



Your Constitutional Watchdog

2017 ANNUAL REPORT



Across-section of university Delegates attentive during the Inter University Interface Debate on 29th September 2017 at Hotel Brovad, Masaka

ABOUT CCG

OUR VISION

Building a center that empowers citizens to utilize their constitutional rights and obligations so as to participate in their governance, promote constitutional governance and defend the constitution.

OUR MISSION

To promote constitutional governance and defend the constitution through carrying out constitutional literacy campaigns and advocacy across East Africa.

MANDATE

Making the Constitution a People's Document.

Customer value proposition:

CCG is committed to promoting constitutional governance through constitutional literacy & advocacy, mentorship, training, public interest litigation, social justice campaigns, research and continuous civic education.

Objectives:

1. Promoting research-based constitutionalism and constitutional governance
2. Promoting democratic culture through creating platforms for discourse, debate and activism
3. Promoting integrity of the democratic processes by advocating for effective policy, legal and institutional mechanisms
4. Strengthening civil society and other social institutions through social justice campaigns
5. Carrying out public interest litigation and legal representation of activists
6. Setting up an Institute for International Studies in East Africa

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FOREWORD

As citizens, we should concern ourselves with the question of whether the current shrinking civic space with collapsing service delivery, brutality by the Police, gruesome killing of women, collapsing rule of law, youth unemployment and the ever increasing corruption and high levels of poverty and inequality really matter. The answer is they matter a great deal. As noted in this report, good governance, constitutionalism and civically competent youth fraternity is a significant path to building lasting democracy in Uganda. This report makes an important contribution to those who are interested in developing a broader and deeper understanding of the connections to strengthen the engagement and participation of university students in governance, accountability and development in Uganda. In providing this information, spaces to facilitate active citizenship and transformative leadership by young people, and linking them with other youth networks countrywide as well as the general population is the ultimate venture to take.

On the other hand, the promotion of democratic governance cannot be an exclusivity of civil society initiatives. Political parties have to be organically linked to these processes. This is because they actually manage power during and after a civic education and electoral cycle. Civil society initiatives augment the frontline efforts of political parties for transformation. Therefore, the broader in membership and deeper in content the process is, the more successful it is likely to be.



Okwiri Rabwoni
Executive Director

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

CCG held a number of Meetings both in the universities and with the general population on constitutional literacy and the broad civic education campaign on governance and development in Uganda including key sessions on gender, human rights and oil governance in Uganda.

The major highlight of the year was the training of trainers (TOT) under the addendum project “Deepening Civic Education in Education and Religious Affiliated Institutions of Higher Learning.” This addendum helped CCG to reach out to 8 education and religious affiliated institutions of higher learning and expanded the outreach of civic education engagements to the broader community. This was building on the continuous civic education campaign that CCG has been running in the universities.

OUR WORK

1. Constitutional Literacy

CCG established a working relationship with Parliament of the Republic of Uganda; Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs and the United Nations Development Programme, Uganda (UNDP) on joint constitutional engagements after the National Conference on the Constitution, held on 6th Nov 2013.

This relationship later resulted into a lot of work in terms of policy analysis, constitutional reforms and the National dialogue on Democracy Day.

Activities under this programme include:

- Constitutional literacy campaign;
- Policy analysis and engagements
- Simplifying and translating the constitution into eight major local languages and disseminating it;
- Mobilization and sensitization on constitutional rights and obligations;
- Advocating for harmonization of policies on governance within the region e.g. electoral laws, migration laws;

- Public dialogue for interface between government agencies and the citizens and training of trainers (TOT) for massive sensitization on constitutional rights and obligations. The expected outputs include: citizens are more knowledgeable about their constitutional rights and responsibilities;
- Cardinal constitutional principles are respected and restored; citizens have means and avenues for expressing their needs and concerns and for holding political leaders accountable;
- Increased understanding and participation of citizens in EAC Political integration process;
- Feedback and accountability processes between governments and the citizens are enhanced and development of a critical mass to effect the sensitization programme.

2. Hope Initiative Program

The project **“Amplifying Students Voices in Governance Processes in Uganda”** was an 18 months project which started on 1st July 2016 and ended on 31st December 2017. The overall goal of the project was to increase levels of confidence of students in claiming their civic and human rights. That is, the project sought to strengthen the engagement and participation of university students in governance, accountability and development in Uganda through the Hope Initiative Clubs network in the 25 selected Universities.

It had spaces like public dialogues, debates and on-line platforms which were created and aimed at enhancing knowledge sharing and critical reflection where the youth actively analyzed, challenged, and refined different political ideologies. These platforms were further created to put the young people at the heart of transforming political discourse, organizing and engagement in Uganda. CCG implemented this project through the **“HOPE Initiative Clubs Network in the selected 25 Universities,”** an effort through which spaces to facilitate active citizenship and transformative leadership by young people was ushered, and the clubs were also linked with other youth networks countrywide as well as the general population. It was premised that the emergence of a strong and functioning

students' network in the universities will have higher influence to wider society awareness on the above mentioned issues.

Completed Activities:

Activities completed during the 2017 project period were: conducted 302 Hope Initiative Clubs monthly meetings, organized 2 televised inter university interface debates; 1 in Kampala and 1 upcountry (regional), conducted 13 public dialogues involving students in the selected 25 universities, held 4 quarterly online twitter chats on the 6 selected topics which targeted students at the universities, youth in general and general social media users, carried out continuous social media engagements on civic education (Facebook, twitter, WhatsApp groups, BlogSpot), and conducted end line mini survey.

The project has managed to bridge the information gaps through trainings and provision of information to the students. Participation of students and youths in the continuous online engagements on civic education happens on a daily basis on all our social media handles through Facebook, twitter and the blog.

CCG was able to achieve high levels of creating awareness about civic and human rights amongst the university students as observed by the 93% of the respondents during the end line mini survey who indicated to have received civic education. The large proportion of students who received CE and were able to raise their voices or report issues of human rights violation is an indication in increase of their (students) confidence. However, it is important to note that a series of activities have been implemented since 2015 aimed at increasing awareness and knowledge of civic and human rights.

3. Training of Trainers (TOT)

The project ***“Training of Trainers (TOT); “Deepening Civic Education in Education and Religious Affiliated Institutions of Higher Learning”*** is a civic education addendum project that was implemented in 8 education and religious affiliated

institutions¹ of higher learning in 4 districts² as a pilot project for 11 months (1st February 2017 to 31st December 2017). The overall goal of the project was to reach out to education and religious affiliated institutions of higher learning so as to expand the outreach of civic education engagements to a broader community.

During the project period, 8 visits were made to the selected institutions to get project acceptance, 144 (86 males and 58 females) people were selected and trained as civic educators, 4 TOT workshops were conducted each for 4 days in Masaka, Jinja, Mbale and Kampala, facilitated the civic educators to conduct 4 quarterly community outreach meetings, facilitated and supported 16 public dialogues conducted by the TOTs in the communities/districts and held 4 review meetings.

The civic educators were able to expand the civic education outreach to over 20 districts across the country depended on their residential home districts. The public dialogues and the community outreaches in particular were eye-openers to the communities. These made the communities reached realize their potential to guard and protect their land, rights and above all, to hold their leaders accountable for improved service delivery. As a result of the continued engagements, there is now reduced apathy levels and hopelessness on governance by the citizens. The project has also managed to bridge the information gaps through trainings and provision of civic education messages to the citizens. However, the short term implementation of the TOT programme has left a vacuum in the continued expansion of the civic education programme to the communities since it was only piloted in few selected religious affiliated institutions.

4. Human Rights

Center for Constitutional Governance (CCG) is still the current chair of the rights of minority groups in the on-going development of the National Action Plan for Human rights (NAP) in Uganda; the chair of youth cluster as well as the chair of the Social Affairs committee under the AU CSO Cooperation.

¹ Nile Vocational Training Institute, Ndegeye Primary Teachers College, YMCA, Islamic Call College University, Uganda Baptist Seminary, Bishop Tucker Theological College, Covenant Bible Institute of Theology, and Uganda Technical College, Elgon

² Jinja, Kampala, Masaka and Mbale

CCG coordinates the rights of women, youth, children, indigenous communities and minority groups in this NAP Development Process. This mandate to promote human rights, rule of law and constitutionalism in Uganda that is cardinal to our work as a constitutional watchdog comes at a time when Uganda's record in governance, rule of law and human rights is at its lowest, with the draconian laws that have been enacted (The Public Order Management Act, The Anti-Pornography Act commonly known as the Mini Skirts Act, The NGO Amendment Bill 2013, Press and Journalists Act, Uganda Communications Regulatory Authority Act, Regulation of Interception of Communication Act, 2010 and now the amendment of the presidential age limit from 75 years to limitless.

These draconian laws have clauses that contradict the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, as amended and affect mostly the youths, women and minority communities in Uganda. These laws have made Uganda a repressive state when it comes to the promotion and protection of human rights. The narrowing space of civil society organizations through the NGO Act Amendments has also accelerated the compromise on human rights in the country, with the rise in the authorities especially the police in abusing individual human rights.

CCG uses its Hope Initiative Model as its approach to advocacy by putting communities at the center of advocacy for the issues that affect them and the Human Rights Programme is also delivered in the same aspect. CCG is politically non-partisan and always uses the Constitution – the Supreme Law of the Land, in benchmarking its work. We defend and promote democracy with due respect to the rule of law and human rights.

CCG LEGAL AID SUPPORT

In 2017 alone, CCG offered legal aid support to 29 youth activists who were arrested by the police and charged on the different accounts:

- On September 18, 2017, 6 Youth activists under the umbrella “The Alternative” were arrested while issuing out flyers for defending the constitution Art 102(b) and tortured by police Flying squad and later taken to Nagalama police station however, two of the suspects were dropped at Nalufenya torture chambers and beaten up by unknown officers.
- On Saturday 16th December 2017, another group of 16 youth activists were arrested and tortured by the police flying squad at FDC Kampala offices under the orders of ACP Muhangi Hebert while having leadership training. Though they were later released but their items such as laptops and phones were confiscated.
- On 18th December 2017, Obed Obed-giu Derrick, a student at Makerere university, a member of Hope Initiative Club under the CCG was also arrested while campaigning against lifting of the presidential Age Limit, taken to Jinja Road Police station and later remanded to Luzira prison but was later released on bail.

5. Oil and Gas Governance

Governance and Policy Issues in Uganda’s Oil and Gas Sub-Sector, If managed properly and in an environmentally responsible way, oil and gas production has the potential of boosting the economy of the country. It can also be a curse if its governance framework is flawed and its management is not transparent and open.

As such, the governments of resource-rich countries face the daunting but surmountable challenge of devising institutional and legal frameworks that ensure maximum benefit for its citizens. The experience from oil and mineral producing African countries such as Nigeria, Chad, Cameron and Angola show that benefits arising from the discovery of oil and minerals is intuitively linked to the quality of

governance in the country which also defines the quality of governance of the oil and the minerals sector.

Whether a country avoids the oil curse is largely dependent on how the sector is managed from the time of discovery, exploration and extraction. It is therefore important that at the very initial stages of the sector, the institutional and legal frameworks to manage the sector are strong enough to cater for all the critical issues in the sector such as environmental, economic, political governance and security concerns.

Challenges faced

The main challenge under this reporting period is under budgeting which seems to be a recurring challenge. Our budgeting has no flexibility with the ever changing market prices and transport costs which affects both the quality of services as we have to look for cheaper suppliers and also the number of participants to invite. For example, the regional interface debates prices on TV Live Broadcasts have since gone high, accommodation, transport and meals keep increasing a factor that disorganizes our planning and this in the end sends a negative feedback to the whole project. This calls for complete review of the budget.

Another challenge which appears to be minor but has grave effect on students active participation on governance issues is the deliberate effort by government agencies to continuously divert the attention of students from governance issues by giving them hand-outs and cash gifts to engage in beach parties especially under the patriotism program. This changes the mind-set of students to focus on money and hand-outs as compared to skills, knowledge and information, and engagements opportunities.

Pictorial coverage



Sarah Bireete conducting TOT training on Land Rights in Jinja



Police officers started surrounding all activists



The youth activists from the “Alternative youth group” having lunch at Nagalama on 23rd Sept 2017



Arinaitwe Scovia being rushed to hospital



Two hope initiative members Andrew Katarbarwa and Obed Derrick after being released at Buganda Road Court