process. The project in collaboration with the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Women Movement, convened a dialogue meeting with the EC on the impact of the revised Elections Roadmap and the new modality of the elections on participation. The dialogue was attended by representatives of the elderly women, women living with disabilities, youth women, the African Women Africa Leaders Network, Uganda Women Parliamentarians Association, and aspiring women candidates. Their views and ideas pertaining to the revised	completed

		<p>Elections Road Map were shared and used by the Electoral Commission in setting up the lay out of the polling stations and the standard operating procedures.</p> <p>The project also worked with the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Uganda Media Women's Association to organize a consultative dialogue between Electoral Commission, the Women's Movement and media owners and broadcasters. The dialogues highlighted the challenges women face in accessing the media during campaigns. Participants collectively identified ways in which access to media could be increased for the diverse groups of women. The Uganda Communications Commission lifted the ban on the community radios locally known as "bizindaalo" that had been banned for noise pollution. Consequently, EC included the use of community radios for communication in the SOPs. The Electoral Commission collaborated with National Broadcasters' Association and the candidates to foster transparency and equitable access to airtime on media. A uniform rate cut was agreed to be used on different media hence increasing access for the vulnerable groups.</p>	
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Project Output 2: Enhanced institutional capacity for EC and other electoral stakeholders

Indicator	Indicator Target	Summary achievement	Status:
<p>2.1. Public confidence in the EC (%)</p> <p>Baseline: (42%) Ugandans said they trust the Electoral Commission "somewhat" or "a lot" (2017 Afro barometer)</p>	Target: 52%	<p>47% increase from 42% in 2016 (as per 2017 Afro barometer)</p> <p>48% of the Ugandans trust EC to ensure free, fair, peaceful, and credible elections.</p>	completed
2.2. Number of target institutions (EC, judiciary, human rights commission, police &	Target: 5	<p>17 institutions</p> <p>They include; The Electoral Commission (EC), the UHRC, MoJCA, MOLG, Makerere</p>	completed

media) with capacity to effectively support electoral processes. Baseline: 0		University, Judiciary, Ministry of Justice & Constitutional Affairs, Uganda Police Force, Ministry of Information & Communication Technology/Media Council of Uganda, Non-state Actors-Inter Religious Council of Uganda (IRCU), The Elders Forum of Uganda (TEFU), Political Parties (through the National Consultative Forum), and Women's Situation Room, International Women Peace Centre, Nnabagereka Development Foundation and Uganda Christian Lawyers Fraternity	
2.3 Number of training programmes undertake to support institutional strengthening across project beneficiaries: EC, media, judiciary & police. 1) Operational training for EC; a) One ToT (national) and b) 11 ToT (Sub-regional); c) One BRIDGE TtF&d) 10 BRIDGE modular trainings; 2) Training of Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs in electoral law/regulation drafting; 3) Operational trainings for the Police, Judiciary and Media. Baseline: 0	21	<p>37 training programs have been undertaken to support institutional strengthening across project beneficiaries.</p> <p>As a result of the training programmes undertaken, the Electoral Legal framework was strengthened. (5) Five electoral amendment bills were passed by Parliament in March 2020 and subsequently all five assented to by the President of the Republic of Uganda.</p> <p>These include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Electoral Commission (Amendment) Bill 2019, 2. The Political Parties and Organizations (Amendment) Bill 2019, 3. The Parliamentary Elections (Amendment) Bill 2019, 4. The Presidential Elections (Amendment) Bill 2019 5. The Local Government (Amendment) Bill. <p>Furthermore, a total number of 3755 stakeholders (F:1895 M:1860) had their capacity enhanced on good governance, issues of democracy, transformative leadership and on electoral processes as a result of the 37 programme trainings that were undertaken.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Judiciary organized 3 trainings in different High court circuits where staff of Judiciary were trained on different aspects of customer care.</p>	Completed

Indicator	Indicator Target	Summary achievement	Status:
<p>3.1. Existence of EWER systems <i>at national and district levels</i></p> <p>Baseline: Not in place</p>	<p>Target: In place</p>	<p>The project supported the Women's Situation Room to develop a sound EWER system which was put in place at both the national and regional level to collect, consolidate, and analyze all the information being provided by monitors and through the data center that was installed as a main entry point for those citizens that wanted to report on issues during the elections. Through this system, the WSR was able to produce evidence-based reports. It is also relevant to mention that given the WSR deployment to 30 district hotspots of 3,000 monitors (who were given three days of mediation training). The Women's Situation Room was the largest elections monitoring mechanism (during the 2016 elections, WSR had deployed 500 monitors). These contributed to a decline in incidents of violence on the polling day; the WSRs reported that of the 1,778 calls received on polling day, majority sought information on electoral processes, election malpractices, misinformation among voters, and a few on intimidation.</p> <p>The project engaged the national peace infrastructure consisting of insider mediators like TEFU, IRCU, and Women's Situation Room (Women Elections Monitoring Centre) to promote mediation and social cohesion. The women's situation rooms were capacitated to effectively conduct qualitative and quantitative violence identification, reporting and response with emphasis on gender-based violence and similar violence targeting minorities. In the post-election period, priority was put into training for conflict resolution of all actors involved including dialogue and mediation. The trainings, mediation, shuttle diplomacy and dialogues conducted with support of IRCU/TEFU were also part of the EWER architecture that the project supported during the 2020/2021 elections. In this context, key stakeholders were involved such as local</p>	Completed

		authorities, peace committees, religious leaders, and civil society organizations, among others	
<p>3.2. <i>Extent to which existing EWER infrastructure is gender responsive (e.g. include the collection of disaggregated data, gender analysis and targeted actions). 1) does not; 2) partially includes gender-data; 3) fully includes gender data</i></p> <p>Baseline: Does not</p>	<p>Target: Fully includes gender data</p>	<p>EWER infrastructure was gender inclusive.</p> <p>Through the WSR, there was increased engagement of women in peace building activities because of the women peace advocates mobilizing women in 30 targeted districts. 1,284 Women peace advocates that were trained supported peace building initiatives in the 30 WSR districts contributing to community sensitization on peaceful elections, encouraged their children not to get involved in election violence, pushed for reconciliation for some political leaders at community level which contributed to peace before, during and after elections.</p> <p>The Early Warning and Early Response (EWER) was supervised by a steering committee composed of 21 eminent women from NGOs from PWDs, media, young women and organizations working on leadership, governance, and legal issues. The WSR had presence at the regional level as well.</p>	Completed
<p>3.3. Number of dialogues held for mediation and consensus building across the country.</p> <p>Baseline: 0</p>	<p>Target: 8</p>	<p>13 dialogues conducted.</p> <p>Five regional stakeholder-dialogue meetings were conducted in partnership with IRCU. The purpose of the dialogue meetings was to identify early warning signs and any emerging issues likely to threaten peace and impede voter participation in the 2021 general elections. In terms of participation, 457 persons (380 males and 77 females) participated out of the targeted 700,000 people. In addition, shuttle diplomacy was conducted through IRCU/TEFU and quiet diplomacy was conducted by the UN Family. Both actions added to the mediation and consensus building and thereby prevention of escalation of electoral related conflict in the country.</p>	Completed

		<p>A total of 300,176 persons were reached with peace messages to ensure peace building and conflict prevention. This was fostered through high level diplomacy and engagement dialogues with key players such as Civil Society Organizations, the WSR and Security agencies that conducted peace messaging. For this purpose, several traditional and digital channels were used, including printed materials, radio talk shows, and social media. Furthermore, collaboration was achieved with GoU, women groups, Youth SDGs Coalition, and National Initiative for Civic Education in Uganda.</p> <p>Over 70 senior religious leaders (F: 19 M:51) participated and obtained feedback from duty bearers like the Police and Resident District Commissioners on their participation in elections, strengthened district peace and stability committees, and enhanced post-election counselling in Six (6) Post-Election Consensus Building dialogues. This resulted into strengthening the IRCU District Inter Faith committees to collaborate with other stakeholders to engage government on creating safe space for believers and conflict mediation. Senior religious leaders pledged to continue offering counselling to both winners and losers to reduce tension and violence.</p> <p>The project took advantage of the commemoration of the International Peace Day 2020 to promote dialogue on peace under the leadership of the respective stakeholders, including nine biggest kingdoms in Uganda. As a result, despite the levels of conflict and violence during the electoral campaign period, the country experienced no major human rights violations or incidence of violence during the Presidential and Parliamentary polls.</p> <p>In partnership with IRCU, Capacity was built for 40 key stakeholders (Religious leaders -10 male,10 female,10 youth, 5 judges /magistrates and 5 women leaders from the women situational room) on</p>	
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		mediation skills, peace, and conflict resolution.	
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Project Output 4: Effective and efficient project management

Indicator	Indicator Target	Summary achievement	Status:
4.1. Number of Project staff & consultants recruited on schedule. Baseline: 0	Target: 10	<p>8 persons recruited; (F:2 M: 6)</p> <p>The project was able to ensure that a core team of national and international staff were deployed in UN Agencies in Uganda between August and September 2020. The core team was composed of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Chief Technical Advisor, -Operations Manager, -Peacebuilding Specialist, -Gender Specialist -Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting Specialist. -Finance &Administration Associate -Driver - Consultant to review post-Election context <p>In addition, short term specialists were engaged in the areas of elections security support, human rights, EWER, hate speech, communications, and legal framework.</p>	Completed
4.2 Number of Partnerships in place to support the electoral process. Baseline: 0	Target: 8	<p>15 Partnerships with key national actors were developed including the Electoral Commission (EC), the UHRC, MoJCA, MOLG, Judiciary, Ministry of Justice & Constitutional Affairs, Uganda Police Force, Ministry of Information & Communication Technology/Media Council of Uganda, Non-state Actors-Inter Religious Council of Uganda (IRCU), The Elders Forum of Uganda (TEFU), Political Parties (through the National Consultative Forum), and Women's Situation Room, International Women Peace Centre, Nnabagereka Development Foundation and Uganda Christian Lawyers Fraternity</p>	completed
4.3 Project Mid-term Evaluation undertaken. Baseline: 0	Target: 1	<p>Not undertaken – project halted and upon project revival, it was repurposed. Only the terminal evaluation is scheduled for September 2023</p>	Delayed

4.2. Annual Resource Delivery % Baseline: 1	Target: 100	Overall Total	7,233,481	100%	Completed
		2020	1,607,119	22%	
		2021	773,193	11%	
		2022	1,111,887	15%	
		2023	3,740,282	52%	

Summative analysis by output

Output 1: Strengthened inclusion and transparency of the electoral process.

Below are some of the results realized under this output:

- a) An increase in voter registration from 15,277,198 registered voters in 2016 to 18,103,603 registered voters in 2020.
- b) 133 (or 4.9 percent) women contested for parliamentary positions and 20 (5.7 percent) women secured direct MP seats. Twenty-two (3.6%) contested for District or City Chairperson positions.
- c) Stakeholder engagement enhanced through dialogues, mobilization, and different media with eligible women voters and potential candidates. In preparedness for the elections of the Women Councils and Committees.
- d) Elections SOPs and related dissemination mechanisms finalised and sharpen communication and public information on COVID-19 SOPs.
- e) Improved inclusion and transparency of the electoral process through strategic engagement:
 - Dialogues with security agencies and other critical stakeholders in collaboration with non-state actors;
 - “Omulembe gwa digito” campaign enables 8 million citizens comprising women and youth to participate in the 2021 elections.
 - 2,193 Radio Spot messages, DJ mentions, mobile caravans, press conferences and other engagements improve electoral information access, by the youth and women.
- f) High-level training for enabling protection and promotion of human rights was completed with security entities including UPDF personnel, UPF, CID, UPDF and CMI.
- g) Technical support enabled the completion and operationalisation of EC Strategic Plan 2022/23-2026/27 under the theme, “*To promote participatory democracy and good governance for the country's prosperity.*”
- h) Electoral Commission supported to develop and roll out a strategy for inclusion.
- i) Advocacy was conducted, leading to the amendment of the National Women’s Council Act to align the timing of the WCCE with the national elections of the country. Among other bills that were enacted include The Electoral Commission (Amendment) Bill 2019, the Political Parties and Organizations (Amendment) Bill 2019, the Parliamentary Elections (Amendment) Bill 2019, the Presidential Elections (Amendment) Bill 2019 and the Local Government (Amendment) Bill.

- j) Capacity was built for 60 women from 9 political parties under the Interparty women's platform for conflict management, social movement building and transformative leadership.
- k) A high-level training was conducted for the Inter Party Women's Platform Executive and Summit on Strategic Leadership, Team Management, and Conflict Mitigation
- l) The "*Obuntubulamu*" a moral concept and way of Life, which constitutes several positive values of propelling civility and thereby development was popularized among cultural institutions including Acholi, Alur, Buganda, Bunyoro, Busoga, Rwenzururu, Lango, Tieng Adhola, Iteso, Kumam and the public.
- m) A dialogue was supported for 88 Religious leaders (F:38 M:50) from East Africa that deliberated on effective and inclusive contribution of religious leaders to nation building and driving sustainable national development.
- n) Capacity was built for mediation for 40 key stakeholder (Religious leaders -10 male,10 female,10 youth, 5 judges /magistrates and 5 women leaders from the women situational room).
- o) Over 90 youth leaders (F- 31 M-59) from over 15 universities and tertiary institutions across Uganda participated in transformative leadership training organized by Makerere University in partnership with Julius Nyerere Leadership Centre. Makerere enhances E-Learning on youth leadership and transformative governance courses.

Output 2: Enhanced institutional capacity for EC and other electoral stakeholders.

The project contributed to:

- a) Human rights protection and promotion:
 - Capacity of the Uganda Human Rights Commission enhanced on human rights monitoring and protection.
 - Capacity of 51 journalists and media professionals strengthened of human rights-based reporting.
 - 35(20F,15M) staff of the EC from Kampala, Karamoja, West Nile, Albertine, Eastern and Central Uganda with increased knowledge and skills on prevention and reporting of Violence Against women and girls in elections.
- b) Increased public confidence in the electoral commission to organize credible free and fair elections from 42 percent in 2017 to 47 percent in 2021.
- c) Improved application of ICTs in enhancing access and administration of justice:
 - Video conferencing systems installed and functional in Gulu High Court and Gulu Prison, Jinja High Court, and Jinja Prison; Mubende, Masaka and Mbale.
 - Judicial training institute computerised.
 - Real-Time Transcription systems for 4 selected superior courts enhance justice services.
 - Digitisation of the Registry and teleconferencing of key offices within the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs (MoJCA) and its regional offices), E-filing equipment was provided that is envisaged to strengthen digital justice services at MoJCA and for efficiency and accountability. Zoom licences provided to public institutions to support uninterrupted public service delivery.

- d) Strengthened Learning through South-to-South between the Judiciary of Uganda and the Judiciary of Ghana on Performance, Accountability and Monitoring of Judicial officers.
- e) Completion of Court Open day dialogues and radio talk shows led by the Judiciary in Eastern, Northern and Western regions of the Country leading to deepening accountability and awareness about justice services, conflict resolution and fostering of peaceful coexistence at community levels.
- f) Development and use of training and learning tools by the Judiciary on electoral dispute resolution and on court transcription.
- g) Institutional capacity for judicial officers through specialised trainings organised by Judicial Service Institute to enhance their capacity and performance in administering access to justice for the people of Uganda.
- h) 245 radio talk shows and spot messages enhanced community civic engagement and rights awareness of vulnerable persons in society (women, Children, Prisoners, Persons with Disabilities, Older Persons). Topics covered included: Right to personal liberty, Land related rights, Democracy, elections and Human Rights, duties and responsibilities of citizens among others.
- i) 14 (4F 10M) senior level Police Officers in West Nile with improved knowledge in key principles of human rights in law enforcement.
- j) ASTU Police in Karamoja with improved capacity in Human Rights-Based Policing in Law Enforcement.
- k) 1500 newly elected office bearers and technical staff at Local Government level in 34 selected districts have improved capacity to take up new roles;
- l) Online self-paced training modules for sustainable capacity development of District Local Councils leaders piloted.
- m) Availability of knowledge products and training manuals that strengthened capacity of newly elected Parliament Members of Parliament for the 11th session.

Output 3: Strengthened dialogue capacities as well as Electoral Violence Early Warning and Early Response (EWER) system.

- a) Fostered conflict prevention and mitigation and peace building mechanisms in the post-election period through;
 - i. Support the establishment of the Women's Situation Room.
 - ii. Deployment of election monitors in support to the WSR.
- b) Strengthened dialogue capacities as well as Electoral Violence Early Warning and Early Response (EWER) system.
- c) Fostered conflict prevention, and mitigation and peace building mechanisms in the post-election period through:
 - Targeted peace building dialogues, political and civic engagement working through the Inter-Religious Council, and Elders Forum.
 - Continuous political - electoral risk and scenario analysis and monitoring that influenced quiet diplomacy.
 - Development of a Crisis Risk Dashboard (CRD) for risk monitoring and informing timely response.
 - Continued peace messaging and response to emerging issues on violence via the Women's Situation.
- d) Increased engagement of 1,464 Youths 726 F (49.6%) and 738 F (50.4%) in prevention of conflicts during the electoral period which greatly contributed to

curbing election related violence. Youths' activities like door-to-door outreaches contributed to better understanding and appreciation of peaceful coexistence resulting into sustainable peace among the targeted communities.

- e) Increased engagement of women in peace building activities through the WSR, by the women peace advocates who mobilized women in 30 targeted districts. 1,284 Women peace advocates that were trained supported peace building initiatives in the 30 WSR districts contributing to community sensitization on peaceful elections, encouraged their children not to get involved in election violence, pushed for reconciliation for some political leaders at community level which contributed to peace before, during and after elections.

Output 4: Effective and efficient project management, partnership formation, and Monitoring and Evaluation.

The interventions under this output contributed to:

- a) Strengthened engagement across project stakeholders on key project and context issues.
- b) Effective coordination and delivery on project milestones; improved risks assessment, human rights monitoring and their responses;
- c) Enhanced collaboration and coordination between development partners and international electoral assistance providers with presence in Uganda;
- d) Covid-19 response effectively supported ensuring continuity and safety at all levels;
- e) Improved technical capacities for effective analysis, programming and delivery of integrated electoral support.

2.0 DETAILED PROJECT PROGRESS AND RESULTS BY OUTPUT

2.1 Output 1: Strengthened inclusion and transparency of the Electoral Process

During 2021 elections, the Uganda National Dialogue process was initiated in collaboration with the Inter Religious Council of Uganda (IRCU) Secretariate and Council of Presidents to ensure peaceful elections and post-election period. This entailed dialogues with the Chief Justice on several judicial issues linked to gaps in limitations in Law, judicial authority, integrity, case backlog among others. A number of recommendations and action points were agreed leading to IRCU's submission of a report on pending court cases to the Principal Judge for follow up, that led to enhanced transparency in the court processes. The interventions under this output led to among others:

Increased voter registration:

The intervention contributed to an increase in the number of eligible voters. There was 18.5 percent increase in the proportion of eligible voters from 15,277,198 registered voters (8,027,803 females, 7,249,395 males) in 2016 to 18,103,603 registered voters (9,501,809 females, 8,601,794 males). The National Women's Council Act has been amended to enable the alignment. For the next cycle since the re-introduction of the multiparty system in 2005, reveals an increasing number of registered voters (Figure 1).

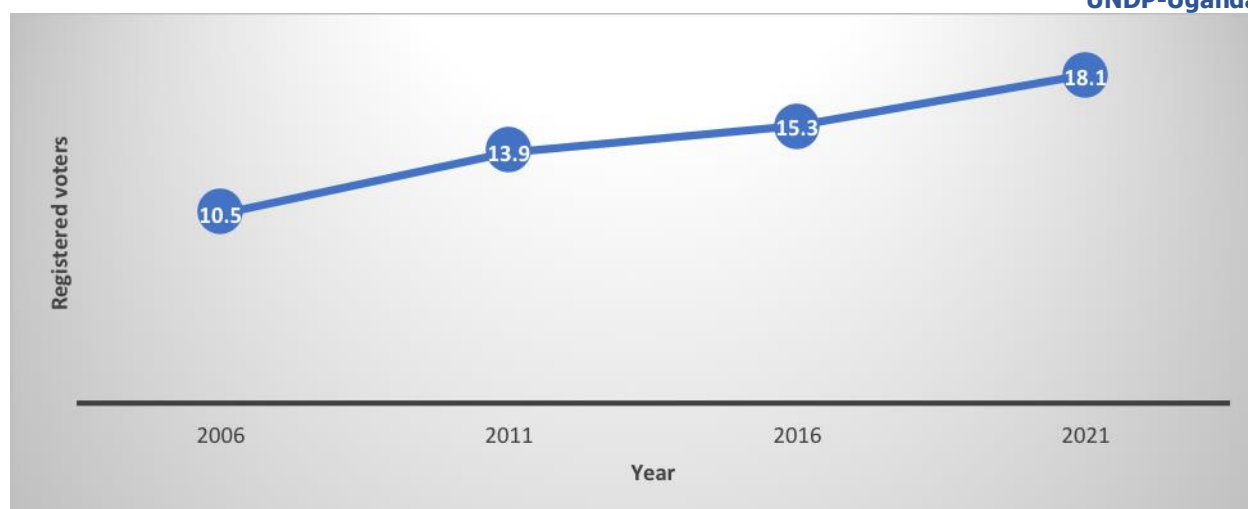


Figure 1: Registered voters in Uganda (in millions)

Women (to men) participation as candidates in elections, at national and sub- national levels.

The implemented activities contributed to the achievement of the indicator. Out of 2,728 nominated candidates in 2021, there were 133 women (4.9%). In 2016, only 88 women compared to 1,255 men contested for the 490 open parliamentary seats. Women Council and Committee participation in the electoral process is gradually increasing with more women vying for different electoral positions including that of the president where there was one female candidate out of 10 men.

At subnational level, there were over 613 contestants for the position of District or City Chairperson of which 22 (3.6 percent) were female. Out of the 353 open parliamentary seats, women secured 20 (5.7 percent). Table 1 below shows the percentage of women elected in the 2021 general elections.

Description	Total number of seats	Number of elected women	Percent of elected women
Directly Elected MPs	353	20	5.7
Women Elected MPs (reserved Seats)	146	146	100
UPDF	10	3	30
Workers	5	3	60
Youth	5	2	40
PWDs	5	3	60
Elderly	5	3	60
TOTAL	529	180	34

Under this output, the implementation process relied on several strategies, notably the use of strategic communication; dialogue mechanisms, civic and voter education, gender, inclusion, and transparency messaging as planned and detailed in the Project Document. See further elaboration below;

a) Strategic communication

The project in collaboration with Electoral Commission geared support towards analysis and scenario planning for delivering on the elections in the context of Covid-19. This was done and successfully completed. It contributed to EC's revising the Elections Roadmap to take into consideration the impact of Covid-19 on the roadmap.

Election planning in the context of Covid-19 and dissemination of the Election Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) were supported. The SoPs were launched by EC in June 2020. The International Day of Democracy commemorated under the theme 'Covid-19 – a Spotlight on Democracy' was used to disseminate and promote awareness on the EC and Ministry of Health SOPs to ensure informed, safe, and enthusiastic participation in electoral activities for all people. The Electoral Commission elaborated on how elections were going to be conducted scientifically. Medical practitioners from the Ministry of Health and WHO discussed from a medical perspective the implications of Covid-19 on elections and proposed mechanism to handle Covid-19 and prevent its spread. This televised stakeholder engagement, and newspaper insert widely promoted public awareness on the SOPs.



Photo (L: R) Justice Simon Byabakama, Mr. Zaidi Mukasa, Dr. Margret Musenero, and Ms Elsie Attafuah.

Figure 2: Commemoration of the International Day of Democracy in 2021

The capacity of the Electoral Commission in strategic communication was planned to be supported by the project, however the activity was not implemented. The engagement with the Electoral Commission was put on hold awaiting a window of opportunity during the post-election period.

b) Dialogue mechanisms

Electoral stakeholder dialogue mechanisms were strengthened. The project organized a dialogue on the Revised Elections Roadmap. The revised Elections Roadmap was met with mixed reactions among key electoral stakeholders, including political parties, parliamentarians and CSOs especially on whether Uganda should conduct the 2021 elections as planned or to postpone these elections beyond February 2021 due to the Covid-19 global pandemic adverse impact. The EC advanced a position that the Constitution and subsidiary laws do not allow postponement of elections, but some Members of Parliament (MP) initiated a process of drafting a law to allow for postponement of the elections. While postponing the elections seemed most unlikely, some analysts argued that polarization and tension was likely to grow over time as the election date drew nearer. The dialogue provided an opportunity for the EC and key stakeholders to share perspectives and as well provided an opportunity for the EC to bring clarity to legal and constitutional issues around the electoral process.

Also, the project in collaboration with the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Women Movement, convened a dialogue meeting with the EC on the impact of the revised Elections Roadmap and the new modality of the elections on participation. The dialogue was attended by representatives of the elderly women, women living with disabilities, youth women, the African Women Africa Leaders Network, Uganda Women Parliamentarians Association, and aspiring women candidates. Their views and ideas pertaining to the revised Elections Road Map were shared and used by the Electoral Commission in setting up the lay out of the polling stations and the standard operating procedures.

The project also worked with the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Uganda Media Women's Association to organize a consultative dialogue between Electoral Commission, the Women's Movement and media owners and broadcasters. The dialogues highlighted the challenges women face in accessing the media during campaigns. It is noteworthy that the media was heavily reliant on digital platforms. Participants collectively identified ways in which access to media could be increased for the diverse groups of women. The Uganda Communications Commission lifted the ban on the community radios locally known as "*bizindaalo*" that had been banned for noise pollution. Consequently, EC included the use of community radios for communication in the SOPs. The Electoral Commission collaborated with National Broadcasters' Association and the candidates to foster transparency and equitable access to airtime on media. A uniform rate cut was agreed to be used on different media hence increasing access for the vulnerable groups.



Photo L-R Samson Kasumba –Moderator, Ms. Adekemi Ndieli UN Women, Ms. Sylvia M. Ntambi –Equal Opportunities Commission and Mr. Charles Draecabo – UNESCO giving opening remarks at the dialogue.

Figure 3: Consultative dialogue with the UN Women, EC, EOC, UMWA & UNESCO in 2021

c) Civic and voter education

The project supported a nationwide campaign on the display of National Voter registration and display of persons recommended for removal from the National Voter Register. The campaign was conducted to raise awareness and mobilize people to register and check the status of their registration in the National Voter Register. This was conducted using Newspaper strip adverts as well as radio and television spot adverts covering all regions in the country. This contributed to the 18.5 percent increase in the proportion of eligible voters from 15,277,198 total registered voters (8,027,803 female and 7,249,395 male) in 2016 to 18,103,603 voters (9,501,809 females, 8,601,794 males) in 2020. Youth accounted for 65 percent of the total registered voters in 2021.

The project in collaboration with Citizen's Coalition for Electoral Democracy in Uganda (CCEDU) used a media voter education and mobilization campaign dubbed "*Omulembe Gwa Digo*" loosely translated as "a digital era to reach out to 10 million women and youth in Uganda. This mobilized youth and women who had access to media. It is however important to note that the shutdown of the internet a day before the 14 January 2021 elections prevented citizens from accessing information ahead of the election, given that civil society organizations (CSOs), CCEDU inclusive, sent out voter education messages through online channels including social media.

The project collaborated with UHRC on civic education. Plans and preparations were made to conduct civic and voter education in the 10 Uganda Human Rights Commission regions targeting 700 key stakeholders and including numerous radio talk shows. Unfortunately, the implementation of the activity was put on hold. It was envisaged that, improved understanding of the electoral rules and regulations by the electorate and other stakeholders would lead to stronger confidence in the election process and increased voter turnout and eventually acceptance of the election outcome based on trust and confidence in the electoral process and institutions. A total of 57.22 percent of the total number of registered voters participated in the Presidential and Parliamentary polls. Therefore, civic education efforts could continue in the post-election period. The 2021 elections registered the least voter turnout since 1996 (Figure 4).

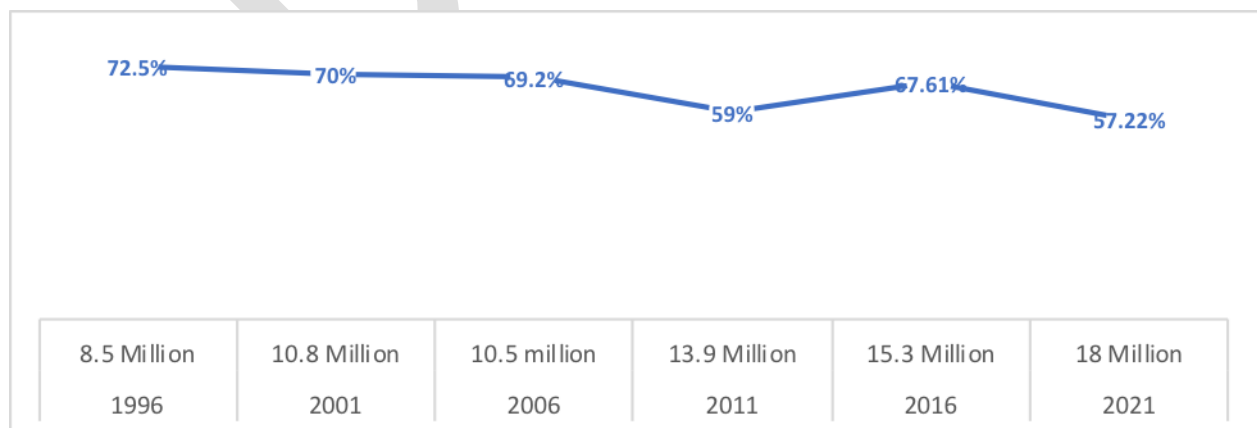


Figure 4: Trend analysis of voter turnout since 1996

The Uganda Pre-Election Survey conducted between 28 October and 6 November 2020 by the International Foundation for Electoral Systems revealed that the electorate needed more voter education around the 2021 general elections. Only 21 percent had a great deal of information, 55 percent had some information, and 18 percent had no information at all, suggesting a need for more information among most people.

d) Gender, inclusion, and transparency messaging

Thematic national campaigns for gender equality and inclusion of women, youth, persons with disabilities in electoral process were conducted. Inclusion and Participation of People with Disabilities in the electoral process was harnessed through engagement with the Electoral Commission, Women with Disabilities, Human Rights Commission, National Council of Persons with Disabilities, and National Association of Women with Disabilities in Uganda (NUWODU). This ensured that electoral administrators, electoral assistance providers, and experts in elections, identified and addressed challenges faced by different marginalized groups in their participation in the electoral processes. Further engagement and dialogue will document good practices that can be implemented at different stages of the electoral cycle to increase participation of PWDs in elections.

Technical assistance was also provided to the EC to support strategic actions and improve gender mainstreaming in terms of personnel skills, tools, and guidelines. This will further be supported in 2021. Women participation was further promoted through enhancement of capacity of aspiring women candidates in 10 districts and a virtual conference for aspiring women candidates on managing a successful campaign.

In addition, through UNDP's Regional Service Centre, a 5- day virtual BRIDGE (Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections) training on Gender and Elections was organized. Three project team members as well as EC staff attended and benefited from the training. BRIDGE is a comprehensive professional development programme on election administration developed by electoral administrators with a wide range of experience in elections in many different countries and contexts. The training attracted 26 participants from different countries such as Uganda, Ethiopia, Malawi, Rwanda, Ghana, Kenya, and Gambia. The participants gained knowledge and skills in electoral administration, strategic planning for electoral management, the legal frameworks, electoral systems, electoral cycle, electoral dispute management, gender equality and elections among others.

The processes to implement the new Online Electoral Dispute Resolution platform (EDR) and the implementation of the EC Call Centre for transparency and inclusion were underway but put on hold by the Electoral Commission. However, it is expected that these processes may be re-launched in the post-elections period which will allow a sound design, testing, and capacity transferring process using actual data, findings, and lessons from the 2021 general elections. It is relevant to mention that a responsive and transparent complaints management system is thereby an essential mechanism to mitigate grievances of unfair treatment. The implementation of such an online platform in the post-election period could help to ensure that electoral disputes are fast-tracked and managed accordingly in the future to enhance responsiveness, transparency, and trust of the Judiciary.

The project also supported regular Politico-electoral and legal analysis, including scenario analysis and context monitoring that informed strategic interventions for dialogue and risk management. This was implemented on a weekly basis in partnership with the UN Elections Working group, which informed the risk log and risk mitigation strategies. The output of these actions informed UN's leadership decision making and enabled timely information flow among the project donors; on key issues, trends, and contingent measures linked to the evolving context and project's implementation. Such strategic analysis was utilized to inform the advocacy work of the UN Secretary-General, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, UN Assistant Secretary-Generals, and the UN Resident Coordinator, amongst others.

The project worked with IRCU to review the pre-election interventions and set the post-election agenda in 10 hotspot districts in Central and Eastern region namely, Rakai, Masaka, Gomba, Mityana, Luwero (Central region) Mbale, Busia, Jinja, Kamuli and Tororo (Eastern Region). This targeted inclusion and participation of youth in the post-election activities. The performance of religious leaders and stakeholders during the election period, lessons learnt, and challenges were identified and reviewed. A post-election peace building agenda was agreed on with the stakeholders and pursued in the post-election period.

The office of the UN Resident Coordinator (RC) met with Citizen's Coalition for Electoral Democracy in Uganda (CCEDU) and UN Women to discuss comprehensive civic education and peace campaign aimed at diffusing tensions. Clear plans were laid out and implemented to diffuse tensions. UNDP worked with UN Women to support the EC to prepare and roll out a strategy on inclusion. Further technical support was offered to ensure that the Standard Operating Procedures during elections were gender sensitive and inclusive. The standard Operating procedures were reviewed and enhanced for gender sensitivity compliance. Compilation of a compendium of recommendations and analysis about the elections, was fundamental in informing electoral programming and for the next electoral cycle.

8 million women and youth were mobilized to participate in the 2021 elections. This was through the "*Omulembe gwa digito*" campaign. The campaign was carried out on 18 radio stations and promoted by six peer-to-peer educators on two main social media platforms: Facebook and twitter. Below is the link to the launch.

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1pzm6ZDfSoQvRXFy4GoRb3hIppqW1xWVGa?usps=haring>

A total of 2,193 Radio Spot messages and DJ mentions were aired on 19 radio stations across the country, enabling youths to know how to use different social media platforms to access information about the electoral process. It also reached through the caravan routes in Mbarara, Gulu and Central region. supported strategic communication of the Electoral Roadmap, including the display of the voter registration. This led to an increase in the proportion of eligible voters from 15,277,198 registered voters (8,027,803 females, 7,249,395 males) in 2016 to 18,103,603 voters (9,501,809 females, 8,601,794 males) in 2021. In 2021, there were 4.9 percent female candidates contesting for the mainstream parliamentary seats (133 women out of 2,728 candidates). At subnational level, there were 613 contestants for the position of District or City Chairperson of which 22 (3.6 percent) were female. Out of the 353 open parliamentary seats, women secured 20 (5.7 percent).

Four press conferences were held to mobilize youth and women to engage, participate and vote in the upcoming elections. 3 pieces of analytical opinion pieces were also developed to

address the issue of women and youth participation in the 2021 elections. The analytical pieces focused on encouraging youth and women to show up and vote since they were the majority voters.

Several stakeholder dialogues and engagements were conducted on selected topics in relation to good governance and inclusion. For instance, a workshop organised by UN Women was conducted for 60 women from 9 political parties under the Interparty women's platform. The training focused on conflict management, social movement building and transformative leadership ahead of the women council elections. The training created a platform for the amplification of women's voices in politics and formed the basis through which the women's agenda is championed for an inclusive and participatory governance system in Uganda and across the different political parties. As a result, a minimum agenda paper for advocacy on critical issues affecting women in politics was developed and agreed upon by women leaders from the different political parties. Other key issues that were prioritised included inclusion of women from different diversities, increased media representation for women in politics, increased financing for women's leagues, mentorship, capacity building for young women in politics, and lobbying for affirmative action in political party structures.

Additionally, Religious Leaders through the Inter Religious Council Uganda were supported to conduct a governance retreat that brought together 88 leaders (F:38 M:50) from East Africa Inter Religious Council that positioned faith-based leaders for effective contribution to nation building and driving national social transformation. Some of the pertinent resolutions from retreat included; the need for IRCU to conduct capacity building on advocacy and policy reform for leaders which skills they will apply to advocate for quality education and healthy programmes especially for the youth, PWDs and women, undertake appropriate advocacy initiatives towards credible and peaceful political processes and governance by advocating and lobbying for funding from government to address regional conflicts, IRB's to focus on pastoral response victims of abuse, strengthening the family institution through social and economic capacity building of parents and development of appropriate skills and resources as well as being committed to work towards a deepened and shared understanding of environmental stewardship underpinning it with theological understanding. Finalization of the framework for harnessing the demographic dividend for the youth focusing on their critical needs and advocacy to duty bearers such as government of Uganda to revitalize the processes of national dialogue.

A dialogue bringing together over 640 delegates from over 13 African countries Uganda, Kenya, Botswana, Rwanda, South Africa, Australia, Unites States, United Kingdom, Nigeria, Ghana, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo and Ethiopia was supported as part of strengthening their engagement with people at grass-roots levels to provide, amongst others, legal education, and training on issues of democracy, human rights; good governance; and rule of law, while at the same time participating in developing and influencing political and legal systems in both the public and private sectors under the theme positioning the Christian lawyers to thrive through a volatile and ambiguous world. The event was a networking and benchmarking opportunity for Christian lawyers from the globe to share best practices with an aim of extending justice to all around the world organized around several themes such as rule of Law, Family and Community, Religious Freedoms, Wellness, the Lawyer, and their Role in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals-2030 especially SDG 16, which today's lawyer should be mindful about

so that they can have more positive impact in their countries and the rest of the world. The four-day conference used a participatory approach that involved aspects such as panel discussions across the three sectors, including the Bar Panel, Judiciary Panel and Academician Panel, Country benchmarking approach with representation from Kenya, Rwanda, Ethiopia, South Africa, South Sudan, Botswana, Rwanda, Nigeria and the host Uganda, daily morning devotions on the event themes, real life experiences and participatory approach with the pastors and church leadership including exhortation.

Nnabagereka Development Foundation (NDF) convened round table discussions with over 9 cultural institutions with a focus on embracing the revival of the *Obuntubulamu* concept within the cultural institutions as a building block tool to foster social cohesion and inclusivity that promote mindset change and national development. During the round table discussion, there was a consensus regarding the training of the *obuntubulamu* concept that the facilitators would visit each cultural institution with the aim of training a bigger number of people. Similarly, it was agreed upon that NDF would organise a briefing for the principles to be done centrally including identification of new schools, host *obuntubulamu* clubs, but also ensure that the clubs are supported to have activities within the school and their communities.

A leadership training program was conducted for over 90 youth leaders from different tertiary institutions and universities with support of Makerere University, Julius Nyerere Leadership Centre (JNLC) and Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development. (MoGLSD) with an aim of equipping youth leaders with effective leadership skills to respond to the fast changing economic, political, and social climate in the country which presents new challenges. The training also engaged in mindset transformation which provided an opportunity for the leaders to connect with a wide range of demographic related challenges in their youthful life while remaining dedicated to their primary mission of serving the student bodies. Other related topics discussed during the training included art of self-leadership, emotional intelligence, leadership, and finances which included personal finances and outsourcing of funds for projects and activities, effective communication and presentation skills, conflict analysis, resolution and management, leading others, strategic leadership, and ethical leadership among others.

2.2 Output 2: Enhanced Institutional Capacity For The EC And Other Electoral Stakeholders.

The project enhanced institutional capacity for the Electoral Commission (EC) and other electoral stakeholders in preparedness for the 2021 elections.

Percentage of Public confidence in the EC

Some Forty-two percent of Ugandans said they trust the Electoral Commission “somewhat” or “a lot” (2017 Afro barometer). Enhancing the capacity of electoral stakeholders contributed to an increase of public confidence in the EC to organize credible free and fair elections from 42 percent in 2017 to 47 percent in 2021 (2021 Afro barometer survey report). The report further revealed that 48 percent of the Ugandans trust EC to ensure free, fair, peaceful, and credible elections.

Under this output, capacity building was the main implementation strategy utilized to enhance institutional capacity of electoral stakeholders.

a) Capacity building

An electoral Symposium was organized to connect knowledge and good practices on electoral processes. This enabled high-level exchanges on electoral best practices in the region, enhanced capacities of the Electoral Commission, and influenced preparations and delivery on the elections. The project continued to support efforts to enhance institutional capacities of electoral stakeholders in several ways. Through capacity building of selected institutions, it contributed to some level of increase of public confidence in the Electoral Commission to organize credible free and fair elections from 42 percent in 2017 to 47 percent in 2021.

- It enabled space for open dialogue among 300 electoral stakeholders (EC, MoJCA, Judiciary, UPF, Political Parties, CSOs academia, UN, development partners), that contributed to the preparations and delivery of Uganda's 2020/2021 electoral road map and general elections.
- A diversity of best practices shared by stakeholders from: Electoral Management Bodies, African Union, Innovation for Democratic Engagement Action, Civil Society Organizations, Academia, and Media
- South –south exchanges between Uganda and Botswana, Malawi, Mauritius, Kenya, and South Africa helped to connect knowledge and good practices on electoral processes that informed preparations and conduct of the 2020/2021 elections and the electoral cycle in Uganda.
- The interventions informed strategies for the electoral support and related resource mobilization. Through a basket fund arrangement, US\$ 7 million was mobilized for the project with contributions from Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Austria, Iceland, and UNDP.
- The knowledge product, "Strengthening Electoral Processes in Uganda" that evolved from the symposium informed national electoral stakeholders in the preparations and delivering on Uganda's electoral road map for the 2020/2021 elections. Over ten critical topics are covered in the knowledge product on key areas such as: promoting public confidence and Electoral Management Body credibility; use of technology in promoting accountability in elections; promotion of participation and inclusion in the elections, civic and voter education; partnerships, making political parties effective, electoral observation, commercialization of elections, mitigation of violence and conflict before, during and after elections; and electoral justice through effective Electoral Dispute Resolution (EDR) mechanisms.

Figure 5: Symposium on Strengthening Electoral Processes in Uganda



in 2019.

Target institutions (EC, Judiciary, Uganda Human Rights Commission, police & media) with capacity to effectively support electoral processes.

The Electoral Commission, the UHRC, and the MC (3 out of 3) have capacity to effectively support electoral processes. According to the Afro Barometer report of 7 January 2021, 70 percent of respondents think the Electoral Commission has the capacity and is well prepared to manage the 2021 general elections. It is important to note that the 2021 presidential and parliamentary polls were peacefully conducted, and results were presented within the 48 hours required by law. The winner of the elections was declared with more than 50 percent of the total cast votes as provided for in the constitution of the Republic of Uganda. President Yoweri Museveni was declared with 58.38 percent of the votes against his main challenger, Robert Kyagulanyi, who got 35.08% of the total votes cast.

Further a benchmarking visit to Ghana on Civic Education, Electoral Administration, Peace Building and SDG action, led by the UN RC and financially and technically supported by UNDP was organized as part of the support to the broader electoral process in Uganda. A multidisciplinary team from Uganda comprising Government representatives and non-state actors participated in the benchmarking mission. This informed Uganda's strategies for a peaceful 2020/2021 election.

Working in synergy with UNDP's Rule of Law and Constitutional Democracy programme and in collaboration Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs (MoJCA) and the Parliament of Uganda, the project supported engagement, and advocacy for electoral reforms. Consequently, five electoral amendment bills were passed by Parliament in March 2020 and subsequently all five assented to by the President of the Republic of Uganda. These include: The Electoral Commission (Amendment) Bill 2019, the Political Parties and Organizations (Amendment) Bill 2019, the Parliamentary Elections (Amendment) Bill 2019, the Presidential Elections (Amendment) Bill 2019 and the Local Government (Amendment) Bill¹. Some of the amendments that have been instrumental in the 2020/2021 general elections include:

¹ <https://parliamentwatch.ug/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/The-Local-Governments-Amendment-Bill-2020-1.pdf>

- Amendment of Article 104 of the Constitution and section 59 of the Presidential Elections Act (as amended) to increase time for filing a presidential election petition from 10 to 15 days and increase in time within which to consider a presidential election petition by the Supreme Court from 30 to 60 days.
- Amendment of the Parliamentary Elections Act section 30 and the Presidential Elections Act section 31, to set the number of voters who should witness opening of the polls at a polling station. This number is now to a minimum of 10 from the previous vague requirement that stated, “full view of all present”.
- The Presidential Elections Act and Parliament Elections Act (Section 39) was amended to stop the practice of creating special polling stations for members of the Uganda Peoples Defence Forces in their barracks.
- The Political Parties and Organizations Act, was amended to insert a Code of Conduct for the Political Parties. This was leveraged to facilitate discussions between political party candidates and Electoral Commission.

Due to the high levels of conflict and recorded elections-related violence in the pre-elections stage, the UHRC was supported and strengthened by the project to undertake effective human rights monitoring and reporting during elections. A total of 175 staff members of UHRC were trained in human rights monitoring in the context of elections. In connection with this, 180 human rights monitor were deployed for four days in the context of the presidential and parliamentary elections in 1,830 polling stations across the country; no major human rights issues recorded. ***“On the whole, the presidential and parliamentary polling exercise was carried out within a secure, peaceful and tranquil atmosphere which enabled a fair process of voting and a fulfilment of the freedom of choice by the voters of their leaders and representatives”*** (according to the UHRC Media Statement of 21 January 2020). Also, one UN Police and two Human Rights Officers were deployed for a period of two to three months to (a) advice national security authorities on human rights issues and (b) increase in-country capacities for monitoring and reporting on human rights issues and violations.

Plans were underway to build the capacity of the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs in drafting electoral laws/regulations and to train Judicial officers on Electoral Dispute Resolution (EDR), but implementation was put on hold. The High Court is responsible for all election petitions except the presidential election petitions which go to the Supreme Court. In the post-election period, a high number of electoral disputes are expected to arise. Therefore, it is relevant for the project to re-launch the capacity building for the Judiciary in managing electoral disputes in an expeditious and transparent manner. Equally so, the project could support the Judiciary to have dialogue on the implementation of the recent amendments to the electoral laws which will impact on the timeliness for handling future election petitions by the Supreme Court.

The project, with support from the MCU, developed six modules of training materials² for media training in gender and conflict-sensitive and overall fair reporting on elections, identified 16 trainers and organized to conduct the training in 20 venues across the country. However, the planned training was put on hold in the months before the General Elections polls. In case the training activities are re-launched with the agreement of national partners,

² The 6 modules focused on National laws with a direct impact on Journalists, Media role in combating disinformation, Media and security forces in elections, election violence triggers mitigation EWER, gender-sensitive reporting to prevent VAW in elections and conflict sensitive reporting

the modules could be customized for media training in gender and conflict-sensitive fair reporting to counter misinformation and disinformation in the next electoral cycle.

Plans were underway to train security forces to maintain law and order during elections in a manner that inspires public and stakeholder confidence and contributes to peaceful elections, but implementation was put on hold. Given the numerous incidents of heavy-handed responses by security forces to incidents of public violence during the party primaries, and campaigns, it is clear that training of the national security forces would be convenient on aspects of the election law, human rights, violence against women in election, safety of journalists, etc. With the agreement of the national securities leadership, such efforts can be supported by the project during the post-elections period.

Implementation of EC electoral operations instruments was put on hold in 2020. However, plans were underway to implement the activity in 2021. The project supported the EC in the post-elections period to strengthen policy frameworks and practices on election operation by reviewing relevant implementation procedures and guidelines to ensure transparency, efficacy and inclusion of Women and People with Disabilities.

The institutional capacity of the EC was improved through concrete actions supported by the project including (a) the organization of a regional symposium, (b) specialized training using the international BRIDGE methodology, and (c) working together with EC on scenario analysis and the implementation of measures to conduct elections under Covid-19 pandemic from which SOPs emerged. The electoral symposium and the training contributed to (i) influence 2020/2021 elections preparations (spaces for dialogue, lessons learned and practices to strengthen business process and overall management of the election) and (ii) inform the design of the UN electoral assistance in Uganda.

In view of a continuous improvement of the electoral administration in Uganda, during the post-elections, the project proposes to support operational training for EC staff and other key electoral stakeholders especially in the conduct of election activities such as voter registration, voter education, dispute resolution and voting, using the BRIDGE methodology, under a broader approach, to put elections in the context of governance and democracy. Besides the operational training support to the EC staff, the project in 2021 will also render professional development and training support to improve the skills of staff in key areas of the EC mandate under the electoral cycle and electoral integrity approaches.

b) Support to national authorities to promote Covid-19 prevention measures.

The project provided support to WHO to conduct various activities to strengthen the capacities of the national authorities to prevent Covid-19 infections during the general elections polls. The purpose of the support was to implement relevant and practical interventions to mitigate the anticipated risks to election officials, health workers and others involved in the election process, communities during the pre-elections, elections and post-elections period. In addition, there was substantive support to risk communication to concurrently reduce the socio-economic impact of Covid-19 by intensifying the health response to the Covid-19 pandemic.



Figure 6: WHO supporting a campaign on the prevention of the spread of COVID-19 in the electoral context WHO disseminating flyers to support a campaign on the prevention of the spread of COVID 19 during the election period in 2020.

The support included the following:

- Technical engagements with election officials and health workers.
- Training of over 3,000 polling officials and 320 health staff from 86 districts.
- Support to health staff to conduct supervision during preparations and on election days in the field.
- Support to social mobilization on SOPs adherence: radio spots aired in 15 FM radios across the country, 200,000 flyers printed and delivered to Electoral Commission's officers in the field, 298 banners and sensitizations actions alongside the election officials and in churches.
- Provision of 600,000 surgical mask and 12,000 litres of alcohol hand rub to supplement those provided by EC.

The Justice Law and Order Sector (JLOS) was supported through setting up video conferencing facility for Masaka Court and Prison to ease and reduce time in hearing of court cases, promote safety in the context of COVID-19 and reduce cost for court process as cases can be heard through video conferencing. This has led to expeditious hearing of electoral court cases within the specified time frame. Further, support for installations of video conferencing systems continued in 4 other select courts and prisons including Mubende High Court and Kaweeri Prison, Mbale Court and Mbale prison, Jinja High Court and Kirinya Prison and Gulu High Court and Gulu Main Prison respectively. Installation of equipment and civil works were all completed, and the staff of the judiciary were trained on usage of the equipment. The Chief Justice of Uganda launched the video conferencing systems on 21 August 2023 at the Gulu High Court and Gulu main prison as a pillar to boost service delivery

and enhance access and administration of justice for the people of Uganda. In addition, capacity enhancement for judicial officers was conducted through engaging judicial officers in different specialized trainings such as 60 Magistrates Grade One and three Editors trained in Law Reporting and Case Summary Writing, other judicial officers from Eastern, Western and Northern regions were trained on customer care. Similarly, the Judiciary toll-free line was upgraded to a call centre. This enabled the Judiciary to receive feedback from the public while informing the public about the judicial process and justice outreach.

Technical support was provided to the Parliament of Uganda, leading to the development of knowledge products/induction training manuals for the orientation of newly elected 11th Parliament which had a high number of first time Members of Parliament, for whom detailed orientation programme and induction manuals to guide orientation of the 11th Parliament were completed. These were in the areas of Governance in a Multiparty political dispensation, the 2030 agenda for Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, Monitoring Government Service Delivery, Ethics and Integrity, Human Rights, Inclusion of Women, Persons with Disabilities and Equal Opportunities.

35 EC staff from Kampala, Karamoja, West Nile, Albertine, Eastern and Central Uganda gained knowledge on prevention and reporting of Violence against women and girls in elections. This was a through training workshop that gave an opportunity to 35 EC staff to reflect on the causes of violence in elections and how to mitigate them. It was observed in the training that whenever there are violent situations in elections, women and youth are affected more, and this limits their full participation both as voters and as candidates. A number of actions were proposed to prevent violence against women and youth in the 2021 elections.

A training for 51 journalists (F:25/ M:26) and other media professionals as conducted on human rights-based reporting. The training included a variety of topics, including an introduction to human rights concepts, background, and principles; the legal framework regulating freedom of the media in Uganda; the role of the media in protecting human rights; and gender-sensitive reporting in journalism. The training contributed to the overall goal of advancing human rights in Uganda by empowering journalists and media professionals to play an active role in raising awareness, promoting accountability, and advocating for positive change through their reporting. It further created a platform for knowledge exchange, networking, and collaboration among participants, fostering a community of journalists and media professionals committed to promoting human rights in their reporting.

Additionally, OHCHR jointly with the UHRC conducted a training for 46 Internal Security Organization (ISO) personnel, Uganda Peoples Defence Forces (UPDF) senior personnel and Uganda Police Force (UPF) senior officers (F: 25 M:21) on human rights standards and the observance of human rights in women's council elections in West Nile region. The training equipped commanding officers with knowledge of key principles of human rights, the use of force and firearms, arrest and detention, including juvenile justice, gender considerations in

law enforcement, and their role in the electoral processes. The post and pre-evaluation exercises indicated increased knowledge of human rights standards applicable to disarmament operations.

Civic engagement and awareness raising was conducted through different multimedia platforms that included radio talk shows and airings of spot-on messages across different parts of the country. A total of 241 radio talk shows were conducted on different local media stations highlighting the concept of human rights and the mandate of the Uganda Human Rights Commission, the rights of vulnerable persons in society namely women, Children, Prisoners, Persons with Disabilities, Older Persons, Right to personal liberty, Land related rights, Democracy, elections and Human Rights, duties and responsibilities of citizens among others. One major lesson arising out of the talk shows was enhanced access to justice as evidenced by the increase in number of people who lodged complaints with the Commissions after the talk shows as well as an increase in calls using the various UHRC toll free lines at every Regional Office with many callers seeking for legal advice on different legal disputes. Additionally, dissemination of IEC materials was conducted to create awareness on human rights and where people whose rights have been violated can seek redress from.

Support was provided to the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs that included installation of teleconferencing equipment at key points of service that included the Administrator General's Office, Regional offices, and Directorate of Legal Advisory Services and 6 regional officers as well as digitization of the registries at the Ministry. This will enhance access to justice and improve service delivery and will also reduce the cost and time incurred during supervision of sensitive cases and promote increased accessibility of state attorney and senior officers in strategic meetings. Through the digitization of the registries and installation of the video conferencing facility at the Ministry it will enable intra linkages between the Ministry and the Judiciary and will further boost expedition of cases hence reducing on case backlog.

Furthermore, as a result of the benchmarking visit from Ghana and amidst the great lessons learned by the Ugandan delegation, the Chief Justice of Uganda, following one of the recommendations from the delegation, invited two Honorable Judges from the Superior courts of Ghana (i.e. Court of Appeal and High Court) were invited to present a paper to the Justices, Judges and Judiciary Managers about performance, accountability and Monitoring during the annual Judges conference that occurred in February 2023. The two Honorable justices presented the paper and interacted with the Ugandan judiciary on how the judiciary could apply some of the best practices from Judiciary of Ghana. One of the key results reported is that the information shared by the two Hon. Judges and the knowledge acquired during the benchmarking visit to Ghana is informing the formulation of the Uganda Judiciary Performance Assessment tool and the Training Institute Regulations. Copies of the Assessment tool and Training Institute Regulations have been drafted and are currently before the 1st Parliamentary Council for review.

In addition, the judiciary conducted stakeholder engagements in Mbale, Gulu and Mbarara districts respectively through radio talk shows and open court days were conducted for the judiciary to have dialogue and feedback with the court users on the service delivery as well as dissemination of IEC materials to the public containing information of the judiciary such as regional offices, toll free lines, services offered among others. The project also provided support to the judiciary to procure and install Real-Time Transcription systems for 4

selected courts in Uganda and development of training tools on electoral dispute resolution and a curriculum for training court transcribers.

Support was provided to Ministry of Local Government that conducted a training of Trainers (TOT) for local government officials who were equipped with knowledge and updated on the recent developments in the Local Governance systems as well as updated on the recent reforms in Government and any other related information. The ToT helped to sharpen the trainers' skill set who later facilitated trainings for over 1500 newly elected office bearers and technical staff at Local Government level in 34 selected districts. The trainings provided a learning platform for the local leaders to fully equip and prepare them to perform their roles effectively and propel service delivery. Furthermore, development of an online self-paced training module was done by Ministry of Local Government to be used for future training purposes.

2.3 Output 3: Strengthened dialogue capacities as well as Electoral Violence Early Warning and Early Response (EWER) system.

Existence of EWER systems at national and district levels:

The project engaged the national peace infrastructure consisting of insider mediators like TEFU, IRCU, and Women's Situation Room (Women Elections Monitoring Centre) to promote mediation and social cohesion. The women's situation rooms were capacitated to effectively conduct qualitative and quantitative violence identification, reporting and response with emphasis on gender-based violence and similar violence targeting minorities. During the post-election period, priority was put into training for conflict resolution of all actors involved including dialogue and mediation.

Under the project, four regional Women's Situation Rooms were established as an early warning and early response mechanism to: identify and proactively resolve electoral disputes that could turn violent to effectively respond to situations of imminent or ongoing electoral violence; and ensure that all electoral operations are implemented in a conflict-sensitive way. The four regional WSR hotline and mediation centres included desks for colleagues from the EC and Uganda police to limit misunderstandings. Through these systems, the WSR was able to produce evidence-based reports. It is also relevant to mention that given the WSR deployment to 30 district hotspots of 3,000 monitors (who were given three days of mediation training), the Women's Situation Room was the largest elections monitoring mechanism (during the 2016 elections, WSR had deployed 500 monitors).

The project engaged the national peace infrastructure consisting of insider mediators like TEFU and the IRCU to promote mediation and social cohesion. IRCU and TEFU organized five regional multi-stakeholder dialogues which had 457 (380 males and 77 females) participants, conducted training of 57 leaders on mediation and shuttle diplomacy; and engaged with key stakeholders including senior religious leaders; women and youth interfaith networks; and the district security teams including Resident District Commissioners (RDCs), District Police Commanders (DPCs), Resident City Commissioners (RCCs), Internal Security Officers (ISO) and District Internal Security Officers (DISO). The meetings were organized under the theme "Regional stakeholders' dialogues for 2020-2021 general elections" and aimed at initiating as well as strengthening the relationship between

religious leaders and officials in charge of security so as to ensure peace during and after the elections.

This promoted peace building through disseminating peace messages and conducting mediation dialogues with key stakeholders before the polls. In addition, synergy was leveraged and promoted with other projects implemented by the UN, such as the Youth harnessing project that is funded through the Peace Building Fund (PBF). In this regard, youth, women, and men were mobilized for peacebuilding and civic awareness through social media, radio dissemination of thousands of printed materials, and mentorships. Also, the project took advantage of the commemoration of the International Peace Day to promote dialogue on peace under the leadership of the respective stakeholders, including nine biggest kingdoms in Uganda. As a result, despite the levels of conflict and violence during the electoral campaign period, the country experienced no major human rights violations or incidence of violence during the Presidential and Parliamentary polls.

The Early Warning and Early Response system was gender responsive since it fully included capacities to produce gender sensitive data. This was achieved through the implementation of the Women's Situation Room with support from the project. It was supervised by a steering committee composed of 21 eminent women from NGOs from PWDs, media, young women and organizations working on leadership, governance, and legal issues. The WSR had presence at the regional level.

Also, four regional WSRs (Northern, Eastern, Western and Central)³ led by 21 Eminent Women from Uganda, Ghana, Lesotho, Liberia, Nigeria and Kenya, were established as an early warning and early response mechanism to identify and proactively resolve electoral disputes that could turn violent so as to effectively respond to situations of imminent or ongoing electoral violence. As part of the WSR activities, 3,000 monitors were trained and deployed to cover 30 districts during the Presidential and Parliamentary elections. These contributed to a decline in incidents of violence on the polling day; the WSRs reported that of the 1,778 calls received on polling day, majority sought information on electoral processes, election malpractices, misinformation among voters, and a few on intimidation. The citizens witnessing an incident on electoral violence used a Google play store application (AMANI) set up by the WSR to report such incidents. This was functional until internet was shut down by the Government. The internet shut down affected relaying and compilation of data from the field (districts) to the national WSR centre in Kampala. This forced them to use only the tollfree lines⁴ to collect such data.

³ In the Northern region WSR covers Gulu, Amuru, Kitgum, Koboko, Arua, Lamwo and Nwoya. Central region includes Kampala, Wakiso, Masaka, Luwero, Mityana, Sembabule and Kassanda districts. Eastern region covers Serere, Iganga, Jinja, Mbale, Katakwi, Bugiri and Soroti districts. Western region includes Hoima, Mbarara, Isingiro, Kasese, Ntungamo, Kabale, Rukungiri, Kanungu and Rubanda.

⁴ The tollfree lines were: 0800333433 for Central region; 0800333434 for Eastern region; 0800333435 for Northern region and 0800333436 for Western region.



Members of the Steering Committee of the Women's Situation Room after the Launch
Figure 7: Launch of the Women Situation Room in January 2021.

Working in partnership with IRCU five regional stakeholder-dialogue meetings were conducted from 7-12 January 2021. The purpose of the dialogue meetings was to identify early warning signs and any emerging issues likely to threaten peace and impede voter participation in the 2021 general elections. In terms of participation, 457 persons (380 males and 77 females) participated out of the targeted 700,000 people. In addition, shuttle diplomacy was conducted through IRCU/TEFU and quiet diplomacy was conducted by the UN Family. Both actions added to the mediation and consensus building and thereby prevention of escalation of electoral related conflict in the country.

A total of 300,176 persons were reached with peace messages to ensure peace building and conflict prevention. This was fostered through high level diplomacy and engagement with key players such as Civil Society Organizations, the WSR and Security agencies that conducted peace messaging. For this purpose, several traditional and digital channels were used, including printed materials, radio talk shows, and social media. Furthermore, collaboration was achieved with GoU, women groups, Youth SDGs Coalition, and National Initiative for Civic Education in Uganda.

In addition, the trainings, mediation, shuttle diplomacy and dialogues conducted with support of IRCU/TEFU were also part of the EWER architecture that the project supported during the 2020/2021 elections. In this context, key stakeholders were involved such as local authorities, peace committees, religious leaders, and civil society organizations, among others.



Figure 8: Participants from Kigezi and Rwenzori region in a discussion during the multi stakeholder dialogue in 2021.

Further, the project leveraged the work of the UN's Youth Harnessing project⁵. It complemented the work of Inter-Religious Council of Uganda and other non-state actors including the Rwenzori Forum for Peace and Justice, Nnabagereka Development Foundation, and the Citizen for Electoral Democracy Uganda. In partnership with the respective entities a diversity of innovative entry points was applied to impact on peaceful elections. Through the PBF support social media and radio was innovatively used for the mobilization of young women and men for peacebuilding and civic awareness on the centrality of peaceful elections. For example, the youth created a twitter hashtag #youthoffaith4peace and through their twitter handle @uyin256 widely spread messages on peace, calling on fellow youth to restrain from engaging in violent acts that could potentially harm them.

The project set an agenda for peaceful elections before, during and after elections. Monitoring and weekly updates on the human rights situation was done and informed strategic action for reinforcing human rights promotion and influence of peaceful elections. Temporary deployment of a UN Police Officer to work with the Standing Police Capacity (SPC) and temporary deployment of OHCHR staff members to form a Surge Team was done, and thereby contributed to delivery on the elections work. Efforts for human rights protections were strengthened during the post elections period, the Parliamentary Human Rights Committee was supported to conduct a review on human rights violations during the 2021 general elections. The committee met with several stakeholders, including ex-presidential candidates and senior officials from the Electoral Commission (EC) and Uganda Police Force (UPF). The committee conducted a visit to Kitalya Prison to assess the condition under which individuals were detained.

Through collaboration with IRCU peace messaging was strengthened. Press releases were prepared and issued about peace during the presidential nominations and other key

⁵ Other UN Agencies that are part of the project include OHCHR and UNFPA

emerging issues about the elections. Strategic engagements were held e.g with the Inspector General of Police and other heads of security agencies to advocate about use of equal and appropriate actions when enforcing law and order to all citizens with dignity, respect and within the confines of the Constitution regardless of their political affiliation. The electorate was also urged to restrain themselves from behaviour that could stir up violence. These contributed to an overall peaceful elections event and consequently a peaceful post-election period.

Over 110 youth leaders, 75 radio presenters, and 160 youth were trained in peace messaging, leading to the airing of 32 radio spot messages. Collaboration was also nurtured with 32 popular DJs to make mentions of peace building. Over 30 radio talk shows were conducted, and 2 op-ed articles were published. In addition, youth social media bloggers were engaged to target peace messaging for youth through social media, in effect reaching over 27,500 individuals. High level political dialogues on the electoral processes were facilitated that helped to clarify a number of issues. For example, IRCU through the council of presidents met with the President, the Inspector General of Police, and the Electoral Commission to dialogue on resolving emerging issues in the pre-election such as the increasing electoral violence. High level diplomacy meetings were convened between the UN Resident Coordinator, political parties, and senior representation of state institutions, that engaged on topical emerging issues in the electoral process.

Working with nine biggest kingdoms in Uganda, due to their respected standing and strong community and grassroots connection cultural leader leveraged for peace messaging and engaging their youth networks in peace building interventions. Youth camps in both Buganda and Rwenzori were supported for mentorship on values of 'obuntubulamu' to elicit inherent change in value system for social cohesion. The project also leveraged the PBF work on conflict analysis and mapping as well work with the high-level influencers and political representatives, to nurture spaces of dialogue in the complex electoral environment.



Figure 9: UN diplomatic meeting with the EC Chairperson on 16 January 2021, election results declaration day. L-R UNDP RR, Ms. Elsie Attafuah, EC Chairman Justice Simon Byabakama and UN RC Ms. Rosa Malango

IRCU was also supported to conduct six (6) Post-Election Consensus Building Meetings in Masaka, Rakai, Luwero, Kampala, Mityana, Tororo, Mbale, Busia, Jinja and Kamuli hot spot districts in which 70 senior religious leaders; 51 Male_19 Female participated and obtained feedback from duty bearers like the Police and Resident District Commissioners on their participation in elections, strengthened district peace and stability committees, and enhanced post-election counselling. This resulted into strengthening the IRCU District Inter Faith committees to collaborate with other stakeholders to engage government on creating safe space for believers and conflict mediation. Senior religious leaders pledged to continue offering counselling to both winners and losers to reduce tension and violence.

A Crisis Risk Dashboard (CRD) was formed for Uganda in consultation with the UNDP Crisis Bureau. Risk factors, indicators and available data sets were identified and used in the design of the CRD. There is a CRD prototype in place. The CRD is used as an early warning dashboard to support UNCT in decision making for early response.

The Uganda People's Defense Force and National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) "on the working relationship. Both parties committed to treating each other with dignity, respect and uphold all the rights, including the responsible discharge of the freedom of press". This marked an important milestone for promoting social cohesion and peace after months of conflict along the 2020/2021 electoral process.

Through The WSR, enhanced increased engagement of 1,464 Youths 726 F (49.6%) and 738 F (50.4%) in prevention of conflicts during the electoral period which greatly contributed to curbing election related violence. Youths' activities like door-to-door outreaches contributed to better understanding and appreciation of peaceful coexistence resulting into sustainable peace among the targeted communities. Further, increased engagement of women in peace building activities as a result of the women peace advocates mobilizing women in 30

targeted districts. 1,284 Women peace advocates that were trained supported peace building initiatives in the 30 WSR districts contributing to community sensitization on peaceful elections, encouraged their children not to get involved in election violence, pushed for reconciliation for some political leaders at community level which contributed to peace before, during and after elections.

EC conducted an internal evaluation exercise of the 2020/2021 electoral process. From this several lessons were learnt, and recommendations made for better preparations and conditions for the next general elections. These are a cornerstone in guiding the post-election interventions and planning for the next elections.

2.4 Output 4: Effective and efficient project management, partnership formation, and Monitoring and Evaluation.

In the implementation of this output, UNDP ensured appropriate managerial, operational, and technical capacities to carry out the planned activities with high quality and transparency standards. It also helped to foster effective collaboration with UN RCO, UN Women, OHCHR, UNESCO, and WHO as well as key national stakeholders that were involved in the implementation. Some of the relevant activities under this output were the recruitment of both national and international staff, the development of partnerships including putting in place specific agreements, facilitating fund release, procurements as applicable and fostering reporting and accountability of both financial and programmatic nature. Also, coordination and synergies were fostered with other international electoral assistance providers with presence in Uganda. In addition, short term specialists were engaged in the areas of elections, security support, human rights, EWER, hate speech, communications, and legal framework. Furthermore, support staff including Finance, Administration, Procurement, and Driver were secured by the project. Other positions such as Capacity Development Advisor and an EWER consultant were hired during the post-elections period. As part of UNDP global practices and regulations, a Project Management Unit (PMU) was established to be responsible for day-to-day management of the project.

The project achieved effective resource mobilization and fostered coordination and synergies among international electoral assistance providers working in Uganda. This resulted in the first ever election support basket in Uganda by donors working in collaboration with the UN. Also, under this multilateral approach for collaboration the project was able to establish, for the first time in Uganda, a multi-donor basket fund mechanism to manage the contributions by the governments from Norway, Austria, Denmark, Sweden, Iceland, and UNDP. The project successfully mobilised approximately US\$ 7.8 Million of the total project budget of US\$ 10.5 million. This type of management mechanism is recommended for electoral support projects since it promotes coordination, coherence, efficiency, transparency, ownership, and flexibility. Key aspects of the basket fund are the governance mechanisms including the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and Project Technical Committee (PTC), both implemented by the project.

In addition, resource mobilization, stakeholder engagements, and scenario analysis were conducted by the project on a continuous basis and informed strategic actions for fostering delivery on the elections.

EC conducted an internal evaluation exercise of the 2020/2021 electoral process. From this several lessons were learnt, and recommendations made for better preparations and conditions for the next general elections. These are a cornerstone in guiding the post-election interventions and planning for the next elections.

High level strategic engagements to inform the direction of the SEPU project were undertaken. Key among these include with Government of Uganda leadership - the President, Prime Minister, Attorney General, Acting Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Minister of General Duties, the National Planning Authority Chair, and Electoral Commission Secretary among others. Consequently, in March 2022 the Government of Uganda, through the Prime Minister provided direction for the SEPU, to focus on support for the elections of the Women Councils and Committees.

Effective coordination and delivery on the project was supported through convening of key meetings such as the project technical committees' meetings, board meetings, conducting of select field visits, undertaking project reporting and communications and financial delivery of project activities.

A project technical meeting was conducted between the project donors and UN Agencies on March 23, 2022, that discussed the way forward for SEPU. In addition, bilateral and follow-up meetings were held by UNDP with select donors contributing to the SEPU basket. All donors agreed to contribute to the work plan in support of the elections of the Women Councils and Committees. The direction provided by Government and feedback from the donors informed several technical level engagements between the UN family, Electoral Commission, and other electoral stakeholders, whereby interventions to be funded in support of the workplan for the elections of the Women Councils and Committees and related budget allocations was concluded.

Technical support was provided that informed the finalisation and launch of the EC Strategic Plan 2022/23-2026/27 under the theme, *"To promote participatory democracy and good governance for the country's prosperity."* Furthermore, technical contribution was made towards the review and enhancement of the Electoral Commission Strategic Plan (2021/2022- 2024/2025). A plan is in place and in alignment to Uganda's third National Development Plan's priority programme of Governance and Security and the 2030 Agenda for development especially Goal 16 on peace, justice and accountable institutions and Goal 5 on gender equality.

An end of project evaluation for the SEPU project was initiated. A consultant has been onboarded to conduct the evaluation which will assess the contributions made to date/expected by UN agencies and other electoral stakeholders accessing contribution of the SEPU project overall, stating the achievements of the project objectives and outcomes as specified in the Project Document, assessing signs of success and/or failure including risks to sustainability to inform future programming. Upon completion of the exercise, a detailed report will be developed and disseminated accordingly.



3.0 STATUS OF RISK LOG

	Description	Date Identified	Type	Impact & Priority	Countermeasures / Mngt response	Owner	Submitted, updated by	Last Update	Status
1	Perception of Government close-down of specific media houses or the social media.	Apr-20	Operational	Government closure of some media houses and/or social media during the election period affects voter mobilization, mobile checking of registration status, and candidate campaigns. Priority- 4	Supported dialogue among stakeholders to promote consensus on the need to promote media freedom and continued access of Ugandans to social media throughout the electoral cycle. Supported the Ministry of Information and the Media Council to train social media influences and actors on responsible conduct. Supported dialogue between state actors and citizens on the need for access to social media during elections.	UNDP	UNDP	October	Closed: Internet was switched off for five days during presidential and parliamentary polls. This affected candidate campaigns and access to voter education because they were conducted through media
2	Project implementation affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.	Mar-20	Operational	Delays to finalize signing of key documents to set up the project: i.e. financing agreements between UNDP and donors; cooperation agreements between UNDP and project responsible parties (i.e. UN agencies) and the project annual work plan (AWP) for 2020.	The e-platforms were used to engage with project partners including donors, UN agencies and other stakeholders to expedite the finalization of relevant project documents; also facilitate relevant project consultative meetings. Priority 5	UNDP (Governance Unit)	UNDP (Governance Unit)	October	Closed.
3	Project implementation affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.	Mar-20	Operational	Difficulty to conduct project activities such as civic and voter education and peace dialogue due to the Covid-19 lockdown	Multi-media campaigns were used for civic and voter education. The lock down was lifted to allow meetings of 200 people	UNDP	UNDP	October	Closed

				and/or continued social distancing and related measures.	whilst maintaining social distancing and related Covid-19 Standard operating procedures.				
4	Non or late passage of electoral reforms	Nov-20	Organizational	Elections are characterized by procedural uncertainty as time may not allow all laws to be implemented timeously; and/or electoral stakeholder contest new laws; project activities to sensitize the public about new laws could be compromised. Priority=5	Institutional dialogue spaces were used to promote and facilitate broad public engagement on the issues. Continued with the advocacy interventions through Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Judiciary, Parliament Affairs and legal Committee, the Parliament and Speaker of Parliament.	Electoral Commission	Electoral Commission	October	Partially solved. Five electoral amendment bills were enacted. However, some provisions could not be adequately integrated in the electoral cycle activities due to time limitations
5	Change in staffing at the Electoral Commission. Four senior technical staff left the Commission.	Jul-20	Organizational	Getting new staff to replace those that left could slow the implementation of project activities as they catch up with work at the EC	Liaised with the EC to ensure that the positions were filled immediately. Supported the EC to bring the new staff up to speed with the SEPU project.	EC	EC	October	Closed: The EC identified internal candidates to replace them - EC Director of Operations, took the position of EC Secretary in acting capacity. Other senior staff were appointed to act in the rest of the positions for six months until after the general election.
6	Lengthy planning.	Jan-21	Operational/Programmatic	Limited progress in implementing project activities	Engagement with country leadership and the executive.	UN RCO/UNDP	All implementers	Mar-22	Resolved
7	Delayed pronouncement on the way forward for the WCCE by EC. Gaps in funding for the WCCE. The budget	Jun-22	Programme/Operational	High	Implement select activities intended to sustainably impact on the broader electoral cycle & not just the electoral event of the WCCE.	EC	EC	Jun-22	Pending

	estimate of UGX 35.67 billion (approx. US\$ 10 million) submitted to UN for support of the WCCE is way beyond the remaining funds under SEPU basket fund.								
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4.0 LESSONS LEARNED, RECOMMENDATIONS, EMERGING ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

This section is an analysis of lessons learned, emerging issues, and opportunities.

Programmatic

Electoral processes

- i) Continuous civic education is proposed, for long-term impact on the electoral cycle, and accountable governance.
- ii) Pronouncement on the Women Council and Committee elections and their alignment to the national elections is key for fostering SDG 5 of gender equality & women empowerment.

Sustainable Peace

- i) Public confidence is key in fostering electoral processes that are credible, transparent, peaceful, and inclusive. The Electoral Commission, in collaboration and coordination with other key national institutions needs to continue investing in raising awareness and conducting of civic and voter education that can build confidence for the next electoral cycle.
- ii) Social cohesion and peace building actions are relevant along the electoral cycle, including the time between elections. The culture of peace needs to be fostered on a permanent basis to reduce the possibility of inter-communal tensions, conflict, and elections-related violence.

Capacity building

- i) Continuous training and implementation of practices and tools to counter misinformation, disinformation and hate speech are necessary along the electoral cycles and not only before each election. This is an evolving issue that is key for national all institutions and key stakeholders to note.
- ii) Seamless internet connectivity such as through the backbone by NITA (U) is critical for enabling technological uptake & sustaining the e-solutions such as at the Courts and Prisons.
- iii) Systematic documentation of usage and impact of e-justice solutions is key for incremental improvements in justice service delivery.

Operational

- i) Effective engagement and buy-in of all stakeholders in all aspects along the electoral process and capacity building interventions is critical for a smooth electoral and governance support.
- ii) The collaborative approach between UNDP and other UN agencies enabled diverse entry points and complementarity in project interventions.
- iii) Risk monitoring and timely response is an essential aspect during the pre, during and post-election period.
- iv) Direct implementation modality by UNDP enables faster delivery but requires consensus building with Government and other Responsible Parties and orientation on practical implementation.
- v) Outbreak of health pandemics during the electoral cycle – important to have adaptation strategies e.g. use of virtual means for business continuity and having Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

- vi) Closure of a UN agency during the cycle of a project – Important to have national counterpart agency to ensure continuity and long-term planning.

1.4.2 Emerging Issues

- i) The postponement of the women council elections. On 24th June 2022, the Electoral Commission issued a press statement suspending the Electoral Programme for the Women Councils and Committee elections. Postponement of the women council elections created uncertainty about when the elections would be held. The postponement of these elections implied that some key interventions especially those with a direct link to the electoral event such as conducting comprehensive publicity campaigns and voter education for the election of Women Councils and Committees could not be implemented immediately.
- ii) Some project activities such as trainings at regional divisions for security entities, had some delays, due to lengthy time for obtaining clearance of key trainings with the headquarter institutions.
- iii) The COVID-19 pandemic and Ebola outbreak led to new demands and budget implications especially on Government. The Ebola outbreak led to a lock down in select districts such as Mubende.
- iv) It took slightly longer to build consensus in implementation arrangements with select partners, Electoral stakeholders were affected by the overall electoral environment such as the perception of lack of transparency and institutional independence, conflict, and electoral related violence.
- v) Slow adoption by partners, to the Covid-19 new normal/approaches such as use of virtual means for conducting business.
- vi) OHCHR was one of the UN agencies implementing under the SEPU project as a responsible party mainstreaming protection and promotion within the electoral context to selected electoral stakeholders. The non-renewal of its mandate affected some capacity development actions of government institutions, law enforcement institutions and CSOs on human rights protection and promotion.
- vii) The project was implemented in a complex national electoral environment. This may have affected the effective and wider realisation of key results.

1.4.3: Opportunities based on lessons learnt and in view of the 2026 electoral cycle

- i) Upcoming National Population Census (Boundary delimitation and establishment of electoral units).
- ii) Discussions on the draft National Civic Education Policy.
- iii) Draft National Peace building and Conflict Prevention Policy.
- iv) Upcoming Constitutional Review process led by Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs.
- v) Deepening participation of women and youth in the electoral processes in the context of the evolving national framework for civic education.
- vi) National Digitization framework and discussion on digital technology in the context of electoral processes.
- vii) Sustainability of electoral financing.
- viii)

5.0 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW FROM FEBRUARY 2020- AUGUST 2023

Below is the interim financial position for 2023 including the status of expenditure, commitments, and balances at the end of the project.

All figures in USD						
Donor	Contribution	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
Austrian Development Agency	EUR 1,499,667	1,194,723	573,013			1,767,736
Government of Denmark	DKK 6,500,000	1,043,171				1,043,171
The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs	NOK 25,000,000	1,657,825		1,013,171		2,670,996
Government of Sweden	SEK 10,000,000	1,122,334				1,122,334
Government of Iceland	USD 200,000	200,000				200,000
Sub - Total		5,218,053	573,013	1,013,171	-	6,804,237
UNDP		318,427	108,037		1,780	428,244
Total contributions		5,536,480	681,050	1,013,171	1,780	7,232,481
Expenditure						
Austrian Development Agency		285,180	120,961	385,935	975,660	1,767,736
Government of Denmark		50,726	105,458	78,535	808,452	1,043,171
The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs		900,483	305,698	500,762	964,053	2,670,996
Government of Sweden		52,303	112,224	81,799	876,008	1,122,334
Government of Iceland		-	20,816	64,857	114,327	200,000
Sub - Total		1,288,692	665,156	1,111,887	3,738,502	6,804,237
UNDP		318,427	108,037	-	1,780	428,244
Total expenditure		1,607,119	773,193	1,111,887	3,740,282	7,232,481
Donor balance						-

6.0 PROJECT PICTURES GALLERY BY OUTPUT

Output 1: Strengthened inclusion and transparency of the electoral processes.

Hon. Rose Namayanja gives her remarks during Women leadership retreat in 2023



IRCU board members attending Governance retreat 2023

Ms Ritah Akatwijuka, a student leader shares her experiences in leadership at the women in politics retreat in 2023





Former UN RC and Hon Miria Matembe during Civic education and Peace campaign discussions in 2019

Participants during a consensus & peace building dialogue in 2023



UNDP/Citizen's Coalition for Electoral Democracy in Uganda (CCEDU) staff during Civic education & Peace campaign in 2020.



One of the Moslem faith religious leaders making a presentation during a consensus building meeting in 2019.



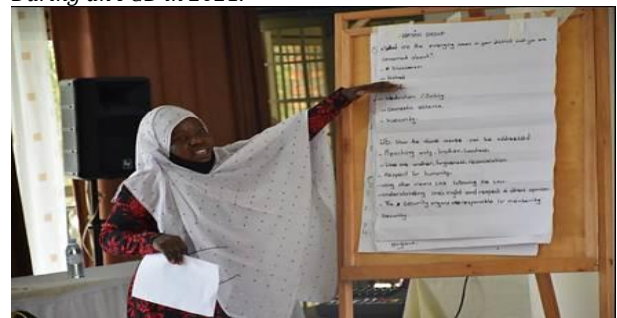
Senior religious, Youth, and Women leaders and key stakeholders during a post-election review dialogue in 2021.



Women leaders in Rakai District discuss focus group questions during a regional consensus building engagement meeting in 2020.



Uganda Muslim Supreme Council in Mityana presents During an FGD in 2021.



Religious leaders meeting with the Uganda Police Force in 2020.



Religious leaders meeting with the Chief Justice in 2020.



The Launch of the Omulembe gwa Digito campaign, a multi media campaign which was meant to engage the youth through ways that are more acceptable and are appealing to them in 2020.



WSR Uganda Eminent Women with representatives from the Uganda Human Rights Commission in 2020.



WSR Uganda Eminent Women and Commissioners from the Electoral Commission in 2021.



WSR Uganda Eminent Women with Representatives from the Uganda Police Force in 2021



WSR Eminent Women and representatives from the National Unity Platform in 2021.

WSR Uganda Eminent Women with representatives from the Justice Forum Party in 2021.



H.E. Hon. Nabbanja giving opening remarks during Governance retreat for the council of presidents that took place between 10th- 13th April 2023

Output 2: Enhanced institutional capacity for the EC and other Electoral stakeholders.



Two female Hon Justices from Ghana interacting with Hon. Chief Justice of Uganda & Hon. Principal Judge of Uganda during the 24th Annual Judges conference held in February 2023.



Training & capacity building of mediators on ADR & peace and conflict resolution in August 2023



L-R Hon. Justice Kwasi Anin-Yeboah, Chief Justice Republic of Ghana, His Highness King of Ashante Otumfour, Hon. Justice Richard Buteera Deputy Chief Justice Republic of Uganda. Discussion on Alternative Dispute Resolution



At the High Court of the Republic of Ghana benchmark team, Judiciary of Uganda, and that of Ghana in November 2022.

through linkage of the formal justice system with cultural institutions in 2022.



A cross-section of participants and UHRC/OHCHR facilitators at a human rights training for senior officers of the UPDF in Jinja in 2022



OHCHR facilitator Emmanuel Bryma Momoh at a human right training for Senior UPDF officers in Jinja, August 2022.



Civic engagement through radio talk shows held in Lira & Soroti districts discussing the duties and responsibilities of citizens and their engagement in electoral processes including women participation in politics by UHRC in July -August 2023.



Some of the student leaders and facilitators of JNL including RR a.i., UNDP pause for a group picture during Youth Leadership training conducted from 24th July – 4th August 2023 held at Protea Hotel.



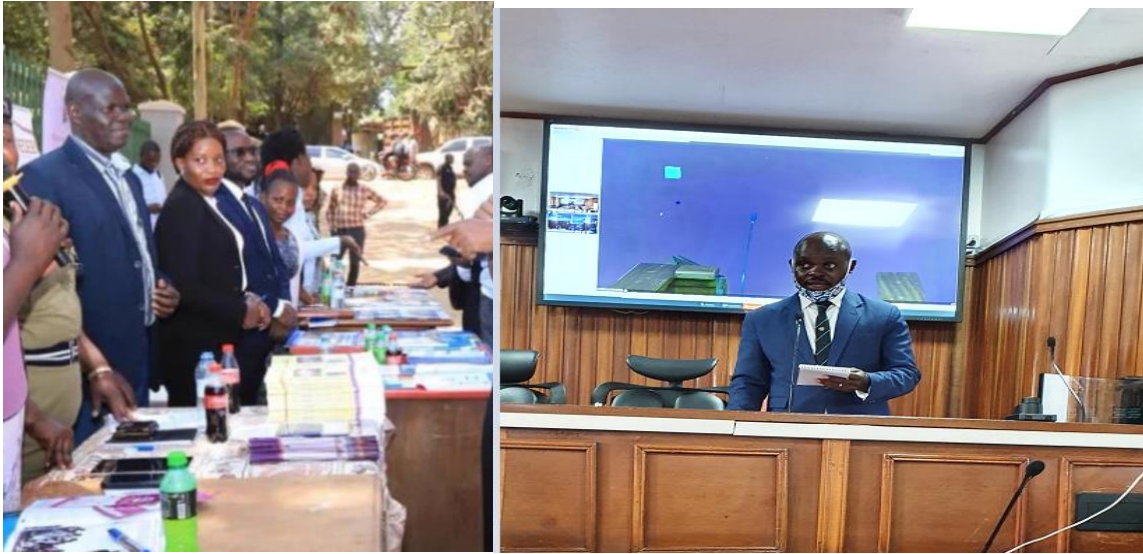
R.R. a.i. UNDP, Ms. Sheila Ngatia giving opening remarks & other keynote speaker giving remarks, below:



Student leaders engaging in a practical exercise during youth leadership training.



R.R UNDP and Hon. Chief Justice of Uganda amidst invited dignitaries at the launch of Video Conferencing of the Gulu High Court and Gulu main prisons as well as open court days held at Amuru Magistrates Court in August 2023.



UNDP-Judiciary team taking part in a hearing session with the use of video conferencing equipment at Gulu High Court



Hon. Lady Justice Lwanga Damalie, head of Judicial Training Institute giving opening remarks at the training of Judicial officers on research and online case reporting held at Mestil Hotel. Also a group photo of judicial officers in attendance of the training, DRR, Grade one magistrates, TL, Governance and Peace Programme in July 2023.

Output 3: Effective and Efficient management, partnership formation, research and monitoring

UNDP team meeting with the Australian Ambassador



UNDP RR meeting Ambassador of Sweden



UNDP team meeting Ambassador of Iceland



NORAD-UNDP monitoring visit to Masaka High Court



Monitoring visit relating to the VCS for Masaka Court



Virtual Court process in Masaka High Court

